Spiritual Refining:

PART I.

OR, A TREATISE OF GRACE and ASSURANCE:

Wherein are handled,

- *The Doctrine of Assurance.*
- *The Use of Signs in Self-examination.*
- *How true Graces may be distinguished from counterfeit.*
- *Several true Signs of Grace, and many false ones.*
- *The Nature of Grace, under divers Scripture-Notions or Titles;* as *Regeneration, The New-Creature, The Heart of Flesh, Vocation, Sanctification,* &c.

Many chief Questions (occasionally) controverted between the Orthodox and the ARMINIANS.

As also many Cases of *Conscience,*

Tending to { Comfort and confirm Saints. / Undeceive and convert Sinners.

Being CXX. Sermons preached, and now published,
By *Anthony Burgess*, sometime Fellow of *Emanuel* Colledge in *Cambridge*, and now Pastor of the Church of *Sutton-Coldfield* in *Warwickshire.*

LONDON,
Printed by *Jo. Streater*, for *T. U.* and are to be sold by *Thomas Johnson* at the *Golden-Key* in St. *Paul's* Church-yard, 1658.

A TREATISE

1658
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To the Reader.

I *Am not discouraged to publish this plain Practical Treatise to the world, although it bring no Peacocks from* Ophyr, *no strange affected words, or opinions. You shall not come out to see here,* A man cloathed with soft raiments, *but rather one like that man of* Jericho, *greatly* wounded, *desiring* oyl *to be poured therein. And indeed holy and spiritual matter hath most convincing Majesty, when words do not obscure it; Painting of a Diamond hinders the lustre thereof: What* Tully *said of the Philosopher, is much more true of the Divine,* Si affert eloquentiam, accipio; si non habet, non admodum flagitem. *Therefore it being my main scope to bring the Reader into a powerful experimental Discovery of True Grace upon his own heart: I thought Words, Opinions, Notions and Controversies, would be like* Asahels *Carkass in the way, to move men to gaze on them, while they neglected more necessary*

and excellent matter. The true Work of Grace ſeparated from the Counterfeit, with the aſſurance thereof, *is the main Subject of this Book, and ſhould be of our conſtant thoughts and Meditations; this will be uſeful, when all other things will vaniſh; As* Noah's *Ark continued on the Waters, when all the ſtately Palaces of the world were overwhelmed.* Grace *juſtifying, is indeed the treaſure of a Chriſtian; but* Grace *ſanctifying, is the Key to open thereunto:* Grace *juſtifying is much to be preſſed, either to broken contrite hearts, or when corrupt Doctrines (as in Popery) have dangerouſly infected; but* Grace *ſanctifying is conſtantly to be urged to every natural man, and all unbottomed Profeſſors: Now there is no man that knoweth how it fareth with us in theſe days, but muſt acknowledge this Subject very uſeful. The vitals of godlineſs muſt be in a ſpecial manner preſerved; that inward infuſed heat muſt not be weakned by uſeleſs evaporations: Diſputes, Opinions, and Differences of Judgment, muſt not be ſuckers to draw away nouriſhment from the ſubſtantial parts of Holineſs. Our Saviour himſelf choſe this Subject, above all other, to preach to his Hearers; It was not their flocking after him in multitudes did content him, but upon all occaſions he inſtructed them in the deep, ſure, and rooted work of* Grace: *even in his Miniſtry, he ſeparated the* Sheep *from* Goats,

Goats, *the* Wheat *from the* Chaff, *and the* good ground *from the* bad, *the* wiſe Virgin *from the* fooliſh. *This then is the* one neceſſary thing, *and they* chooſe the better part *who prefer it before all* Controverſal *matter. Oh that all would be invited to taſte and ſee how ſweet the* Practical *Power of* Grace *is above all* Notional *Diſcourſes: And oh that this Book, if thou vouchſafeſt to reade it, might be to thee like* Eliſha's *ſtretching himſelf upon the dead Child, to bring ſpiritual Life with the Operations thereof: I have alſo (the matter requiring) diſperſed through the* Treatiſe *Practical Arguments againſt Arminianiſm, which is not onely repugnant to many eminent pregnant places of Scripture, but (as Doctor* Ames *well urged againſt* Grevinchovius) *is contrary* Communi ſenſui fidelium, *to the Experience and Senſe all the Faithful have had of* Gods *gracious working upon them. It hath greatly grieved me to ſee men of great Repute, amongſt their Diſciples at leaſt, publickly to avouch ſuch Doctrines, without any trembling or heſitation; for who will not be ready to fall down and worſhip the guilded Image of Error, at the ſound of ſuch Sackbuts and Pſalteries? But I hope the People of* God *will ſay to ſuch Teachers,* Non eſt diſputandum de guſtu, *That which we have ſeen and felt, as it were, upon our Souls;*

that

that we will adhere unto. I ſhall ſhut up all with Luthers *Prayer,* A Doctore glorioſo, Paſtore contentioſo, & inutilibus quæſtionibus, liberet Eccleſiam Deus, *From a Doctor that ſeeks onely his own glory, from a contentious Paſtor that affects to remove the bounds of* Truth, *and from unprofitable Queſtions, Let* God *deliver his Church.* Amen.

Cotton-Coldfield
July the 3d.
1652.

ANTH. BURGESSE.

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FINIS.

FINIS.

A TREATISE OF GRACE and ASSVRANCE; Being CXX. SERMONS.

SECT. I.

The Doctrine of Assurance and Signes.

SERMON. I.

How necessary and advantagious the Assurance of our being in the state of Grace is.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

Examine your selves whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves, &c.

THe Church of *Corinth*, though it was a Garden immediately planted by the Apostles, yet quickly was filled with noisome weeds, whereupon the Apostle threatens it with severe Discipline, if they repent not; Ecclesiasticall Discipline being in the Church, as the Sword is in the Common-wealth. The *Corinthians* distaste this severity, and question his Apostolical power and authority: Love to mens lusts, and a desire of security in them, rather than any solid Arguments, make men question the *Jus Divinum* of Christs institutions. The Apostle proveth his Calling by that spiritual success and powerfull efficacy which his Word had among them, and therefore in stead of proving and examining him, he commands them to try their own selves. This very Argument may the faithfull Ministers of God in *England* use against many who now condemn their Calling.

In the words you have a Duty enjoyned. 2. The object matter of it, Which is illustrated from an absurd consequent, if this duty be neglected.

The Duty is set home in two emphatical words, πειράζετε *Examine your selves*, and δοκιμάζετε, *Prove your selves*. The former word doth in the general signifie to take an experimental knowledge of any thing that is either uncertain, unknown or hidden. Hence that knowledge which we have by generall arguments and abstracted reasons cannot be called πεῖρα an experimental knowledge. Now because, besides the bare knowledge, there may be also a good end or bad propounded in examination, therefore in an ill sense the word is applied to the devil and his instruments, and in a good sense to God, and here in the Text to our selves. It is further to be observed, that these words do imply that men are great strangers to themselves, and that so much self-love doth blinde them, that they know not themselves. Again, These words also imply that there are certain Marks and Signs, whereby a man may come certainly to know what he is,

otherwiſe this command would be in vain. To the ſame purpoſe is the word alſo *Ἐξετάζειν, Examinate* implieth a ſevere and diligent inquiſition into our ſelves, ſo as to have a full experience of what is in us; hence *Rom.* 5. 4. *Δοκιμὴ* is uſed for experience.

In the next place you have the object matter, *Whether ye be in the faith.* He doth not here ſpeak of *Fides quæ creditur*, the Doctrine of faith; but the ſaving grace of faith, as appeareth by the other particular, *Know ye not that Chriſt is in you?* The Apoſtle ſaith, *Ye in the faith*, rather than faith in you, to ſhew the large extent of faith, that we are Subjects who do not contain it wholly; as he uſeth contrary phraſes to be *in ſinne*, and *in the fleſh* rather than ſinne, and fleſh to be in us; ſo ſome obſerve that, *Enter thou into thy Maſters joy*, not thy Maſters joy into thee; though that ſeem to be a fancy, and the true meaning is, *Enter into the place of thy Maſters joy*, for ſo *χαρὰ* is uſed in *Eſther*. The Popiſh Commentators to elude this place when brought by the Orthodox, to prove, That a man may be certain of true grace in him, do anſwer, That the Apoſtle ſpeaks not here of the *ſaving works* of the Spirit, but the *miraculous works*; This is made an Argument that they were the Apoſtles of the true *Meſſias*, becauſe of the miracles wrought among them. And *Gal.* 3. 5. the Apoſtle proveth the true Doctrine of Chriſt to be among them, becauſe of miracles done to them; we may adde alſo *Matth.* 11. 5. when *Johns* Diſciples come to know, *Whether he were the true Chriſt*, Jeſus returneth this anſwer, *The blinde receive their ſight, the lame walk*, &c. As if he ſhould have ſaid, Theſe wonderfull works demonſtrate me to be the *Meſſias*. Now though it ſhould be granted, that this were part of the meaning, when the Apoſtle cals them to an experimental proof of his Apoſtleſhip among them, yet this cannot be all, becauſe Chriſt is not ſaid to dwell in us, (according to the Scripture-phraſe,) or to be in us by a meer miraculous faith onely.

The conſequent abſurdity is in thoſe words, *Unleſſe ye be reprobates. Piſcator* takes reprobates here as oppoſed to thoſe that are predeſtinated; but I preferre *Beza's* judgment, who underſtands it of a corrupt and unſound minde, thus, They might eaſily diſcover the work of Chriſt to be in them, or among them, unleſſe their underſtandings were in part depraved; for that he doth not ſuppoſe a totall unſoundneſs is in them, appeareth by the Greek, *εἰ μή τι ἀδόκιμοί ἐστε*, where *τι* doth mitigate the ſpeech; therefore it is rendred by ſome, *unleſſe in ſomething you be unſound.* That a reprobate minde is a corrupted minde, appeareth 2 *Tim.* 3. 8. *Men of corrupt minde, reprobate concerning the faith*, and *Tit.* 1. 16. Although we do not take reprobates here as oppoſed to predeſtinated, yet I ſee not why we may not well tranſlate it Reprobates, not as taking it for ſuch who are out of hope of ſalvation; but as the Scripture calls *Reprobate ſilver*, Jer. 6. 30. which hath no worth or fitneſſe in it for trade. Though the Apoſtle writeth here to the whole Church, yet the duty is to be obſerved reſpectively by every believer; Neither is that true of *Eſtius*, who to avoid the Orthodox Arguments for Aſſurance of grace, ſaith, It may be eaſilier known, Chriſt is in ſuch a Church or Congregation, than in the heart of a particular believer: for the Text ſpeaks not of Chriſts being in his Doctrine and Ordinances among them, which indeed is eaſily diſcerned; but of his ſpiritual inhabitation by ſanctifying grace in them.

Obſerv. 1. *It is a duty of ſpecial concernment for the people of God to be aſſured of ſuch a true and ſaving work of grace in them, as thereby they ſhall be differenced from unſound hypocrites.*

Obſerv. 2. *There are certain Notes and Signs of grace, whereby a man may diſcern what he is.*

A Practical and Experimental knowledge of Grace doth farre tranſcend a meere Notional and Theoretical: There is a great difference between him that hath heard Honey is ſweet, and him that hath taſted it. It is a rule among the *Hebrews*, That *Verba notitiæ, quandoque ſignificant effectum & effectum.*

Words

Words of knowledge do sometimes signifie the affections in the heart, and the effects thereof in life, how well were it if they did always so signifie among Christians. In former times Christians did much labour after an experimental knowledge, now they luxuriate into a meer brain-knowledge, howsoever in physick we call that man by way of contempt an *Emperick*, who goeth by experience only, and hath no knowledge of the nature of things, yet to be an *Emperick* in Christianity may have a good sense. *In legendis libris non quæramus scientiam, sed saporem*, said *Bernard*, in reading books let us not so much look for science, as a savourinesse of the truth upon our hearts. Now when the Apostle commands us *to prove and try our selves*, it is to endeavour to feel that *in actu secundo*, as they say in actual working, which we perswade our selves is in us *actu primo*, or habitually: as for example, Every man thinketh he is a believer, he is regenerated; To prove or try our selves, is to apply those notes and marks which the Scripture makes of such, and thereby to have an experimental feeling of the actual exercise of these things. The Scripture *Phil.* 1. 9. calls this *αἴσθησις sense* or *feeling*, where the Apostle distinguisheth it from *ἐπίγνωσις, Knowledge* and *judgement*, making it to be the inward savoury sense and feeling of divine things upon their hearts.

To prove or try our selves what?

Now that this practical experimental work of grace in our selves, whereby we are able to discern what is true, and what is imperfect and counterfeit, is very necessary, will be made manifest from several grounds. As,

How necessary assurance is?

First, *our Saviour did in his Sermons much presse this point upon his hearers.* If that be true which the Heathen said, *Quando sapiens loquitur, aulea animi aperit*, when a wise man speaks he openeth the rich treasures and wardrobe, as it were, of his minde; This is much more true of Christ, in whom are *the treasures of wisdom.* And of all practical points in Divinity our *Saviour* is most frequently on this, That which is conceived his first Parable, *Matth.* 13. 3. it is mainly to shew the difference of true grace from that which is like it onely, and as being a matter of great concernment; it is said *Luke* 8. 8. after the parable was ended, *Jesus* cried, *He that hath ears to hear let him hear.* Now that *crying* is never attributed unto *Christs* speech, but when his affections were very earnest, and the matter of great importance. It is also to be considered that this he speaks to a multitude that thronged after him with great attention, yet to such he declareth, That few have a good and honest heart to receive the Word. When therefore our Saviour himself shall thus preach, that you may in the use of the Ordinances finde much alteration made in your selves, you may have joy, faith, some kinde of reformation, and yet not be the good and right soil: what a provocation should this be to us never to leave, till we be truly qualified: Our Saviour also spends another Parable to this purpose, *Matth.* 25. 1. of the *ten Virgins*, where all are *Virgins*, that is, such who had preserved themselves from the Idolatries and grosse vices of the world; They both had lamps, they both go with confidence to meet the Bridegroom, and there is no differencing of one from the other, till the bridegroom come: so that by this Parable it should seem, that a Professor, having no more than a false, imperfect or counterfeit work of grace, may live and die with a great deal of comfort and confidence, as if his condition were exceeding good, and not finde it otherwise till it be too late.

Reason 1. Christ much presseth it?

Again *Matth.* 7. 24, 25, 26, *By two kinde of builders, one upon the sand, the other upon the rock*; What is represented, but two kinde of believers, one that hath the outward profession and way of Christianity, and he is also truly *rooted upon Christ*; but there is another who builds upon the sand, who diggeth not deep enough; and this is the greatest part of Christians: thy faith, thy repentance, thy joy are not deep enough, now marke the consequence, *The fall thereof was great.* Thy damnation will be so much the more terrible, when all thy religious duties, all thy external profession shall *fall to the ground.* And it is a fall by way of rending, as the word signifieth, Oh how wofull to be rent from God, and

thoſe duties which thou truſtedſt in. Therefore our ſaviour *Mat.* 7. 22. ſaith, *Many will call to him at that day, Have not we propheſied in thy Name, eat and drunk in thy preſence?* that is, offered Sacrifices and received Sacraments? but for all that *Chriſt knoweth them not.* By all this you ſee, how neceſſary it is we be not deceived about the work of Grace, and that we ought to have both our eyes in our head, leaſt we take an whole ſpirituall eſtate in counterfeit coyn.

Reaſon 2. Becauſe of the eaſineſſe and proneneſſe in us to miſtake.

This experimental knowledge is of conſequence, becauſe of the eaſineſſe and proneneſſe in us to miſtake. What *Auſtin* ſaid of the Doctrine of the *Trinity*; *In nihilo facilius & periculoſius erratur*, in nothing is the errour more eaſie and more dangerous; the ſame is applicable to this matter; for the words of *examining* and *proving* do imply the deceitfulneſs of our heart, that there are many falſe ſhapes and forms upon it. Hence are thoſe phraſes of *ſearching our hearts* and *communing with our hearts*; all which argue the difficulty of being fully acquainted with what is in it. The *Papiſts* indeed preſſe this too farre, as if therefore none could ever tell when they did truly love God, or had a ſincere heart; but the falſneſſe of this is in time to be ſhewed, onely there is much truth in this, that there is ſo much ſelf-love and carnal confidence in us, that we eaſily perſwade our ſelves that we are indeed ſuch as we ought to be. Ask every man one after another, who is not confident that he is regenerated, that he hath an intereſt in Chriſt, that his heart is good? and why are they ſo? but becauſe they do not faithfully compare the notes and characters of true grace, and diligently apply them to their own ſelves. The *Jews* and *Phariſees* could never be beaten out of thoſe vain hopes and carnal confidences. Hence the Apoſtle uſeth an emphatical word of a Jew, *Rom.* 2. 17. *Thou reſteſt in the law*, ἐπαναπαύῃ, *Thou art ſecure in the law*, as in ſome admirable priviledge, and ſignal teſtimony of Gods love; That which Chriſt promiſed, *viz. Reſt to their ſouls*, they found in the law, ſo that no load of ſin could burthen them, becauſe they had reſt here. As it is thus of a Jew, ſo we may ſay of a Chriſtian, he reſteth in the Doctrine of the Goſpel, and the outward uſe of Ordinances, not feeling the weight of ſinne. Inſomuch that it were farre better to ſee people pray with fear, and eat their bread with trembling and aſtoniſhment, leſt they have gone no farther yet than hypocrites, than to be ſo carnally and falſly perſwaded of their good condition as they are. How many are indeed but *Glow-worms*, or white rotten trees of baſe materials, though ſome ſhining there be upon their converſation! Therefore this Text might be faſtened upon the gates of the whole world, upon every door, every poſt, *Examine, prove your ſelves.*

Reaſon 3. From the danger of miſcarrying.

Thirdly, *It is very dangerous to miſcarry in this matter.* Oh the confuſion that fell upon the fooliſh Virgins when their want of oil was diſcovered. How wary are you to take *clipt ſilver*, or *counterfeit coyn*? but it is greater danger to take *counterfeit Repentance* for *true Repentance*, *counterfeit Faith* for *true Faith*. If that praying, profeſſing of thine be not good and ſound, thou art undone for ever. When the *Apoſtle*, Heb. 6. 4, had reckoned up ſeveral particulars, which many among us do not attain unto, They were *enlightened*, they *taſted of the good word of God*, they were *partakers of the holy Ghoſt*, yet ſaith he, *I hope better things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation.* What thunder and lightnings is here? better things than illumination, than participation of the holy things, better things than taſting of the good word of God? what, are not theſe things that do accompany ſalvation? May we not cry out with the Diſciples in another caſe, *This is an hard ſaying, who then can be ſaved?* Yet ſo it is, we Miniſters of Gods word may ſay, Except your righteouſneſſe exceed that of outward profeſſion, of repeating of Sermons, of Family-duties, of common works of Gods Spirit, which are in temporary believers, you can never enter into the kingdom of heaven; and therefore we hope and pray for better things of you, even ſuch as will ſurely accompany ſalvation.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, *This practical diſcerning is of conſequence, becauſe of the difficulty to finde out the true differences between true grace and its counterfeit.* It is hard doctrinally to lay down the bounds, wherein they differ, inſomuch that ſome Divines make the work of grace in the temporary believer to differ from that of the regenerated perſon, gradually only, not ſpecifically, but that is falſe. If then it be thus hard by way of Doctrine to ſet the bounds, how much more is it difficult for Chriſtians in their practice to mark out the right way? The *hypocrite* feels a joy, feels a ſorrow, feeleth a ſweetneſs in the Ordinances; and ſo doth the godly, but to ſhew how one is ſure he is not deceived, and the other is, this is hard, though indeed they do differ as much as one in a dream, or madneſſe, that is really perſwaded of, and affected with ſuch great advantages, doth from him that is truly awake, and knoweth he is in a dream. Therefore the words *to try* and *prove*, do ſuppoſe that a man muſt have knowledge of the rule: and the characters which do deſcribe ſuch a grace, he muſt alſo have skilfulneſs in managing by way of application theſe notes to himſelf, and this muſt be done out of a temptation, with much attending and perſevering thereunto. For as in doctrinal controverſies, that is the great Queſtion, Which is the true Church, and that which doth not erre? as alſo, What are the eſſential marks that do conſtitute a Church? So in practicals, This is the great doubt, What is the truth of grace? Whether I be the man that have it? And what are the notes to decipher it? And as for the former Queſtion, we would fain have ſome viſible infallible Judge to determine it, that there might be no more diſpute: So here, we would deſire ſuch a peculiar revelation from heaven that ſhould by name ſay unto us, we are thoſe Chriſtians in whom are no guile.

Reaſon 4. From the difficulty of diſcerning between true grace and counterfeit. *Baxter.*

Fifthly, *It is of concernment, becauſe of the manifold advantages that will come to us, when we have attained to ſuch an experimentall knowledge of our ſelves.* As,

Reaſon 5. Advantages of this experimental knowledge of our ſelves.

I. Firſt, We ſhall account all our former knowledge of divine things, and all our parts, though never ſo admirable to have been but like a tinkling cymbal. When thou comeſt to have this inward feeling of holy things upon thy heart, thou wilt bewail all thy duties, and conferences, and religious performances done by thee, as a Parrat that had no underſtanding of theſe things. If a man read in a book, or ſee in a map ſuch and ſuch countries, he hath indeed ſome confuſed knowledge, but if he travell himſelf into thoſe countries and ſee the Towns and building, he will ſay his former apprehenſion of them was but lame to what he hath now; or as the Queen of *Sheba*, who had heard rumors of *Solomons* wiſdom, when ſhe came to have an experimental knowledge of it, then ſhe was aſtoniſhed, and ſaid, *All that ſhe had heard was nothing to that which ſhe ſaw*; So it is in matter of grace, if God work theſe ſavoury inward experiments in thee, thou wilt be aſtoniſhed to ſee the difference between thy ſelf now and once; all that thou haſt heard, read or preached, is nothing to that thou feeleſt; But how is it to be feared, that many have ſeen godlineſs but in the *Map* onely, they never had experience of the thing it ſelf. How many are there that talk of converſion or repentance as men do of bringing forth a childe, who never had the experience of the throbs and pains that then are endured. *Rom.* 7. 9. *Paul*, what a long time did he live in a road of religious duties, but when he came to have an experimental work upon him, he *died*, whereas he was *alive before*, that is, he became ſenſible of the damnable and dangerous eſtate he was in, whereas he had great confidence of his good life and ſalvation before. And thus it is with every man that hath gotten experimentall knowledge; Alas (ſaith he) I was alive once, I thought my ſelf ſomebody, when I could pray, write Sermons, diſpute ſo underſtandingly, but now I ſee I did not know what that faith was, or godlineſs was, that I did argue ſo much about, I never knew any thing of God, or of his gracious works till now, will that ſoul ſay.

II. Secondly, Where there is this experimental knowledge, that mans heart is as it were

were the Bibles counterpane. The Scripture is the original, and his heart is the copy of it, he can read over the Promiſes, the Threatnings, and can ſay, *Probatum eſt. David* in his *Pſalms*, *Paul* in his Epiſtles, ſpeak that mans heart, feel that mans temptations, make that mans objections. Hence you have an excellent expreſſion, *John* 3. 33. *He that receiveth his teſtimony, ſetteth to his ſeal, that God is true.* The Scripture ſpeaketh of Gods ſealing to us, and our ſealing to him. In this place it is a Metaphor from their civill contracts which were confirmed and ſolemnly declared to be good by ſeals, *Jer.* 32. 10. So he that doth indeed receive the teſtimony of the Scripture, he doth ſolemnly declare by his life and converſation, that God is true; Therefore all thoſe who in the general ſay, they believe, yet ſhew not a practical converſation accordingly, they ſet not their ſeale that God is true.

III. Thirdly, Where this is, it will powerfully dead the heart to all humane excellencies; That as in man the Philoſophers ſay, the vegetative and ſenſitive life is ſwallowed up in the rational; ſo in a Chriſtian his natural and animal life is in great meaſure turned to his ſupernatural life. In the thorny ground there did the corn and thorns come up together, but where the life of grace is in the practical exerciſe of it, all ſuch ſuckers will be cut off. It is not head-notions, but heart-feelings that will exclude immoderacy of affections to other things. A man that a long while taſted of the wine of brain-knowledge, when he comes to taſte of this experimental knowledge, he will ſay, The new is beſt. Hence *Gal.* 2. 20. *Paul* denieth *he liveth, but Chriſt liveth in him. Omnis vita eſt propter delectationem*, All life is for delight. Till therefore thou canſt take delight and experimental ſweetneſſe in holy things, thy tongue indeed may be often about good things, but thy heart can never be in them. Love of the world may ſtand with the former kinde of knowledge, but not with the later. *Ariſtotle* obſerveth, that dogs cannot hunt where the ſcent of ſweet flowers is, becauſe that diverteth the ſmell; ſo neither can we run after Chriſt in the ſweetneſs of his ointments, when the ſmell of worldly delights and earthly refreſhments do interpoſe.

SERM. II.

Holding forth more advantages to Aſſurance.

2 COR. 13. 5.

Examine your ſelves, prove your ſelves, &c.

THere remain more advantages, which will accrew to a Chriſtian, that beſides a general notion knowledge hath a practical and experimental diſcovery of grace in his heart.

I. The knowing experienced Chriſtian only enjoys the ſweetneſs of the Ordinances.

Firſt, *He will enjoy the ſweetneſs and benefit of the Ordinances*, which men of parts and gifts only, do not. How many are there, who in our Church adminiſtrations are like old *Barzillai* that had loſt his taſte and hearing, and ſo cared not for *Davids* feaſts and muſick? *David*, Pſal 19. preferred Gods Word in *ſweetneſs above the honey and honey-comb*, Pſal 84. is ſpent in admiring the lovelineſſe and beauty of Gods Ordinances: Now (alas) a man without the experimental work of grace upon his ſoul, can no more be affected with theſe, than a blinde man with colours; *Cant.* 1, 1. *Becauſe of thy ointments poured forth, therefore the virgins*

virgins love thee; Chriſt in his Ordinances doth as *Mary*, *Open a box of ointment*, which diffuſeth a ſpiritual ſavour in Church-Aſſemblies to the godly, and this only the experimental Chriſtian feels. *Chryſoſtom* ſometimes in his Sermons ſpeaking of the more hidden and choice principles of the Chriſtian Religion, uſeth this phraſe, *Sciunt initiati quid dico*, Thoſe that are initiated or admitted into our myſteries know what I mean. Thus alſo may the Miniſters of God preaching either of the bitterneſs of ſinne, the ſadneſſe of ſpirituall deſertions, or the fulneſs of Chriſt, the ſweetneſſe of his fellowſhip and communion, ſay, The practiſed exercised Chriſtian knoweth what I mean; formal cuſtomary Chriſtians are ſtrangers unto that vertue and efficacy which is communicated in ſpiritual Ordinances. *Cant.* 4. 12. The Church is compared to *a garden ſhut up, a fountain ſealed*, which is to be underſtood, not onely in reſpect of the defence and protection God vouchſafeth his Church, that none can deſtroy her; but alſo, becauſe ſtrangers and wicked men are not able to drink of her delicacies, or ſmell of her ſweetneſs. A ſpiritual Sermon is a *Fountain ſealed up*, the ſpiritual adminiſtration of a Sacrament, is a *Garden incloſed*; formal notional Chriſtians underſtand not or perceive the full ſweetneſs thereof. There were many people in a throng and croud about our Saviour, but the infirm woman only, felt the efficacy come from him: ſo many may attend the Ordinances, frequent the Aſſemblies, but ſome few only finde the inward power of Chriſt derived unto their ſouls. As therefore *Thomas*, though upon an ill ground, ſaid, He would not believe Chriſt to be riſen, unleſſe he *ſaw his wounds, and put his fingers into them*; ſo neither do thou believe thy eſtate to be good and ſound, unleſſe thou mayeſt ſee and feel the efficacy of Chriſt in his Ordinances upon thee. *Auſtin* ſpeaks experimentally of his ſatneſs and ſweetneſs in Gods Ordinances, *aliquando intromittis me, Domine, in affectum multum inuſitatum introrſus, ad neſcio quam dulcedinem, quæ ſi perficiatur in me, neſcio quid erit, quod vita iſta non erit.*

Auſtin *lib.* 10. *confeſ. cap.* 40.

II. Is taken off from needleſs and vain diſputations, to look more into his own heart.

Secondly, *By this practical knowledge and exerciſe thou wilt be taken off from all needleſſe and vain diſputations in matters of Religion, and wilt be more ſolicitous at home in thy own heart.* In former times when the people of God were buſie about the touchſtone and trial of grace in themſelves they did not launch out into ſuch deep and unprofitable Queſtions, but now of late ſince believers have buſied themſelves in diſputes and controverſies, and new opinions, this practical knowledge of grace is much neglected, you ſhall finde men ſooner *diſputing about faith than living by faith, talking of heavenly-mindedneſſe, than being ſo indeed.* Thus the trees in Gods garden ſprout up into ſuckers and barren boughs, and bear little fruit upon them, 1 *Tim.* 6. 4. The Apoſtle doth excellently deſcribe ſuch a temper, he cals it *Doting about Queſtions*, or as it is in the Greek, *Sick and languiſhing*. Even as much fretting and vexation conſumeth the fleſh of the body, ſo do proud and vain affectations of new opinions pine away the ſoul. What is this but to think that *a ſtone may become bread*, and *a ſerpent fiſh*? As it is a Miniſters duty to preach only thoſe things that are profitable, *The ſower went out to ſow good ſeed*, not tares, or empty chaff; ſo it is alſo required of private Chriſtians, that they do think, conferre of, and ſtudy thoſe things only that may edifie and practically build up their ſouls. I would not hereby diſcourage an indeavour in Chriſtians to grow in knowledge. The Apoſtle reproveth ſome for being babes, and that he could not ſpeak unto them as ſpiritual but as carnal, only they muſt know, that faith hath efficacious purifying acts as well as knowing acts, and therefore our increaſe muſt be equal both *quoad notitiam*, and *efficaciam*, in reſpect of knowledge and efficacy alſo. A Chriſtian may grow either *Quoad amplitudinem ſcientiæ* or *efficaciam ſcientiæ*, the inlargement of his knowledge both in reſpect of the matter, he may know more things than he did, as alſo in the manner, more clearly, evidently and firmly than he did, or elſe in the efficacy of his knowledge, though he do not more things than he did, yet he knoweth them more practically, they have a greater influence upon his heart and affections

ſections, they move and inflame him more than ever they did; now though the former way of increaſe be neceſſary and pleaſing to *God*, yet this is much more. Take heed then that we be not like *Pharaohs* lean Kine, that devour many Queſtions, but yet are as ſtarved and ill-favoured as before. When one came with a curious Queſtion to our Saviour, asking him, *Whether many ſhould be ſaved?* How pertinently doth our Saviour anſwer him, *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate.* This therefore diſcovers the neceſſity of importunate preſſing and urging practical knowledge upon people in theſe dayes, *Vbi malunt homines diſputare quàm vivere*, they had rather argue than live. As little boyes in ſport ſtrive who ſhall ſtrike moſt ſparks out of their iron, not intending to kindle thereby for their uſe, ſo do Chriſtians ſtrive who ſhall ſtrike out the moſt ſubtil and fineſt ſpun-notions, not intending the profit of their ſouls therein.

III. And to attain to the end of knowledge, *viz.* to do.

Thirdly, *By this practical experience, a Chriſtian ſhall attain to the end of all knowledge, which is to do. If ye know theſe things, bleſſed are you if ye do them.* It was ſaid of ſome people that they had money only to tell it, they made no other uſe of it; it is as vain when we have knowledge in matter of religion only to know, *Tit.* 1. it is called, *The acknowledging of the truth after godlineſſe*; inſomuch that in the Scripture-phraſe, *They who have not the practical power of knowledge, are denied to have any knowledge at all.* Hence are wicked men ſo often called *fools*, and ſaid *not to know God.* By this means a private Chriſtian may be ſaid to know more of *God*, than a learned Doctor that hath nothing but orthodoxy; for you may have an orthodox learned man write and preach admirably about juſtifying faith, converſion, &c. yet in regard of the practicall knowledge of theſe things no-wayes comparable to ſome private man or woman, who feel the power of theſe things upon their own hearts. It is diſputed, Whether Divinity be ſpeculative or practical, and it is reſolved by many upon good grounds, that it is practical, there being nothing in all Religion but what is to be improved for practice one way or other, οὐ λόγων μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔργα τοῦ Χριστιανοῦ. It is well done that orthodoxy and true Doctrine be defended by books, diſputations and Sermons; but above all things we are to indeavour that our life anſwer our Chriſtian profeſſion. When Chriſt looked upon the fig-tree that had only leaves on it, *he curſed it.* To him that knoweth how to do good, and doth it not, there is the greater ſinne, as if he ſhould have ſaid, ſaith *Bernard*, *Sumenti cibum, & non digerenti, perniciosum eſt ei*, to him that takes meat, and doth not digeſt it, it is very dangerous. There muſt be true Doctrine, and a godly life joyned together. *Cyril* conſidering *Abrahams* ſervant, who gave to *Rebecca ear-rings* and *braceleti*, applieth it to Chriſt and his Church, who vouchſafeth to her both true faith that cometh by hearing, and a godly life the practice or work of our hands.

IV. And be ſetled in the truth to endure perſecution.

Fourthly, *By this experimental knowledge a man will be ſetled in the truth, and endure all perſecution rather than forſake it.* He will believe no fallacies or ſophiſms, he will not be frighted out of it by any dangers. Its called taſting of *God* and his Word, and the rule is, *Non eſt diſputandum de guſtu*, there is no diſputing againſt taſte. The ſenſe of taſte and feeling do herein differ from the other ſenſes, that they are joyned really to the objects themſelves, whereas ſeeing and hearing do receive onelb the intentional ſpecies, and therefore cannot make ſuch a real and powerfull impreſſion, as is in taſting or feeling. *Pauls* experimental *knowing whom he did believe*, made him boldly to ſpeak: what makes men have a monethly or yearly faith, change their opinions as often as there garments, but becauſe they have not felt the power of truth upon their own ſoul? The Schoolmen ſpeak of a gift of the holy Ghoſt which they call *Sapience*, which they define to be *Quoddam lumen divinorum, ſub quo videntur & guſtantur divina per experimentum*, A certain light of divine things, whereby they are ſeen and taſted by experience: or others deſcribe it, A contemplation of God out of love, with a certain experimental ſweetneſs in the affections. But whatſoever

The cauſe of changes in Religion.

soever their conceit is about this, it is certain the Apostle *Heb.* 5. 14. would have us *by use to have our senses exercised to discerne both good and evil.* Where the Apostle attributeth to the minde αἰσθητικα, which are properly the Organs of sense in the body, but he applieth it to the soul, because of the intuitive and experimental knowledge the soul ought to have in good things; and therefore he speaks of use and custom which the people of God have in this spiritual discerning. No wonder then that faith is called *Heb.* 11. ὑπόστασις, *The real subsistence of things believed* in the soul. (*Aristotle* calls the thick cloud, that by the repercussion of the sunne beames makes the Rainbow, ὑπόστασις, and the Rainbow ἴριδα,) and ἔλεγχος, an undeniable conviction of the minde of man, because where this grace is operatively upon the soul, it makes a real impression. Hence also the whol work and way of grace is compared to life, *Gal.* 2. 20. because it is most real, it is not in imagination and fancy. That is notable *Heb.* 13. 9. *Be not carried about with divers doctrines, for it is good to have the heart established with grace;* Where the Apostle makes grace and godlinesse to stablish and settle the heart; and therefore men that are led aside into errors, are said to be carried about with them, a Metaphor from chaff and straw, which because of its emptinesse and lightnesse is blown this way and that way. Thus a man that is empty of grace, and not consolidated by the power of it upon his heart, he runneth from one opinion to another, without any stay at all. Therefore a savoury inward knowledge of divine truths, would be an excellent *ballast* in the soul. And as it would thus keep the heart firm to the truth, so it would unite the heart to holy things as the best and sweetest, without hypocrisie, double-mindednesse and inconstancy, and this is much to be considered, thy heart is one while for good things, another while as vehemently for the world, thy heart is divided between the Creator and the creature, how cometh this about? for want of real and experimental knowledge of the goodnesse of God, *He that drinketh of this water* (saith Christ) *shall never thirst more*, that is, *Sitî totalis indigentiæ*, with a thirst of total want. Now how great a mercy it is to be kept from that double-mindednesse the Apostle speaks of, To be like a wave that is sometimes tossed up high to the heavens, and then presently sinks down low in the sea; or like the Grashoppers that leap up towards heaven, but immediately fall down to the ground: When temptations of profit and pleasure come, how easily can they be repulsed by an heart who feels better things? So that till you have an inward feeling and joy about the things of God, you are not able to withstand other temptations, but you will alwayes be striving to make possible that which our saviour hath pronounced so impossible, *To serve God and Mammon.*

I shall in the next place shew you what impediments and destructive principles there are to hinder us in this experimental proof, which we are to make of our selves. For this duty here pressed of *examining and proving of our selves* is like the compound that the high-Priest was to make, consisting of choice materials. *Now one dangerous principle is, when we go to prove and examine our selves, being prepossessed with self love and carnal confidence*, and where this foundation is laid, its impossible to make any good superstruction. Hence all the piercing and discovering Sermons which the Prophets and Christ made unto the Jews and Pharisees, could make no battery, give no shaking to their rotten foundation, and all because they had carnal confidence, and vain trust in themselves. Therefore when thou settest upon this duty, thou must say, "Lord, I come not in any love "of my self, I can as easily judge and condemn my self for an hypocrite (if such "I shall be found) as approve my self for an upright one: O Lord, it shall not "seem an hard thing to me, if I perceive that I have thus long, thus many years "laboured in vain. O Lord, it shall be so farre from being matter of discontent, "as that I shall rejoyce, if now at length, I may be put into a sound and right

Impediments of an experimental proof in our selves.

1. Self-love and carnal confidence, or temptations to unbelief.

"way of holineſſe. But how many go to ſearch the grounds, principles and ends of their actions with as much negligence, as ſome officers do alehouſes and unlawful meetings? they are unwilling to ſee the *hidden works of darkneſſe*, Prov. 28.26. *He that truſteth in his own heart is a fool.* It is deſperate folly to believe thy heart will deal truly with thee. Hence the Prophet *Jeremiah* calleth it *deſperately wicked*, or crafty, which will beguile and deceive thee without much caution, inſomuch that this duty of examination is but ridiculous, and a meer mockery, unleſs we reſolve to become impartial Judges. It is like diſputing with the Church of *Rome*, who hold the true Church cannot erre, and then that ſhe is the true Church, whereby ſhe becomes incurable and without hope of healing, *Prov.* 16. 2. *Every mans way is clean in his own eyes, but the Lord pondereth the hearts.* This is one way to blinde us, but then we may runne into another extream, *by temptation of unbelief*; and thus when a godly ſoul ſet againſt it ſelf, and taking every thing for hypocriſie that he ſhall do, if in this caſe he goeth to examine himſelf, he will alſo draw falſe concluſions; as the carnal man fails the former way, ſo the tempted Chriſtian doth the other way; The one believeth every thing to be done with a good heart, the other nothing; But as a man that would ſee his face in the water, muſt make no commotion or trouble at all; ſo he that would rightly judge his heart, muſt take heed of carnal confidence on one ſide, and unbelief on the other ſide

Temptations to unbelief.

2. An erroneous principle.

A ſecond dangerous principle is, *When we conclude that action to be done well, which is for the matter good, whatſoever the principles, ends, motives or manner be.* This deſtroyeth many thouſands, *Jehu* did that which was according to Gods will, and this made him bold ſo ſay he is zealous for God, *Come ſee my zeal*, ſaith he; but though his actions were very great, and of high concernment to the Church of God, yet God would be avenged on him for theſe, *Hoſ.* 1.4. who would think God would be avenged on *Jehu* for diſpoſſeſſing *Jeroboam*, killing *Baals* Prieſt, making ſo great a Reformation as he did? But becauſe he himſelf did not do theſe things with an upright heart, therefore he is threatned. The Phariſees had an external righteouſneſs, but there was a great gulf between them and true godlineſs. Hence they are called *Vipers*, which though they have a glorious skin, yet are full of poiſon; and how holy ſoever they appeared, yet like the Serpent they eat of the duſt of the earth, live upon earthly advantages. A man therefore had need be Eagle-eyed, or like *Ezekiels* living creatures full of eyes, that would ſee into the bottom of his wayes: Thy profeſſion, thy family-duties, thy religious performances are plainly viſible, every one that runneth may read them; but the ends and motives are ſecret and latent, the foundations and roots of things lie under ground; The firſt letters in the book are garniſhed with many gaies, and we can hardly tell what they are. This made *Paul* diſtinguiſh between a *Jew outwardly, and a Jew inwardly, circumciſion of the fleſh, and circumciſion of the heart*; Eſpecially the end, and motive that doth ſpecifie and diſtinguiſh moral actions; Two may be in a family, both pray, both mourne for ſinne, yet becauſe one is done upon a pure motive and principle from God and to God, therefore it is right; and the other, becauſe its defective in one of theſe, is rejected: who then is ſufficient and prepared for ſo great a duty as this is?

3. Trying our ſelves by falſe rules.

A third way of miſguidance is, *When we try our ſelves by falſe Rules, when we weigh with falſe weights*; This duty of examining and proving ſuppoſeth there is ſome ſure ſtandard, which if we go by, we are ſure not to be deceived, now that rule is the word of God; but as in matter of Doctrine men have left the Scriptures, the ſure rule, and taken up antiquity, univerſality, tradition, and the like for their guide, and by this means have fallen into the ditch; ſo in matters of godlineſſe, when we ſhould try our ſelves according to the characters and

ſigns

signs that the Scripture deciphers, we take up principles in the world, the applause of others, the conversation of most in the world; And thus it is with us, as men in an Hospital, because every one is either wounded or lame, or some way diseased, therefore none are offensive to each other.

The fourth and last dangerous way to miscarriage, is, *When we mistake about the object matter which is to be discovered, when we mistake what godlinesse is, and so think it to be in us, when it is not*; And in this is the grand imposture; men take a good nature, morality, civility, the common graces of Gods Spirit for godlines, and when they see they have these, they conclude all is well. This is as if a man digging for gold should take lead or copper for it, and think himself rich, because he hath these. He therefore that would not be deceived in this great matter, must consider what the Scripture makes the nature and properties of godlines, and must conclude godlines is no lesse or inferior a thing than the Scripture makes it. If a man shall not reach up to these scripture-directions, he is but a Glow-worm, though he seem to be the Sun; but more of these things hereafter. 4. A mistaking about the object matter of our enquiry.

Let the Use be, to set us with all diligence, fear and trembling about this work: How much better is it to eat and drink, to pray and hear with fear and trembling of heart, than to sit down secure when there is no cause? Believe not your own hearts in times of danger, or fears of death, or any sudden fits, You see *Pharaoh* and *Ahab* can cry out of sinne under the judgements of God; but attend to pure motives only; In the civil law no credit is given to a testimony that is given by one upon the wrack, because it is supposed, the torture and pain will make him say any thing to be eased. And thus in times of trouble and fear, even a false and unsound heart will say any thing, hoping for some relief. Howsoever in this life we may satisfie our selves and others with a profession and external diligence in holy duties, yet at the day of Judgement we shall be astonished and silent before God. In the Parable, the man that was at the feast *without a Wedding Garment*, when expostulated with, was presently *speechlesse*, he pretended not poverty, or difficulty to get a wedding Garment, but was immediately speechlesse, even as if he had had a muzzle put on his mouth, as the Word signifieth. At that day all the crooked and subtil windings, all the false pretexts of thy own heart, will be so discovered, that thou canst not but see it, and acknowledge it. *Use.*

SERMON. III.

Reſolving, Whether Hypocrites may not attain to ſome meaſure of practical Knowledge in matters of Religion?

2 Cor. 13. 5.

Examine your ſelves, prove your own ſelves, &c.

I Shall abſolve this Doctrine, in handling of one practical Queſtion, and that is, *Whether hypocrites may not attain to ſome meaſure of practical knowledge in matters of Religion?* Is that *ignis*, which in the godly is *Calidus & lucidus*, in hypocrites *Lucidus tantùm?* Can unregenerate men go no further than to meet knowledge and illumination? may not this oil poured upon their heads fall down upon the wills and affections alſo. As they have imperfect knowledge, ſo may they not have inchoate affections about good things? and if they may, wherein ſhall we be able to give ſound differences, or exact bounds and limits betweene the practical knowledge in the one and the other? This is a point of univerſal uſefulneſs; and for the opening of this, conſider there are three general ſorts of men who go under the name and title of Chriſtians, all pretending a right and intereſt to all the priviledges of the Covenant of Grace.

Three ſorts of men go under the name of Chriſtians.

The firſt is of thoſe who have onely the name and outward Ordinances of the Chriſtian Religion, but have not the leaſt influence or power from it, *In works they deny him.* Theſe are like ſome Apothecaries boxes that may have the inſcription of ſome cordial, but within is deadly poyſon; They are in names Chriſtians, in actions heathens; and the Prophet called the Rulers of the Jews for their wickedneſs, though circumciſed, *Princes of Sodom and Gomorrah.* Theſe are (as a Father ſaid) *Sine Chriſto Chriſtiani*, yea, *contra Chriſtum*, Chriſtians without Chriſt, yea, againſt Chriſt. Howſoever in ſome reſpects they may be ſaid to be better than Heathens, in which ſenſe *Arnobius* ſaid, *Melior invenietur judicio Chriſtianus fornicator, quàm caſtiſſimus idololatra.* A Chriſtian even in fornication is better than a moſt chaſt idolater; yet in other reſpects he is far worſe, ſuch as theſe are have no real and ſaving benefit by Chriſt, for *Non actibus, ſed finibus penſantur officia*; they being like dead corpſes, that have ſweet fragrant flowers ſtrewed upon them, but yet are not in the leaſt degree made more ſavoury by them; and certainly it is an aggravation of the wickedneſſe of ſuch, that when moral Philoſophy, and the principles of reaſon have been able to cure the outſide ungodlineſs of many men; The truths of Chriſtianity, which have a power to regenerate, and to work a new nature, ſhould not ſo much as change the skinne of men. Yet if we caſt our eye upon the greateſt number of thoſe who yet are baptized into the name of Chriſt, ſhall we not finde them in the rank of thoſe, who have onely a name in Chriſtianity, and nothing elſe, who derive not the leaſt efficacy or power from Chriſt, but are as a dead hand, or a withered branch, whoſe lives are a continual blaſphemy to the Goſpel of Chriſt?

1. Scandalous Chriſtians.

2. Temporary Believers.

2. Another ſort is of thoſe, who beſides the name, have alſo ſome influence and

and operations of the Spirit of God upon them, and many of them are in such a way as an *embryo* to a childe, onely they prove abortive, *Matth.* 13. The second and third kinde of hearers were in this number; Divines, as they attribute to the former sort a meer historical faith, such as the devils have, though it may be thought they have no faith at all in any respect or notion, unlesse it be an humane assent; so they give to these later a temporary faith, which they make to differ from historical thus, because it is carried with some kinde of affections, both in *revelantem*, the person revealing it, who is God, and *in rem revelatam*, the matter revealed, whereas historical faith is without any affections at all: now although these who are in this condition, be in respect of their estate carnal and unregenerate, yet they differ from the former, as much as copper from dung, and howsoever comparatively to the godly, they are but counterfeit and false, yet they are as pearls and stars respectively to prophane men, for these have a practical experience of some power of divine truths upon them (and howsoever the Spirit of Christ *doth not dwell in them*, because they are not *members of the body of Christ*, and as the soul of a man works not as a form to any part that is not united to the body; so neither doth the Spirit of Christ operate savingly, but to the body of Christ) yet the Spirit of God works as an outward efficient cause breathing upon them. The Spirit of God works not in them, *Ut in domicilio*, but *ut in organo*, an instrument, which he useth for the good of the Church; Now in this sort there is a great latitude, some having a greater measure of these workings than others, as the third kinde of ground went beyond the second.

A third sort is of those who are indeed incorporated into Christs body, and so do receive vivifical influence from him, that are in him, as a living branch in the Vine, as a living member in the body, and so are animated by that Spirit, though with an infinite disproportion, which Christ himself their head is; these are *born of God*, have an *immortal seed* in them, shall never perish, because Christ will not lose any of his mystical members; and these onely have a proper, clear and full experimental knowledge of Christs sufferings and resurrection upon their soul; and these do differ from the former not gradually, as some thought, but specifically; a regenerate man, though the lowest in that kinde, differeth from the hypocrite, though the highest in his kinde, as much as the heavens, which according to some Phylosophers is made of a fifth essence, from the sublunary bodies, and the works of Gods Spirit upon hypocrites, if increased never so high, would not come up to saving grace, as copper will never be gold. In the next place observe, That howsoever hypocrites, or temporary believers, do not attain to that which is indeed saving, yet great are the works of Gods Spirit upon them, and they have many experimental motions of the truths in religion wrought on them. I will choose out some material ones, to awaken you, and make you tremble, least you be not in a form above them, yea, happily many have not come up so far as they. 3. True Believers

In the first place, *They have an experimental knowledge of the common gifts of Gods Spirit; They feel what it is to have assistance from God in these administrations.* Thus *Matth.* 7. *Have we not prophesied and cast out devils in thy Name?* They did it by the power of Christ, and virtue from him; and although we told you, this was not the whole scope of the Apostle here, to prove Christ was in them, by the miracles and wonderfull works done amongst them, yet this was included as part: Thus *Saul* had another spirit, not in the way of sanctification, but political administration, whereby he had an experimental knowledge of Gods power and assistance in his place. And thus many a Christian may finde great assistance in duties, in parts and abilities, and may finde the power of the Lord going along with him; but this is nothing to sanctification. And it is to be feared that in these times this is the furthest practicall experience of Gods help that most have; if it be not so, why is it that people do so abound in opi- How far hypocrites may attain in practical experimental knowledge. 1. To the common gifts of the Spirit.

nions, diſputations, and are ſo little in mortification and vivification, they ſprout but into ſuckers and leaves, not into fruit; and we ſee in the *Corinthians*, that naturally men are more prone to deſire the gifts of Gods Spirit, which are for publick adminiſtration, than the graces of ſanctification. But (alas) to be a good preacher, a good diſputant, to be able to make good enlarged prayers, do argue only *Spiritum moventum*, not *inhabitantem*, the Spirit of God breathing on thee not dwelling in thee; neither doth God beſtow this on thee for any love to thy ſoul, but becauſe of his Church, as nurſes to Princes children feed on delicate fare, not for their own ſake, but for the childrens ſake to whom they give milk: Hence it is that they preach that Goſpel, that faith, that Chriſt to others, which they do not partake of, and ſo are like thoſe poſts in high wayes, with hands on them, directing to ſuch or ſuch a way, but they never ſtirre out of the place they are in: Oh therefore that the Miniſters of God could become ſons of thunder in this matter, you have had experience of God inabling, inlarging, increaſing the common gifts of his Spirit, but what have you felt of Gods renewing, ſanctifying and healing of your luſts?

2. The bitterneſs of ſin.

Secondly, *They may have ſome practical experience of the bitterneſſe of ſinne, and the terrours that come by it.* We may not think that the terrours upon *Cain* and *Judas*, were by a meer natural light of conſcience, for ſuch could quickly be extinguiſhed, but there was alſo the Spirit of God convincing and ſetting ſinne home upon the conſcience, Hence *Rom.* 8. 15. the Spirit of God is called, *The Spirit of bondage and fear*, becauſe it works ſuch fear and trouble in the heart of a ſinner, not the ſinfulneſs of them, but the troubleſome motions and ſtirrings of them in our ſouls: Thus we may not ſay, that thoſe humiliations of *Ahab* and the *Iſraelites*, when they cryed out to God becauſe of their ſins, were by the meer power of their natural free-will, but by the common work of the Spirit of God; and thus thoſe many gripes and wounds of heart, which are inflicted upon many in the preaching of the Word, whereby the memory of their ſins is like Wormwood and gall to them, floweth from the Spirit of God; whatſoever is wrought inſtrumentally by the Word, is efficiently from Gods Spirit; and this experience confirmeth that many men, who yet are not made new creatures, have an hell ſometimes in their hearts, their conſciences can tell that it is a bitter thing to ſinne againſt God. Yea, becauſe the time hath been, when they have had ſuch wounds and blows, they therefore conclude, that they were in the new birth and although they brought forth nothing but winde in all their pain, yet they rejoyce as if *a man-childe, a new creature were born.* It may not therefore be denied, but even one who is a wilde olive, and not yet implanted in Chriſt, may have the inward feeling of Gods diſpleaſure for ſinne, may be able to tell you the time hath been they could not eat, or drink, or ſleep, but cryed out, Oh their ſins, ſins, ſins; but yet do not demonſtrate Chriſt dwelling in them.

3. Deſires and longing affections after things that are good.

Thirdly, *They may have practical experience of deſires and longing affections after things that are good.* They having ſudden and confuſed apprehenſions of the goodneſs of ſpiritual things, may have ſome ſuch general affections and deſires after them; In ſuch a temper they cry out, *Joh.* 6. 34. *Lord give us evermore this bread*; Chriſt told them, *He was the manna and bread of life*, and ſpeaks of the benefits that come to ſuch who eat and feed on him, it is bread not onely that nouriſheth, but giveth life (which no other bread doth) Hereupon in a confuſed manner with ſome good affections, they cry, *Give us evermore this bread*; They were like *Peter* in a transfiguration, not knowing what they ſaid; Thus *Balaam* he is in ſuch a transfiguration, for he foreſeeing the happineſs of the people of God, *Wiſhes to die the death of the righteous*; yea, is affected with the ſpiritual Ordinances and worſhip of God among them, *How beautifull are thy tabernacles, O Iſrael?* (ſaith he) in thoſe ſudden flaſhes upon him; How often are people deluded in this, becauſe in ſome fits they have good affections and deſires.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, *They have a practical experience of some sweetnesse and joy in the Ordinances of God, and some assurance of Gods favour flowing thence from.* Thus *Matth.* 13. *v.*20. *They received the word with joy*; and *Johns* hearers were said for a while to *rejoyce in his light*; *Ezekiel* was to his hearers, *As a pleasant Song*; And *Hebr.*6. Those, who had not things accompanying salvation, are said, *To taste of the word of God*; They did taste it as *Jonathan* did a little honey, but had not the full of it. Whereas the people of God are said to eat his flesh, and drink his bloud, yea, rivers of living water are said to flow out of their belly; and from these experimental tastings arise some confidence of their condition, which is declared in the foolish virgins, who with much boldnesse, and without any suspition of their want of oil, *Go out to meet the Bridegroom*; Now this is thought a great matter, if so be their hearts have been at any time sweetned and mollified in the Ordinances of God. 4. From Sweetnesse and joy in the Ordinances.

Fifthly, *They have such an experimentall working, as that it hath influence upon their lives and conversations, it makes some alteration and change there.* 2 Pet 2.20. Those Apostates, who returned to their own vomit, and so never had true grace, are said to *escape the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of Christ*, and therefore they are called *Virgins*, Matth 25. though *foolish ones*, because they were kept from the prophaneness of others; Now, a man would think this were all in all, what would you have more? *Those that stole steal no more*, Those that were *drunk* are so no more, those that were *filthy* are so no more; but yet as the Swine are Swine for their natures, though washed from their mire; So are they unregenerate and filthy still, though outwardly cleansed: By these instances you see, that even men, who are not in the faith after a sanctifying and saving manner, may yet have many seeming works of grace on their soul. 5. An alteration and change in their lives.

But yet there is a difference many wayes, I shall but briefly and generally touch at the differences, because they will come in more properly in the counterfeits. The difference between the experimental knowledge of the unsound Christian and the regenerate

In the first place, *There is a difference in the very nature of them.* That which is in the godly differs from that in the most refined Hypocrite, as much as gold from drosse, or true pearls from counterfeits; Hence *Matth.*13. The fourth ground, or kinde of hearers, are onely said to have *an honest and good heart.* So that the soil of one ground differs essentially from the other, and this may be abundantly cleared, in that the promises of Justification and eternal life are not made to any kinde of faith that an hypocrite hath, but they are made to the faith of a godly man, though it be in the least degree; so that a little Infant in true grace, may by the hand of faith receive Christ, when a Gyant-like hypocrite, cannot take him: but more of this in time. 1. In the nature of them.

A second difference is *in clearnesse and evidence*; That which they do know about the things of God is in a more confused manner, because that light in them is but by way of flash, and a sudden enlightning, not as permanent and abiding light in them; a little sip or taste of heavenly things cannot enable a man exactly to comprehend the excellency and worth of them. Therefore they see these things, as the man not perfectly cured of his blindnesse, *That saw men walking by like trees.* It is true the holiest that are do but see in part; and *David* prayeth, *That his eyes may be opened to see the wonderfull things in Gods law.* Thus *Paul* also prayeth for the *Ephesians*, who yet *were light in the Lord*, *that their eyes might be opened, and they have the spirit of wisdome and revelation*: but yet is not like the purblinde hypocrite, who doth by a guesse rather judge of godly things, than any way else. 2. In clearnesse and evidence.

A third difference is *in the operation*, for the experience of the godly inclineth them spiritually, makes them more holy, carrieth them out of themselves, whereas all that is done upon the unsound Christian ends in carnal effects, it makes him puffed up, vainly confident in himself. Thus the Pharisees, though they did abound in the duties of the Law, yet their greatest corruptions did run out there. 3. In operation.

Hence

Hence a Phariſee praying, a Phariſee giving alms, was a Phariſee in all the power of his corruption. *John* 3. *He that is not born of the Spirit is fleſh*; and this fleſh doth extend not onely to his ſins and corruptions, but alſo to his duties; Therefore obſerve whether the duties that for the matter of them be ſpiritual, are alſo ſpiritual in the effect, that they leave thee more humble, outed of thy ſelf, more depending upon Chriſt and his grace, more mortified to the world, and the temptations thereof. It may fall out that a mans religious duties be the ſtage upon which all a mans luſts do eminently act, as the Phariſees who did all things *to be ſeen of men*.

Uſe. We might be larger in giving you ſymptomatical differences, but becauſe they will fall in upon the ſeveral particulars, or in the next Doctrine about the ſigns and characters of grace, I forbear, concluding with an Uſe of Exhortation, not to be too credulous and facile in believing our ſelves to be good and right. Woe full may the coſenings and ſupplantations of thy own heart be. What may you not be? What may you not do, and yet be unſound? Oh how burdenſome will it be when men ſhall ſay, Lord, Have we not been enlarged in thy ſervice? Lord, Have we not mourned in thy preſence? Have we not rejoyced in the good Word that hath been preached to us? and yet God to return this, Inaſmuch as you did it not upon ſound and ſincere grounds, you did it not to me, *Depart yee workers of iniquity*. Draw off all your thoughts, diſputes, meditations from other points, and minde this one neceſſary thing. Thou diſputeſt Whether there be a true Church, a true Miniſtery, true Ordinances, Oh conſider, Whether there be true grace in thy heart. The Phariſees kept the feaſt of purifications, or cleanſing of the Temple, but were foul and unclean in their own ſouls As God declared his inviſible Attributes of wiſdom, power and goodneſſe by the viſible works he did in the Creation of the world, ſo do thou manifeſt thas ſecret and hidden efficacy of Chriſt in thee, by a powerfull and vigorous life of godlineſſe; The ſe are miracles that will confirm thee to come from God. Good is that of *Auſtin*, when pride tickleth thee and would puff thee up, ſay, *Quem te putas, bircum forte novit te Deus*, Thou thinkeſt thy ſelf a ſheep, but it may be God knoweth thee to be a goat; and again, when deſpair and unbelief aſſaults thee, ſay, *Hircum te putas, ovem te forte Deus novit*. Thou thinkeſt thy ſelf a Goat, but God knoweth thee to be a ſheep it may be. Not as if we perſwaded you to doubting or commended uncertainty, as the Papiſts do, but an holy fear and trembling to make our calling and election ſure, which the Apoſtle *Peter* doth.

SERM. IV.

Shewing that Aſſurance may be had.

2 COR. 13. 5.

Examine your ſelves, &c.

WE come to the ſecond Doctrine, which though implied only, yet is of neceſſary uſe. The Apoſtle preſſing them to try, whether they be in Chriſt, and in faith or no, doth thereby ſuppoſe, that there are ſuch ſigns and ſymptomes of this ſtate and condition, that a man diligently attending thereunto by the help of Gods ſpirit, may come to be aſſured that he is in ſuch a

ſtate;

state, for whereas *Becanus* the Papist would argue against Assurance from the Text, That the *Corinthians* were uncertain of their spiritual estate, otherwise it had been a vain thing and absurd to exhort a man to examine himselfe about that of which he is certain; The answer is easie, That although they might *de facto* not have assurance, yet the Apostle his urging this upon them doth evidently suppose it possible, and not only so, but their duty to have it. Although none do hold such a certainty in this life, as the Saints in Heaven have, which excludeth all weaknesses; Therefore the certainty Gods people do reach unto hath its degrees, and doth admit of changes.

The Doctrine,

There are such characters and signes of the state of grace laid down in Scripture, that a godly man by the faithfull application of them to himself, being thereunto guided and enabled by the Spirit of God, may be assured that he is in such a state. *Observ.* 2.

In the Doctrine there are three main particulars must be spoken unto and opened: 1. Assurance and Certainty: 2. The Signs and Marks of Grace: 3. The work of Gods Spirit in this; and much excellent practicall matter will flow from every one of these fountains; and marvel not if I be large ere this subject be fully finished, for it is a subject of the greatest concernment that may be, and if men be willing to spend so much time and cost in evidencing their Titles and Proprieties in Land or earthly Goods, how diligent should we be about heavenly?

I shall therefore first speak to the matter of Assurance or Certainty; and for this take notice of these particulars; Twelve Propositions about Assurance.

First, A Certainty or Assurance may be had of a thing divers waies, as *There is a certainty of sense*, such as *Thomas* desired to have by putting his fingers into Christs wounds; and this Philosophers say is infallible about its proper object if there be no defect or impediment in the sensitive faculty. 1.

Again, *There is a certainty of Science or Knowledge*, and that is either of first principles which are assented unto by all, without any discourse or debate at all, or else of such conclusions as are deduced from those principles.

Lastly, *There is a certainty arising from the Authority of those who do declare or witnesse such things*, for the testimony of him whom I believe to be the supream truth and infallible about such or such things, doth beget a firme and sure perswasion that they are true; now this Authority is two-fold, *either Humane*; and as the men who witnesse are for number few or lesse, or for quality more or lesse worthy of credit, so more or less is that Certainty; and this breeds an humane faith, or moral certainty only (Now it is much to be feared that the greatest part of Protestants even in matters of Religion, have no more than this humane faith, believing upon no higher a motive than humane tradition, or the authority of man) *or else it is Divine*, from Gods authority and revelation, and this begets an undoubted assent which cannot be over-mastred by any contrary temptation, Hence it is that this certainty of faith is above all certainty of sence or reason, because the ground of it is more firm and immutable; and although the nature of things believed be far above our understandings (as in the Doctrine of the Trinity and incarnation of Christ) yet the testimony of them is clear and evident, so that the certainty of faith may not be called obscure, as Papists term it, but clear and evident; for that is true which *Aquinas* saith, No man believeth that which he doth not see to be credible, and therefore in every thing believed there is *evidentia credibilitatis*, a clearnesse and evidence of the grounds why I do believe, though there be not alwayes *evidentia rei*, a clearness of the thing assented to; now if you ask, To what kinde of certainty is that reduced, which the people of God have about their being in Christ, and in the state of grace; I answer it is a mixt or compounded certainty, partly a certainty of faith, and partly of sense and inexperience, which sense is spiritual, and wrought by

the Spirit of God in us, so that it doth farre transcend probable conjectures and moral perswasions arising in us, because of such bodily affections or dispositions of joy and grief, which we sometimes finde in our selves, and hypocrites also are many times made partakers thereof.

2. A man may be assured he is wicked.

Secondly, *A man may be assured that the condition he liveth in is damnable, and such a wicked man is to be assured of that as long as he continueth in that life, he is without the state of grace:* So that we may truly say to many the contrary in this Text, *Examine your selves, try your selves, whether you be in the flesh and power of sinne or no; Know ye not that the devil dwelleth and reigneth in you?* The Apostle saith, *Gal.* 5. 19. *The works of the flesh are manifest*, and therefore such who live in the practice and habitual custome of grosse sins, may and ought to conclude unto their own soules that they are in the state of gall and wormwood, and that they have no portion in Christ or his benefits; and O that such would make such practical conclusions and judgements against their own selves, it might be an effectual preparation to awaken and rouse them out of their security, whereas through self-flattery, and a groundlesse perswasion of Gods mercy, they utterly destroy themselves.

None can be sure they are Reprobates.

But although a man may for the present conclude that he is in a state of sinne and death, *Yet none may assure themselves that they are reprobated by God*, and that they have such signs upon them that they can never be saved, because no man can come to such a certainty out of the Scripture; and as for a particular revelation, as God doth not assure believers by any such extraordinary way, much lesse may we think he will the reprobate by that way. We therefore speak of the present estate of a wicked man, let such an one cast up his accounts, come to a peremptory conclusion how it is between God and his soul, do not live in vain hopes, be not as one that knoweth not what to do, or what will become of him, how many are there who on their death-beds cry out, I live they cannot, and die they dare not, though they must? Dost thou not see the plague-tokens upon thy soul as yet? Are not thy oaths, thy lusts, thy neglect of holy duties a full demonstration that thy heart is barren of all grace?

3. Easier for a Church to know it is true than for a Christian to know he is a true Believer.

Thirdly, *It is easier for a particular Church to know it is a true visible Church, than for a particular Christian to know that he is a true believer.* For to a true visible Church are required onely those notes and marks which are external, as the pure preaching of the Word with an external submission unto it, or receiving of it, and where this is, a man may conclude there is a true visible Church for the essence of it; but to the truth of grace in a mans heart, there is required inward and secret operations of Gods Spirit by a powerful and most effectual change of a mans soul. Now as in the notes and marks of a true Church, some take general marks which are common to false Churches, as the Papists Signs of universality, antiquity and temporal felicity, *&c.* And again Others they make the whole dispute about the marks of a Church useless and of no profit at all (as *Episcopius* that Remonstrant) so for the signes of grace, some are too large, and make those things arguments of grace which any hypocrite may attain to, as Baptism Morality, external conformity to Gods Law, *&c.* So others, as The Antinomians, do wholly overthrow the Doctrine about signs of grace, and make it altogether useless to preach about them: but this is to be confuted in its time.

Estius the Papist would make this exhortation of the Apostle in the Text, to be only for trial, Whether they were a true Church, and whether Christ dwelt in them by true Doctrine, Miracles and his Ordinances? But that cannot be the total meaning, partly, because every believer had not Christ dwelling in him by Miracles, and therefore such an one could not have acknowledged *Pauls* ministerial power; and if so, then *Paul* would not have provoked to that, partly because this place, and that of *Ephes.* 3. 17. may explain one another; now there Christ is said, *To dwel in their hearts by faith*, where it must needs be justifying faith; and certainly Christ is in us, as we are in Christ, for *Joh.* 14.

these

these are put together, now we are in Christ by a faith of Miracles, and therefore he is not in us by such a faith.

Fourthly, *No man can by any natural light or evidence in him, come to be assured of the grace wrought in his soul.* Hence I shall shew you, that it is Gods Spirit which doth seal to us what we are; and that as a man cannot see the sunne but by the light of the Sunne, so neither can he see Christ or his graces in him but by the Spirit of Christ. Hence a man may be in the state of grace and not know it, even as the childe in the womb may be an heir to a great inheritance, and not understand it; and therefore as it is not the power of a mans free-will to subdue and conquer sinne, but that belongs to the Spirit of god sanctifying, so it is not the light of a mans natural understanding that can assure us of the things of God in us, but it belongs to the spirit of Adoption in us. Hence it is that a man naturally is destitute of all comfort, as well as grace, his heart is like an hell; as there is the unquenchable fire of lust, which never goeth out, so there are worms of doubts and fears perpetually gnawing which never die. For the Promises being divine and supernatural, we have no more inclination to them, or compliance with them than the commands of God, which require holinesse. Hence it is, that as a man while unconverted doth resist the Spirit of God, convincing and sanctifying; so when converted and humbled for sin, he doth often refuse Gods Spirit comforting and witnessing his love to him. And hence is the spiritual combate and conflict the people of God have, which is not only between corruption and holinesse, but also between doubting and faith. Assurance therefore doth not follow the work of grace in us by a necessary consequence, as heat doth the light of the fire, but is separable from it. as we see in many of *Davids* Psalmes, who though full of grace and holinesse, yet was in darknesse, and felt not Gods presence with him, or his love of him; and this should make us keep with all fear and trembling any measure of Assurance that we have, seeing if we sin it away, we are no more able to call it into our souls again, than we can bid the Sunne stand still in its race.

4. Assurance not a natural light.

Fifthly, *There are four special priviledges and mercies that a christian even in this life may be assured of, his Election, Remission of sinne, Sanctification of his nature, and Perseverance in that state, with future glory at the end thereof.* And the assurance of our Sanctification or present grace must be the foundation for the other certainties; so that there can be no certainty of Predestination, of Justification, of Glorification, if there be not a certainty of Renovation in us. We therefore ought the more diligently to attend to this; for he that hath a false perswasion about his grace in him, hath also a false perswasion of his pardon of sin and of his Salvation, and so at last all his hopes will miserably faile him. Tell me therefore thou that hast such confidence that thy sins are forgiven, such boldnesse as to hope for salvation, what works or fruit is there of sanctifying graces, there you must begin, & you build in vain, unlesse this foundation be laid. Not that we are to trust in our graces, but to gather Gods love by them as so many signs and testimonies, otherwise our certainty is *indignatione Dei*, not *in dignitate nostra*, said *Bernard*; And *Ambrose*, *Non gloriabor quia justus sum, sed quia redemptus sum; non gloriabor quia vacuus peccati sum, sed quia peccata mihi remissa sunt.*

5. Four things a Christian may be assured of.

Therefore sixthly, *It is a most sad delusion for an ungodly or unregenerated man to be perswaded his estate is an estate of grace, when as indeed it is nothing but of sinne and death.* We pity those that are bewitched or possessed with devils, but this is the most terrible possession, when a man is possessed with the devil turned into an Angel of light. Thus the Pharisees blasphemed sometimes saying, Christ had a devil, they themselves were possessed with one; you are they that justifie your selves (saith our Saviour) now all are very prone to this corrupt judgment, *Every mans ways are right in his own eyes* (its the wise mans Apothegm) *but the Lord pondereth the heart*; and in this bewitchery most men lie. For who is there that is not confidently perswaded of the goodnesse of their spiritual estate, who is not

6. It is a sad delusion for an ungodly man to be perswaded his estate is good.

Laodicea perſwaded of their riches and fulneſs, when indeed they are naked and empty. Oh therefore that ſuch had the ſpiritual eye-ſalve, that ſuch had their eyes opened to judge righteous judgement. How great will thy confuſion be when thy gold ſhall be found droſs, thy wine water, thy graces corruption, and thy goodneſs nothing but ſin! Do not therefore give credit to thy deceitful heart. Be afraid leſt thy ſelf-love hath blinded thy eies & hardned thy heart, pray unto God that he would make known thy ſelf unto thy ſelf. The better thoughts thou haſt of thy ſelf, it may be, it is the worſe with thee; ſuch a righteouſneſſe and godlineſſe as ſatisfieth men like thy ſelf, is not preſently acceptable unto God. Men may live forty or threeſcore years, and yet be great ſtrangers unto their hearts. We pity thoſe deluded mad men, who are perſwaded they are ſuch great perſons, and have ſuch large eſtates, when in the mean time they lie miſerable and naked, bound up in chains in a dark dungeon; ſuch a ſpiritual madneſſe is upon moſt, who never ſearched to the bottom of all that filthineſſe which is in them, and thereupon call themſelves grapes and figs, when they are thorns and thiſtles.

3. The ſoul hath two kinds of actings or workings.

Seventhly, *Conſider that the ſoul of man hath two kinds of acts or workings.* The former are *direct acts*, ſuch as go immediately to their *Object*; as when by faith I take Chriſt and adhear to him; the latter are *reflex acts*, which are onely in reaſonable ſubjects, and this is when a man doth perceive and diſcern thoſe *direct acts* in him, as when I perceive that I do thus adhear to Chriſt, that I do love God. *Now certainty or Aſſurance is properly in this latter way, when we know that we believe*; and therefore this Aſſurance it is called by ſome *Senſus fidei*, the feeling or perceiving of Faith. Now you muſt know that this feeling or perceiving of Faith is from Gods Spirit as well as Faith it ſelf, ſo that it is not a meer humane ſenſe or diſcerning, which is ſubject to falſhoods and deluſions, but is infallible, even as faith is; for as the Spirit of God cannot externally witneſſe any thing that is falſe; ſo neither can it inwardly in the ſoul of a man perſwade of that which is falſ, ſo that as a man knoweth by the help of Gods Spirit, *His word to be the word of God*, and is never fully confirmed till that come, ſo though a man may have probable hopes and conjectures of grace in his heart, yet he never comes to be ſettled, till the Spirit of God doth thus corroborate him.

What Aſſurance is.

2. A Believers aſſurance cannot be known to any other.

Eighthly, *This certainty a Believer hath cannot be made known or demonſtrated unto another, but remaineth unexpreſſible in his own heart.* Even as a man cannot deſcribe unto another, what it is to be a father or mother, onely thoſe that are ſo, and feel the bowels of ſuch a relation, they can in themſelves feel what it is; and thus when a man becomes perſwaded of the truth of grace in his own ſoul, as differing from hypocrites, this cannot be diſcovered unto another, onely the man himſelf reſts ſatisfied; Therefore its called, *The white ſtone which none knoweth but he that hath it.* As it is thus only known to a mans ſelf, ſo neither can others by a judgment of Certainty, but of charity only judge who are ſo. For it is God only that knoweth the hearts, and there is nothing viſible in Chriſtinity, which an hypocrite may not upon falſe grounds do, as well as the godly upon true, and if ſome did in the primitive times know what was in mens hearts, it was by a peculiar extraordinary revelation, not of cuſtomary diſcerning. And that diſcerning of ſpirits which was given to ſome in the Church, was in reſpect of Doctrines, to difference the true from the falſe, not of mens hearts and affections: This is to be obſerved againſt that errour of ſome, that hold, A man may certainly know whether another be godly: Peter was deceived about *Simon Magus*, and he calls *Sylvanus a faithfull brother*, as he ſuppoſeth, 1 Pet. 5. 12. It is true there is a great ſympathy and conformable working of Gods Spirit in godly men, and their hearts anſwer one another as the face in the glaſſe, but yet here is no infallibility, and many whom the godly have admired as ſtars, have faln from heaven; and others whom they did not expect have remained firm to God.

5. Ninethly, *In all the acts of Faith, whether they be direct or reflex, the firmneſſe and*

and certainty of them doth more depend upon Gods Spirit confirming us, than in the clearneſſe of the argument. Our Aſſurance doth conſiſt more in that firm adheſion of the ſubject, than in the evidence of the object. If you conſider it in thoſe aſſertive acts of faith, whereby we believe truths revealed in Scripture, their firmneſs and immovablenes doth more depend upon the work of Gods Spirit ſtrengthning the inward man, than upon the arguments; hence it doth believe them even unto Martyrdom, though it be not able to anſwer all the objections brought againſt it; and thus it is in theſe reflective acts, the confidence that a Believer hath of the truth of grace wrought in him, comes more from Gods Spirit removing our ſlaviſh fears and bondage-diſpoſition, as alſo ſtaying and ſupporting the ſoul, than from that excellency and beauty of grace which is within us.

Tenthly, *Conſider that as a man in his animal or rational life doth perceive the motions of his ſenſitive and rational ſoul, ſo doth a Believer in this ſupernatural feel the motions of his ſpiritual life.* 1 John 3.14. *We know we are tranſlated from death to life, becauſe we love the brethren*; a place much to be inſiſted upon hereafter. In this Text are two things, the firſt is general, *Thoſe that love the brethren are tranſlated from death to life*; The ſecond is more particular, we love the brethren and therefore know we are tranſlated from death to life; ſo that as he who hath fire in his boſom, he feels that heat within him; Thus he that loveth God feeleth the motions of love within him, ſo that as a man as ſenſitive doth perceive the motions of ſenſe within him, thus doth a man ſpiritual feel infallibility the ſupernatural motions of an heavenly life within him, yet here is this difference, a man doth diſcern bitter from ſweet, and a ſeeing man white from black without any temptation or oppoſition at all, but it is not ſo in ſupernatural motions. 10.

Eleventhly, *It is a vain thing to diſtinguiſh between the certainty of Hope, and a certainty of Faith, as if a man might have a certain Hope of Grace and Godlineſſe in him, but not a certain Faith*, for the firmneſſe of Hope doth depend onely upon the certainty of faith; So that where there is no certainty of Faith, there cannot be any firmneſſe of Hope. It is true, a man may have a ſtrong deſire of that which he hath no certain Faith for, but that deſire cannot be called Hope, and this is more eſpecially true in divine Hope, which *makes not aſhamed*, and the reaſon is, becauſe it is the fruit of Faith which is built upon the Promiſe and word of God; What Certainty therefore Faith hath it doth tranſmit to Hope, and as God hath placed ſuch a natural Affection as hope in a man, to bear him up againſt all the difficulties he meeteth with for the obtaining the good he deſireth, ſo he hath placed a ſupernatural frame in the heart to ſupport the ſoul till it obtaineth thoſe good things it believeth to have. 11.

Twelfthly, *The Scripture ſpeaking of this Certainty hath many ſignificant words to expreſſe it by* Rom. 8.38. πεπεισμαι, for although the word is common both to a moral or conjectural perſwaſion, in which ſenſe *Paul* uſeth it of the faith of the *Romans*, *Rom.* 15.14. and of the *Galatians* converſion, *Gal* 5.10. yet it is alſo uſed of a divine Faith, and that in Doctrines of Religion, *Rom.* 14.1. 2 *Tim* 1.12. and the context doth evidently ſhew it to be ſuch a perſwaſion (becauſe it is not a confidence againſt a ſeparation from God, but a poſſibility of it, Who ſhall ſeparate us?) It uſeth alſo the word *Know* in that of *John*, 1 *Joh.* 3. and in many other places. *Ephes.* 3.12. you may there ſee Faith the root, πιστις, and from that flowing παρρησια, *Confidence*, and from his Confidence flowing παρρησια, but the word that the Scripture doth moſt fully expreſſe this by is πληροφορια, *Rom* 4. 21. *Rom.* 14. *Col.* 2.2. *Heb.* 6.11. It is uſed in an ill ſenſe, *Eccleſ.* 8. Hence there is πληροφορια του θεου in wicked men, and πιστις in the godly. 12.

SERMON. V.

Handling the Adjuncts of Assurance, viz. The Possibility, Excellency, Difficulty and Necessity of having it.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

Examine your selves, whether ye be in Faith.

THis Text (as is proved) is a sure foundation of that profitable and necessary Doctrine, *viz.* The Certainty that a godly man may have of that Grace which is wrought in him, I come to adde two more Propositions, which may further declare the nature of this Truth,

13. As first, *there are three things, when we speak of Certainty, that are confounded by some Divines, and accurately distinguished by others*; and they are *Fides, Fiducia*, and *Certitudo, Faith, Assiance* or *Confidence*, and *Assurance*. In the writings of many Authors these are spoken of promiscuously, as the same thing; yea, Faith is by many learned men defined to be a full perswasion of the heart; &c. which definition, though it was maintained by them out of a good intent against all Popish doubtings, yet it is not a Truth in it self; for many have Faith, yea, justifying Faith, who have none of this Assurance; and this definition hath plunged many tender Consciences into sad Labyrinths, as if they had no Faith at all, because no Assurance at all: But of this more hereafter. Others therefore speak more distinctly, and also consonantly to that place of Scripture, *Ephes.* 3. 11. where Faith in Christ is said to have three effects, 1. Affiance or Confidence, 2. Boldnes or Assurance, and both these come from Faith. 3. Προσαγωγὴ, Readinesse of accesse to call upon God in times of adversities, so that a believer is made Gods favourite, and it is not against Law (as *Esthers* was) to go in and speak to this great King. Now whether Faith, Confidence and Assurance differ onely as so many degrees; as a Childe, a Youth and a Man; or whether they differ as several kinds, is to subtil a dispute. This is certain, That unlesse our Faith go so far as in a special manner to apply Christ to us, it cannot justifie us or do us any good: Others were in the croud besides *the woman that had the bloudy flux*, but she *touching of him* did partake of vertue from him. Though an *Israelite* had looked upon all other Objects as well as the brazen Serpent, yet beholding that only did cure him; So that our Faith be carried out to the whole Word of God, yet it is the applying and resting upon Christ that doth justifie us: Let not then a gracious heart despair, as if it had no interest in Christ, because it hath not yet attained to Assurance, God that hath begun to make thee desire Christ, that hath supported thee under thy fears and guilt, will at last give thee Assurance; for God bestoweth these mercies by degrees, even as *Boaz* did to *Ruth*; he first gave her gleanings, then her meals, and lastly his own self. God may come unto thee in mighty rushing winds before he come in a still, quiet voice, *Nil tam certum, quam quod ex dubio certum*, nothing so certain, as that which is so after doubting. The shaking of the Trees by mighty windes, doth make the root more

That Faith is a full perswasion of the heart is a false definition of Faith.

Baxter Note.

more firm, and so may these temptations be a foundation of greater joy and boldnesse.

Secondly, *The Assurance Gods people have of their estate of grace, is not so high and full as that it excludes all doubting*, for there is nothing Perfect in us in this life, whether it be Duty or Consolation, but as *the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit* in regard of Sanctification, so it doth also in respect of Consolation; We see *David* subject to many Convulsion-fits; his *Psalms* sometimes discover Confidence and Assurance, sometimes again Dejection and great Diffidence, so that *Sampson* with his Hair grown, and his Hair cut, doth not more differ from himself in strength and weakness, than *David* doth. We do not therefore maintain or plead for such an Assurance that excludeth all Doubting, all Conflicts & Agonies, such as the glorified Saints in Heaven have, but such a certainty as is grievously assaulted by Satan the Prince of darkness, and by the unbelief of our own hearts; and although we make Doubting as a grievous sin, yet we say it cannot be avoided, because of that remainder of corruption which is still in us, insomuch that its a received Maxim in Practical Divinity, grounded also upon Scripture, That he which never Doubted never Believed; as he that will say he is never Proud, it is a sign he was never Humble; now the ground of this Truth is from that fountain of sinne that is still in every man; so that he can neither do any Duty, or partake of any Comfort without the dregs of corruption; there is the leaven of sin that doth sowr both. There is some Gall in all our Honey, and by this means godly Assurance (as is to be shewed) doth differ from all that carnal confidence and presumption which is in wicked men; and we may justly say to them that which *Isaac* did to *Jacob*, when he brought his counterfeit Venison, *How comest thou by it so soon?* This Land of *Canaan* is not so easily possessed, yea as the *Aegyptians* did most oppresse the *Israelites* when they were getting out of their power, so doth the Devill most buffet and assault those who have escaped his snares: And as the Trees that are fullest of fruit have their boughs most broken, so the people of God that carry about with them the richest Treasures of Gods Grace, have the greatest encounters from Satan. We read the Devill tempting Christ upon this very Point, *Whether he were the Son of God.* It is no wonder then if he do frequently try thy strength and comfort. Besides, the failing in our Duties is a ground of coming short in our Comforts. Hence commonly the most active Christian hath the greatest Comfort, and he that walketh loosly and lazily, is fullest of Doubts; as the waters that run swiftly breed no vermine, no croaking Frogs, but those that are sluggish, and are constagnated in a Pool. 14.

Before we come to the practical Questions about this Assurance of Grace, we will consider these Adjuncts of it. 1. *The Possibility of it*, 2. *The Excellency of it.* 3. *The Difficulty of it.* 4. *The Necessity of it.* The Adjuncts of Assurance.

I.

First, *The Possibility of it is seen, in that the people of God have enjoyed it.* When *David* doth so often call God *his God and his Portion*, acknowledging with joy and thankfulnesse that he had forgiven his sins, doth not this suppose a Certainty? When that man said, *O Lord, I believe*, Did he speak he knew not what? And *Paul*, how often doth he manifest such an Assurance! and lest it should be thought he had it by some special Revelation, he doth *Rom.* 8. inferre this Assurance from those grounds, which are common to all the people of God, do not therefore think it impossible, saying, Who will go up to Heaven and bring a Revelation for me, that God is my God? for thou hast the same wayes to obtain it, as the people of God have had heretofore. The Possibility of it. 1

Again secondly, *The Possibility of it is seen in that a man may be assured of his dogmatical Faith*; That is, a man may be assured that he doth believe such Principles of Religion upon a divine ground; and if so, why not also that he loveth God and his children upon true Motives; as also that his Repentance hath all 2.

true

true Ingredients into it. And indeed if a man could not tell whether he did believe upon supernatural grounds, he could not truly but upon a bold venture say he did believe in God in deed, that there is a Church of God, or a Resurrection of our bodies.

3. Thirdly, *The Possibility of it appeareth from the institution of Sacraments, as Signs and Seals particularly to witnesse Gods love unto us;* So that as the appointing of Seals among men doth argue an intent of making bargains and contracts sure: Thus God appointing Sacraments in a visible particular Application, doth hereby declare his Will, that his Children should be sure; so that to overthrow Assurance is to take away the Sacraments; As a man doth prise that wax which is made up in a seal to confirme his Inheritance to him, more than all the wax in the world, so do Christians look upon bread and wine consecrated and set apart for that use of signification and obsignation of the benefits of Christ, more than all other bread and wine.

4. Lastly. *If assurance were not possible, the defect would be either in the object or in the Means to attaine it, or in the subject.* In the object there can be no defect, as all say. For *Gods Promises are in Christ Yea and Amen*; and no iota or title of Gods Word in the promising part of it, can any more passe away, then in the preceptive or threatning part of it. Then there can be no defect in the means to obtain it; for there is the Spirit of God efficiently to work it; There are the Sacraments appointed on purpose to confirm us; There are Ministers to instruct and informe about it. Neither is there any defect in the subject, for although the heart of a man be naturally deceitfull and full of crafty wickednes, so that the Scripture cals him a fool who trusteth in it; yet being now renewed by Gods Spirit, that guile and hypocrisie is in a great measure removed, and he doth not see and discern by his own strength meerly, but by the spirit of God enabling and guiding of him; So that as Gods Spirit working by the law, doth convince a man in particular of his sins, filleth him with despair of himself and every thing he doth, makes him to see he is an undone and a lost man; so the same Spirit through the promise of the Gospel, doth perswade us of Gods love, revealing it outwardly in the Word, and shewing it abroad inwardly in our hearts.

II. The Necessity of it.

Secondly, The Necessity of it appeareth, 1. *From the Nature of Faith.* It is of an establishing and setling Nature. It is a Pillar and an Anchor to the soul, and although Assurance is a separable effect from it, yet the Scripture makes Doubting and Fear to be opposite to believing. Hence is trusting in God compared to rolling our selves upon him, to staying the minde, to resting of the heart &c. So that by strong and customary Acts of believing on Christ, and patiently waiting, we come at last to be assured.

1.

2. *There is a necessity from Gods Glory.* It is not enough that God doth work Grace in us, and sanctifie us, but we are to know this, that we may praise and blesse God for it: Can a man in his sleep, or in a swound, when his senses are stupified, praise God that he liveth? no more can a Christian staggering with uncertainties, and lying in all darknesse of minde: how therefore should this quicken us up to obtain this Mercy! How much Glory doth God lose by thy fears! As *David* argued, *Doe the dead praise thee?* So doe thou say, O Lord, Do they in darknesse and that have no light, glorifie thee for thy goodnesse to them!

2.

3. *Hereby we shall have more Joy and Peace in our hearts*; O what an Hell must every mans heart be that hath not some little light at least of this in his Soul? What Legions of tormenting Doubts must needs possesse him, till he have some support this way? How can a man be sick, be in dangers, be under the stroke of death, who hath no knowledge of any Good that God hath wrought in him? See how this supported *Hezekiah* in his sick-

ficknesse, *Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before thee with a true heart.* And thus *Paul* is animated to look Death in the face, because he knew *He had fought a good fight:* and is not this the complaint of many languishing on their death-beds? Oh if they had Assurance, how willingly could they depart out of this world!

4. *In the Usefulnesse of it, hereby we shall be enlarged and quickned to all holy Duties. He that hath this Hope purifieth himself, even as God is pure,* 1 John 3.3. And *Having these promises,* saith the Apostle, *viz.* of God being our God, and we his people, *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of flesh and spirit,* 2 Cor. 7.1. We believe, therefore we speak; and therefore it is an opinion against manifest Experience, that Assurance of Gods Love will beget Presumption and carnal Security: whereas indeed this will be like fire in our bowels, wings to our Souls: Doth not the Childes Knowledge and Assurance that his Father loves him, beget all willingnesse, and readinesse of Obedience? And is not the Rule, *Si vis amari, ama, Love, if thou wouldest be loved?* When therefore the Soul shall be perswaded that God in great Love hath wrought such mercies for him, Will not this make him seven times more enflamed to God? 4.

III. The difficulty of getting Assurance.

In the third place, *We have the Difficulty,* few do attain unto it, and that from these grounds,

First, *Where the sense and feeling of the guilt of sinne is, there we presently look upon God as an Enemy, think of him as of a Man that cannot forgive, but will certainly avenge.* Thus *Cain* and *Judas*, how prone were they to despair! And therefore the word to *Assure,* 1 John 3. 19. signifieth *Perswade*, implying that our Hearts have many froward and peevish Objections; and we are many times as *Rachel mourning, and would not be comforted.* 1.

Secondly, *It ariseth from the desperate Hypocrisie and falsnesse of our Hearts.* This is urged by the Papists too farre, as if it were such a Deep, that the Spirit of God also could not assure us what we are; but thus farre it manifesteth, That Comfort or Assurance is not a Flower that groweth in our Garden, but if the Spirit of God should not both work Grace in us, and give us eyes to discern it, we should remain in a dark Chaos. 2.

Thirdly, *It ariseth from our proneness to walk negligently and carelesly.* We are beaten down with many Temptations, and therefore do quickly lose our hopes; for this Assurance is preserved in the continual exercise of Grace. Hence the Apostle useth two words μᾶλλον σπουδάσατε, *The rather give all Diligence to make your Calling and Election sure,* 2 Pet. 1. 10. Implying, that if we walk not carefully in the use of all the means of Grace, which God hath appointed, we cannot obtain it, but now, how are we in coldnesse, lukewarmnesse, earthlinesse &c. often, and so grieve that Spirit of God which would seal us? 3.

Fourthly, *It is Difficult from outward Causes, as* first *from Satan*, who *hath fiery Darts, is a Man-slayer from the beginning,* and endeavours to keep us in doubts and fears, that so at last we may be even wearied out, and rage against God. When the Devil cannot hinder us in our Duties, he doth it in our comforts and Consolations; as the Spirit of God is the Comforter, because of that special benefit it brings to the people of God; So the Devil is the Tempter, and watcheth the opportunity to throw bitter wormwood into every condition we are in: As the Pirates do beset and wait for those ships that are fullest of gold, and other treasures; yea, therefore never are wicked men cast down with those fears and troubles as the godly are; they know not the meaning of spiritual Temptations, nor what it is to have the light of Gods countenance denied them. 4.

2. On Gods part, he makes it difficult, *That his favour may be the more prized.* The Church that had carelesly put off her Beloved, afterwards makes

great and vehement enquiry after him, and cannot finde him. Though it ariſe not from the Doctrine of Aſſurance, to make us careleſs and negligent; yet ſometimes this may be abuſed through our corruption.

IIII. The excellency of this priviledge.

Laſtly, *Here is the Excellency of this Priviledge* ſeveral wayes;

1. First, *This keeps up excellent Fellowſhip and Acquaintance with God.* The Church that could ſay, *I am my wel beloveds, and my wel beloved is mine*, did abound in ſpiritual Society with Chriſt: Hence the Church glorieth in this expreſſion four or five times; whereas fears and doubts keep us aloof off, and make us ſlaviſhly trembling about him.

2. Secondly, *It will work a Filial and an Evangelical frame of heart.* The Spirit of Adoption enabling us to call God Father, makes us [illegible] have the humble diſpoſition of Sons. Hereby we are carried out [illegible] ice from pure intentions and motives.

3. Thirdly, *It will ſupport, although there be nothing but outward miſery and trouble.* In thoſe times when we cannot be aſſured of any thing, ſuch as theſe are, not aſſured of our eſtates, ſafety or lives; yet if aſſured of the grace of God wrought in our ſouls, this will be like a wall of Marble that cannot be beaten down. Thus *Rom.* 8. *Paul* triumpheth over all difficulties upon this ground.

4. Fourthly, *It will much enflame in Prayer, when we are aſſured of Gods love.* This kindles Deſires, encreaſeth Hopes to ſpeed, and ſo makes the Soul more importunate; and in this reſpect *David* doth encourage himſelf in prayer many times *If Experience breeds Hope*, much more will Aſſurance.

5. Fifthly, *It makes a man walk with much tenderneſſe againſt ſinne*; As being that only evil, which would put him out of the heaven he is in, for having now the Experience how *ſweet the Lord is*, and how greatly his favour is to be prized, he will take heed that he do not rob himſelf of ſo great a treaſure as that is. How do men fear to diſpleaſe thoſe who can if they will, keep all their earthly Evidences from them? and ſhall we not much rather God, who can deny us our heavenly Evidence?

6. Sixthly, *His heart will be impatient and earneſt till the coming of Chriſt.* When he ſhall have a full poſſeſſion and accompliſhment of all Glory, *I deſire to depart* ſaith *Paul, and to be with Chriſt*, If the beginnings be thus wonderfull and excellent, What will Heaven it ſelf be, when all fears ſhall be abandoned! If *Seneca* ſaid of his wiſe man, *Majore parte illic eſt, unde deſcendit*, He is more in Heaven than in Earth; this is much more true of the godly.

7. Seventhly, *A full acquieſcency and reſting in God and Chriſt*, as ſufficient for every kinde of want, ſo as *They deſire nothing in Heaven but him, and nothing in Earth beſides him, and hereby having drunk of this water they thirſt no more*, but all their happineſſe is in him. Bleſſed is the man that is partaker of ſuch a priviledge, and happy is he who in this manner *hath God for his God, and Chriſt for his Chriſt.*

Serm-

SERMON. VI.

Shewing the Difference between true Aſſurance and Preſumption.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

Examine your ſelves, &c.

IN the next place we are to conſider, *What are the Characteriſtical Differences between Aſſurance and Preſumption?* You have heard it to be the greateſt deluſion and madneſſe that can be, to have a falſe perſwaſion of our eſtate, as if ſound and godly, when its the contrary; and yet the greateſt part of Chriſtians are delivered up to ſuch a carnal confidence, and are like that mad *Athenian*, who thought all the Ships on the Sea were his. How many are there, who when they hear the exact Diſcoveries that are made of *Grace*, whereby they may evidently conclude, That they are for the preſent ſhut out of this Kingdom, do yet bleſſe themſelves, as if all were well with them! It is therefore worth the while to ranſack ſuch falſe Evidences, to diſcover between Droſſe and Gold, Honey, and Gall, what is of the Fleſh, and what is of the Spirit.

The difference between true Aſſurance and Preſumption. I. In the cauſe.

In the firſt place, *We may finde a vaſt Difference in the efficient cauſe or principle that is procreant of the one and the other.* And although cauſes are like the root under the ground, not ſo viſible, yet they make much to the differencing of things. Aſſurance is a Fruit, whoſe Root is in Heaven, the Spirit of God in a two-fold act, Enlightening or Revealing, and adopting or Corroborating the heart with Filial Evangelical Affections, but carnal preſumption is a ruſh that groweth in the pudled mire of our own hearts; There being theſe internal cauſes that give life and breath to it.

Internal cauſes of preſumption. 1.

Firſt, *An ignorance with an unexperienced apprehenſion of the depth of ſinne, and danger thereby.* They have never yet with *Paul* found the *Law alive*, and themſelves *dead*; They have not ſeen the great abominations of their Nature; The foulneſſe of ſinne, the purity of the Law, the exactneſs of Gods juſtice; and for want of theſe Diſcoveries and Apprehenſions, they come quickly to be perſwaded that every thing is well with them; This was *Pauls* caſe, he was *alive* before theſe thoughts came into him, he had great confidence in himſelf; and generally this was the ſtate of the Phariſees, who juſtified themſelves, and the Jews who *truſted in their own righteouſneſſe*, not that there was any ground for them ſo to do, but only they were blinded and ignorant, not knowing themſelves, as thoſe of *Laodicea*, who thought themſelves rich and full, when they were poor and miſerable: So that the preſumption of unregenerate men ariſeth from the ſtupidity of blindeneſs in them; whereas the godly Aſſurance is wrought out of a gracious Illumination about the heighth, depth and breadth of ſinne, with a tender affection about the weight and burden of it. Art thou then one who preſumeſt of the love of God, and reſteſt in the goodneſſe of thy heart? know, that if thou wert acquainted with all the wounds ſinne hath made upon thee, if thy eyes were opened to perceive the filthineſſe and vileneſs of thy nature and wayes, thou wouldſt ſit like *Job* upon the dunghill, abhorring and loathing thy ſelf.

2. Secondly, *Another internal cause is self-love*; that is, the Ivy which cleaveth so close unto us, till it hath devoured our substance; by this means we flatter our selves, making every thing to be good within us, and to be godly, whereas its altogether fleshly and carnal. The wise-man observeth it, *That every mans wayes are clean in his own eyes, but God pondereth the heart. Quisquis se excusat sibi, accusat Deo*, Whosoever doth excuse and acquit himself to himself, doth accuse himself to God. This was also the epidemical disease of the Jews, what Prophet could perswade them their hearts were not right with God? Who could bring them out of love with themselves? Art thou therefore fully perswaded of thy good estate? Dost thou blesse God for thy good heart and affections? Whence is the ground of this? Is it not from self-flattery and a carnal love to thy self? If thou wert diligent and observing of thy self, this would be found indeed the real ground of all thy carnal confidence; Whereas a godly Assurance ariseth from an utter displicency, and loathing of our selves.

II. A second vast Difference is, *From the Motives and Grounds.* The godly Assu-
In the motives and grounds. rance is from and through the word of God; That which is the means of our Regeneration, is also of our Assurance, *That we through the Scriptures might have comfort*, saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 1. whereas a vain presumption comes from base and unworthy motives, As

1. 1. *A meer natural light and judgement about the state of Regeneration and Grace*; but (as you heard) Assurance comes by the light of the Spirit shining in Gods word, and the works of Grace in our hearts can be no more discerned by a natural light, than the sensitive part can apprehend the actings and workings of reason, or the natural faculty of the Will have power to do that which is supernaturally good. We see a clear instance in *Nicodemus*, how blockish was he about the work of Regeneration? Now this is the Motive of most mens Assurance, their gross mistake about the work of Grace what it is. Do not the most of men think this godlinesse consistent with frequent and constant Practices of Impieties and daily neglect of holy Duties? How many say, They have a good heart, notwithstanding their bad tongues and lives? But if they are not so grosse as to be deluded herein, Do not many take a fair, civil and moral Conversation, void of scandal, to be the Scripture-godlinesse, and because they are so, though they have no more, are therefore perswaded of their sanctified condition? Nay, a mans mistake may yet go far higher, *viz.* when they take those workings of Gods Spirit which are but for a season, or are in some imperfect and short Degrees, being without root in the soul, for the peculiar saving work of Grace, which is in the truly regenerated only. Now how easie is it to be deceived one of these wayes, and with the foolish Virgins *Matth.* 25. to die confidently, and boldly go to meet the Bridegroom, when yet they want oyl? See therefore if the Motive of thy Assurance be not an absolute mistake about the nature of sanctifying Grace.

2. 2. *The Motive of a godly Assurance is not from any Worth, Merit or Perfection we deem in our selves, but only from the Truth and Sincerity of Grace, with many defects that are washed away by Christs bloud.* Hence *Paul*, *Though he knew nothing by himself, yet he was not thereby justified.* Therefore the Popish description of their Hope making it to arise partly from the merits of Christ, and partly from their own merits, is bold Presumption. We do not defend such an Assurance as shall arise from a full and perfect Obedience unto Gods Law; (nay we have an Assurance, such an Obedience cannot be in this life) but only a certain perswasion of the uprightnesse of our hearts in the wayes of God. Now the Popish Arguments, they militate against Assurance chiefly upon this ground, *Because none can say, he hath a clean heart, and that in many things we offend.* These places argue indeed strongly against a perfection in this life, but not against a gracious Assurance.

3. 3. *A carnal Presumption ariseth many times from the outward comforts and plenty*

they

they enjoy. They look upon their Riches, Children, Honours, as ſo many Teſtimonies of Gods Love to them, and Arguments of the Reward of their Obedience. Becauſe the Scripture hath many temporal Promiſes unto thoſe that walk in Gods wayes, they finding themſelves bleſſed with ſuch advantages, do thence from inſer their Piety But the Scripture gives many Antidotes againſt this tumor and ſwelling, telling us that ſuch ſtand in *ſlippery places*; yea, that theſe things may become a ſnare unto them, encreaſing both their ſinne and torment. *Quandoque divitiæ damnur ad pœnam*, ſaid *Auguſtin*, as *Solomon* obſerved, *Riches, for the hurt of the owners.* That place in *Eccleſiaſtes*, *No man knoweth love, or hatred by theſe things below*, doth not, as the Papiſts would have it, prove no Aſſurance at all, but no Aſſurance by outward mercies and favours, *Dives received his good things in this life, and Lazarus evill things; but a genuine Aſſurance that is moſt powerfull and operative in all outward diſtreſſes and miſeries.* You ſee it in *David* by ſome of his *Pſalms*, how confident in God, when all outward things did witneſſe the contrary! Thus *Hezekiah* when under the ſtoke of death, is ſupported with the truth of Grace in his ſoul: but all carnal confidence vaniſheth in time of diſtreſſe, they then rage and rave, not knowing what to do; See then what it is that beareth up thy heart, that keeps up thy Spirit: Is it thy Wealth, thy Eſtate? Alas, how are theſe things beſtowed many times upon thoſe whom God hates, if theſe go to happineſs then Chriſt was not happy, who became poor that we might be rich? It was well obſerved by *Auguſtin*, *That God giveth Riches ſometimes to wicked men, that we may not think they are good in themſelves; and ſometimes he giveth them to godly men, that we may not think them evil in themſelves.* God may give thee theſe things, and not Chriſt, but if he giveth us Chriſt, how ſhall he not with him give us all things elſe?

The third Difference is, *In reſpect of the Manner and Method the Spirit of God doth uſually work Aſſurance.* For although *The winde bloweth where it liſt*; and Gods wayes are many times diverſified unto his people, yet commonly as *Face anſwers face*, ſo do the hearts of Gods people one another; Inſomuch that what is *Communis ſenſus fidelium*, though it be not like Scripture, yet is of grave and ſerious Authority, now in theſe wayes the people of God come to have Aſſurance, III. In the manner and method of Gods working Aſſurance.

1. *By a deep and ſerious Humiliation for ſin, and feeling the burden of it.* Matth. 11. ſuch only are promiſed to *finde reſt in their ſouls*; Chriſt did not aſſure *Mary Magdalen Her ſins were forgiven*, till *ſhe wept much* for them. We do not limit this to any time or degree of Humiliation, but unto the truth of it. Come we then to a man who is confident of all things, as well with him; Oh, But what travails hath thy ſoul had before the joy of ſuch a man-childe born unto thee. *Rom.* 8. The Spirit of God, is *a ſpirit of bondage*, before it is a *ſpirit of Adoption.* And this very particular is enough to ſhake the foundations of many mens buildings. What deep digging was there in thy heart before this ſuperſtruction? I know this true and ſafe practical Divinity is rejected by ſome upſtart flaſhie ſpirits, who turn Religion into Notions and Opinions. But *Paul* Rom. 7. and *Chap.* 8. doth fully deſcribe ſuch a progreſſe and method upon himſelf; firſt The diſcovery of ſin by the Law, whereby he judged himſelf miſerable and out of meaſure ſinfull, and then the apprehenſion of Chriſts Grace upon this. This Aſſurance will not grow upon an heart not ploughed up. The Needle muſt pierce the heart before this ſilk can follow. 1.

2. *Another Method whereby God worketh Aſſurance, is by conflicts of doubts, and oppoſition of unbelief.* For ſeeing that Aſſurance is a fruit of Gods Spirit, and doubting a working of the fleſh, it cannot be but the Apoſtles rule muſt be made good, *The fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh.* I like not the Aſſurance that never doubted; it is like the temper of that man, who ſaid, *All theſe have I kept from my youth.* It cannot be thought that ſo great and ſpi- 2.

tual a mercy ſhould be brought into thy ſoul, and thy heart not be in many commotions. Apprehenſions of Grace in us, accompanied with ſenſe and feeling of our imperfections are alwaies good ſymptoms, as in that man, *Lord, I believe* (there was his Aſſurance of Grace in him) *help my unbelief*, There was a perceiving of his defects. As *David* hath ſometimes the Sun-ſhine of Gods favour, and its clear with him; ſo at other times he is in the dark, and much wavering.

3. 3. *God worketh Aſſurance out of the vehement and fiery aſſaults of Satan.* As Chriſt himſelf eſcaped not his Arrows; ſo neither do his members. Wo to that man whoſe peace the Devil doth not diſquiet. The ſtrong one who is the Devill kept all things in quiet, till Chriſt the ſtronger came. As the Baſiliſk hateth the very picture of a man; ſo doth the Devil oppoſe the reſemblance of Chriſt. Think therefore that vain Preſumption, and not godly Aſſurance, which is not oppoſed by hell it ſelf. He is an *Ægyptian*, not an *Iſraelite*, if *Pharaoh* do not oppreſſe him.

IIII. A fourth reall Difference is, *In the Effects of godly Aſſurance, whereby it doth as much out-ſtrip Preſumption as light and darkneſſe.*

In the effects of godly Aſſurance.

1. 1. *This godly Aſſurance is diligent in the uſe of the means*, carefull to perform all Duties, and in the neglect of theſe it either periſheth, or is much weakned, *Give all diligence* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *To make your calling and election ſure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. So that where Diligence, and all Diligence is not uſed, there is no Aſſurance. This is the Oyle which keeps the Lamp burning; in earneſt Prayer, holy uſe of Sacraments, walking univerſally in all Gods waies, is this godly certainty maintained; whereas carnal confidence is big, and ſwelling even in the neglect, yea, prophane contempt of the means. A man that doth not pray, that polluteth himſelf with daily ſins, yet he is throughly perſwaded of his happineſs. As therefore in the ordinary paſſages of Gods Providence, he is rightly judged a preſumer who will perſwade himſelf of life, when yet he will neither eat or drink, be aſſured of wealth and riches, when yet he will uſe no Diligence: ſuch an arrogant ſottiſhnes is in a ſpiritual preſumer.

2. 2. *Godly Aſſurance the more it is, the more doth it inflame the heart with love to God.* It is like the burning Glaſſe that by reflection of the Sun-beams doth cauſe a fire to be kindled within, as we told you of *David* and *Paul*; and none do ſo highly bleſſe God and praiſe him, as thoſe that have this Aſſurance: but carnal preſumption worketh into a love of the creature, or comforts he enjoys, and careth the leſſe for God. As the Adultereſſe the more confident ſhe is of her husbands love, the more bold and impudent ſhe is to abuſe it. The Spirit of Adoption giving a filial diſpoſition, and Aſſurance of a Fathers love doth much melt a filial frame of heart; but if love be ſhewed to a ſervile ſlaviſh ſpirit, it makes it more haughty & lofty. Conſider therefore how thy Aſſurance worketh in thee, doth it put out all love to ſin and the world? Doth it kill inordinate affections to things below, and raiſe up thy heart to God, delighting and rejoycing in him? This is a comfortable demonſtration of good Aſſurance.

3. 3. *Godly Aſſurance is potent and able to keep up the heart under all diſcouragements and deſolations.* Thus *David* in that ſad exigence, *Encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God.* This Certainty of our Propriety and Intereſt in God, is an Ark to the ſoul in the midſt of many waters; whereas take any carnal confident man, his heart becomes like a ſtone within him, when all carnal hopes fail. And this is a precious ſymptome, ſee in the middeſt of theſe confuſions thou liveſt in, when Heaven and Earth ſeem to be mingled together, What makes thee rejoyce and to lift up thy head with gladneſs? Is it that knowledge thou haſt of God to be thy God? Is it thoſe pledges and pawns in thy ſoul of his eternal love and goodneſs unto thee? This is ſomthing But alas, as the hypocrites joy, ſo his confidence will quickly periſh. It is not a Star fixed in the Orb made of quinteſſential matter, but a blazing ſtar compoſed of ſlimy materials, which will quickly conſume and vaniſh away. *True Adamant* (ſaith *Origen Hom. 3. in Jer.*) *is tried by this, if it* can-

can endure the hammer, if under the hammer above, and the anvill below, it continue more obdurate, then it is true metal: So it is with true Assurance, it abideth though billows and waves come upon it. So that troubles will discover the truth of thy Graces and Comforts, sooner than any thing else. Hence Camero observeth, That Mercies are never called Temptations in the Scripture, but Afflictions, because it is so difficult to be deprived of that we desire.

Fifthly, *We may finde a palpable Difference in the Companions or Concomitants of it.* As, V.

1. *Its accompanied with holy fear and trembling*, for as Gods Word doth not contradict it self, when in some places it calls upon us to make our *Calling sure*, and in other places to *work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*; So neither may these two Graces contradict one another, as they are in the subject. So then, they who are assured, though they rejoyce, yet they rejoyce with trembling. Those who are assured *they shall stand*, yet *take heed lest they fall*. As a man that looketh down from some place where Battlements are, though while he holds on them, he knoweth he cannot fall, yet when he looks to the ground, that is so deep below him, he cannot but fear he should fall; so that at the same time he hath both an Assurance of not falling, and a fear of falling, though not from the same considerations. Thus it is with the people of God, whereas carnal presumption excludeth all kinde of fear, obstructeth all diligence. In the companions or concomitants of it. 1.

2. *A second Companion is Humility and lowlinesse of minde.* For the greater mercies God bestoweth upon his people, the lowlier they are in their own eyes, as the Virgin *Mary* witnesseth in her Song, and *David* in Gods kindness to him, whereas in carnal presumption, the more confidence, the more pride in our selves, and despising of others. How might we prove that a Pharisee had not Assurance of Grace in him, but vain confidence, by this, *viz.* that he despised other men as sinners to him? And this may make us justly doubt, whether many that speak of immediate Revelations and Assurances they have from Gods Spirit, be not in a proud delusion, by contemning others as low, and not acquainted with the Spirit of God. For if there be such a danger even in godly men, when lifted up to great priviledges, as in *Paul*, *Wrapt up into the third Heavens*, of becoming proud, that *Paul* is assaulted with *buffettings of Satans* to keep him low, and he repeats it twice 2 *Cor.* 12.7. *Lest I should be lifted up above measure*, in the beginning of the verse; and again, *Lest I should be lifted up*, in the end of the verse. *Hierom* compareth this Temptation of Satan exercising *Paul* in the midst of his Revelations, to the *Boy* that was a *Monitor*, who cried aloud to him that rode in triumph, *Memento te esse hominem, Remember thy self to be a man.* If, I say, there be such danger even in godly men, when they have the real works of Gods Spirit, what cause is there of pride in corrupted men, who have only puff-paste delusions of Satan? When therefore thy perswasion of Gods love to thee, raiseth up lofty mountains in thy soul, thou lookest upon thy self in heaven, while others grovel upon the ground, thou deemest thy self to be as much above other Christians, as an Angel is above a Worm; then fear this, coming from the devil transforming himself into an Angel of light. 2.

Lastly, *It differeth in the contrary or opposite which will destroy it.* Assurance being wrought by Gods Spirit, is only interrupted by sin. *Grieve not the spirit of God, by which ye are sealed.* So that even corrupt and idle communication, even little sins (as the world judgeth) may greatly disturb our certainty: But carnal presumption is not weakned through sinne, only outward troubles or horrours of conscience vanquish that. As the *Casuists* give a difference between melancholy, and trouble of conscience for sinne; Melancholy is removed by bodily remedies, merry company, variety of imployment; but trouble of conscience can onely be taken away by comforts out of the Scripture. Though *Cain* travelled and builded Cities, yet that could not free him from that trembling guilt within him. Thus it is on the contrary, Peace in the holy Ghost wrought by Assu- VI. In respect of its opposite.

Assurance, is only excluded by sin or lukewarmnesse in holy Duties: but sinfull confidence a[illegible] the same, till it be shaken, or removed by some outward troubles.

SERM. VII.

Containing Remedies against carnal Confidence with Directions to the Godly that mourns under the sense of the want of Gods favour.

2 COR. 13. 5.

Examine your selves, whether ye be in the Faith.

THe differences between carnal Presumption and godly Assurance have been at large declared. Let us in the next place consider what are the fit engins to batter down those strong holds, That the carnal confident man runneth into, what way may be taken to undeceive such a man, and to put him in a way of salvation

What way may be taken to undeceive the carnal confident.

And in the first place, *This may be laid down as a most certain truth, That there are none more indisposed for Christ, none have higher mountains and hils in the way, than the falsly perswaded Christian.* Christ told the Pharisees, *That the Publicans and Harlots got to heaven before them. Ille morbus vix est sanabilis, qui sanitatem imitatur,* saith one, That disease is hardly curable that is like unto health: and the task must be great to remove such an one from his stedfastnesse, because two things are to be done; the former to make known his false righteousnesse he is perswaded of, and the latter the true righteousnesse he is to be assured of. As the *Philosopher*, who was to teach one that was infected with false opinions, required a double fee, because his work was double, *dedocere*, to unteach, and *docere* to teach. This was the great labour the Prophets of God were put upon; and Christ who had the tongue of the learned, preached many Parables to make the full hungry, and the rich empty in themselves. What the Heretick is in matter of Doctrine, the same is a carnal presumer in matter of practice and conversation. Now as the former is seldome reduced, because there is obstinacy and contumacy in him against all admonitions; so is the latter scarce ever truly debased and humbled, because of the self-love that cleaveth to him.

But if ever any thing be able to overrule and conquer him, these remedies following are likely to do it.

Remedies against carnal confidence.

First, *A powerfull and soul-searching Ministry, that will so pierce into, and discover the hidden things of the heart, that thereby he may come to be made known to himself.* The Ministery of the Word is like the Sun in the firmament, from whose light nothing is hidden. Thus the Prophets, the Apostles, they were lights. And what conviction might the Jews have had of all their self-fulnesse and hypocrisies, if they had not shut their eyes against the light, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. The weapons of the Ministry, though they be not *carnal, yet are mighty to the pulling down of strong-holds, and every thing that exalteth it self*, by this is meant all kinde of opposition. What the woman of *Samaria* said concerning Christ, that he discover-

A Soul-Searching Ministry.

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ed *whatsoever she hath done.* So sometimes may we say, Come and hear a Sermon that hath laid open all the vilenes and inward filthines, all the poverty and wretchednes that is within me.

A second remedy is, *A particular opening and applying of the Law in the purity and rigidity of it.* Matth. 5. What an excellent course did our Saviour there take to make his hearers afraid of themselves, and to see more sins in themselves than ever they thought of! He makes the Law so spiritual, reaching so deeply into all the motions and lusts of the soul, that they must needs be as foul as Blackmoors in Gods eyes, while they did admire their own beauty. Thou blessest thy self because of the innocency in thy outward conversation and freedom from all gross sins, but no dunghill is fuller of Snakes and Worms, than thy heart is of filthy lusts. Thus *Rom. 7. Paul*, as good as he was in his own eyes, when he looked into the glasse of Gods word, his holy Law, he found so many blots and blemishes in himself, that he had no longer life or hope within him. Hence it is that men, to keep themselves from appearing so deformed as they are, limit the sense of the law, as if it were not so exact as it is, like the Elephant bemudding the water that it may not see its own deformity. The particular opening and applying of the law in the purity of it.

The third Remedy is, *To discover the fulnesse and necessity of Christ.* And indeed if Christ be so necessary, as the Scripture saith, and that in such a way, as that his Righteousnes must be *all in all*; then thereby is demonstrated, that all which we have is nothing but sinne and weakness. If Christ be commended unto us, under the titles of a Saviour, Physician, Redeemer, then certainly we are sick, in bondage and utterly undone in our own selves. Why dost thou then (O vain man) boast so in thy own self! Why art thou so strongly perswaded of thy own sufficiency? If it be so, What needs a Christ? Was not he incarnated? Did he not suffer in vain? If a Star were able to give light to the world, and to dispel all darkness, what need is there of a Sun? if the stream hath enough to refresh, what use is there of the Ocean? Wouldst thou then come to be poor and miserable in thy own eyes? Consider in what glory, riches, fulness and absolute necessity the Scripture sets Christ forth, and then thou mayest quickly abhor thy self. 3. To discover the necessity and fulness of Christ.

A fourth Remedy are *Outward and sad afflictions accompanying the Word.* For when God shall thus by his Word thunder in their ears and hearts; When he shall also outwardly scourge & afflict, then is a man many times taken off from his lofty imaginations. That as we deal with mad men, who have false conceits of their outward happiness, throw them into Dungeons, use them hardly, and that is the way to bring them to the knowledge of themselves; thus God when he would have a man reject all his carnal presumptions, abhorre all high thoughts of himself, he hangs many clogs upon him, causing many thornes to run into his side. How much better were it for many men to be kept by God in darkness, and sad plunges of their own spirit, than to be set alwaies upon the pinacle of the Temple (as it were.) Be therefore awakened out of thy security, fear lest thou hast lived thus many years in a meer dream of thy holinesse and interest in Christ. 4. Afflictions.

Fifthly, *The examples of such who have made great progresse (as might be thought) in the wayes of Religion, and have had high thoughts of themselves, whose ends notwithstanding having been very dreadfull and terrible, is, or may be a special help to rouse us out of false presumptions.* How should that place be like a sword in our bowels, *Heb.* 6. where some had illumination, yea, and a favoury tasting in some degree of the goodnesse of God and his Word, yet had not *things accompanying Salvation!* So likewise the instance of the foolish Virgin, who were so bold and confident in their preparation for the Bridegroom, how wofully were they deluded! Now look over these examples, and consider again and again, lest their cases and thine be alike. Think and tremble lest the time be coming when thou shalt cry for oil, because all thine is spent, and there is none to help thee. 5.

Our Saviour by many Parables to this purpoſe would teach us how prone all are to be thus abuſed.

6. Sixthly, *Let a preſumptuous man conſider how apt he is to miſtake in other things, and therefore fear leſt he do alſo in this of the greateſt concernment.* Every man is full of blindeneſs, ſtupidity, ignorance, how often is he deceived even in natural and moral things? How often in truths ſupernatural? And is it any wonder then, if in the workings of his own heart, wherein he is commonly carried by ſelf-love? If a natural man doth not perceive many times natural things, how can he perceive the things of God? As our Saviour ſaid, If you underſtand not earthly things, how the things of Heaven? If a godly man, out of whoſe heart gulle and hypocriſie is in a great meaſure removed, do yet cry out, *Who can underſtand his errours, Cleanſe me from ſecret ſins*, How much more is this true of him who is wholly in the leaven of hypocriſie? If *David* hath much unknown pride and corruption in his heart, how much hath a Phariſee or an unregenerate man? It is a good ſpeech of *Ameſius*, *Præſumentes ſunt eo magis deſperati, quò minùs ſunt deſperantes*; Preſumers are therefore in the more deſparate condition by how much they are the leſſe deſpairing.

The next Queſtion ſhall be, *What ought a man to do, who hath indeed the truth of grace in him, but he knoweth it not?* Though God hath wrought ſupernatural cures upon his ſoul, yet he doth not believe any ſuch mercy is done for him. And as when a man hath Aſſurance of the truth of grace in his ſoul, there is alſo a complication of the Aſſurance of Election, Juſtification, Preſervation and Glorification; ſo when the ſoul is in darkneſſe about the former, and hath no knowledge of that, it is alſo involved in ignorance about the other things. Now how ſoever carnal men know not the ſadneſs of ſuch an eſtate, yet *David's* Pſalms make mention of the heavineſs of ſuch a condition, expreſſing it by all thoſe ſimilitudes which may make it to appear very horrid, He compareth it *to broken bones*, not one broken bone, *but all his bones broken*, What intolerable pain was that? Chriſt who wanted the light of Gods favour in his Agony, though no corporall bone was broken, yet was full of theſe broken bones.

How ſad a condition it is for a truly godly man to want the ſenſe of Gods favour.

1. What a godly man ſhould do that mourns under the ſenſe of the want of Gods favour.

Firſt, *Let him conſider whether ſome ſin, unreformed of, that he liveth in, knowing it to be ſinne, doth not eccliſpe all his certainty*, *Davids* Adultery drave away the ſpirit of gladneſs and joy from his ſoul. Oh that is a curſed joy and confidence which is not expelled by the committing of known groſſe ſins! How can there be Aſſurance & Peace, as if grace were in thee, when thou demonſtrateſt ſuch works of the fleſh and Satan in thee? Is it any wonder then to ſee men who take upon them the profeſſion of Religion, and yet live looſly, tumbling now and then into foul ſins, if they have often an hell upon their conſciences, and frequent terrors upon their ſoul? As when vapours are gathered together in the bowels of the earth, it cannot but make an Earthquake; ſo ſinne gathered together in the heart, will one time or other make an heart-quake. That place *Epheſ.* 4. *Grieve not the Spirit of God*, ſuppoſeth ſinne doth grieve him, and how juſt is it then that Gods Spirit ſhould grieve us?

2. Secondly, *Suppoſe no grievous ſin fallen into makes ſuch a great gulf between him and Aſſurance, that he can neither come to that, or that to him, yet negligent, and careleſſe uſe of the means of grace, will much weaken a mans Certainty.* You heard that place, *Give all diligence to make your Calling ſure*; So that without conſtant Diligence this Aſſurance cannot be obtained; for although ſincere and zealous endeavours after godlineſſe be not the cauſe, yet they are the ſign and teſtimony of Gods love; and ſo without theſe there cannnot be any comfort at all. Fervent and gracious performances of holy Duties are the Oyl, without which this Lamp would not ſhine. When the Apoſtle exhorted to Prayer, That we ſhould make our requeſts known, he addeth, *And the peace of God ſhall rule in your hearts.* It is therefore an unworthy thing to ſpeak of doubting, and complain of the loſſe of Gods favour, and that thou haſt no Aſſurance, when all thy

Duties

Duties and Performances are careleſs and withered.

Thirdly, *If yet thou haſt no Aſſurance, then know that it is a free and arbitrary Priviledge, which God beſtoweth when and where he liſteth.* We did briefly, and ſhall more at large ſhew, that it is the Spirit of Adoption, which doth work that filial affection, and inable to cry *Abba Father*, It is the Spirit of God that doth ſeal unto us, ſo that aſſurance doth not flow from the workings of grace in us by a natural and neceſſary conſequence, but by the immediate diſpenſation of Gods love unto us. Hence 2 *Cor.* 1. God is called, *The God of all conſolation who comforteth us*; For God doth not as a chriſtian friend or Miniſter may do to one tempted about ſin, outwardly propound comfort, and give him arguments of conſolation, but cannot inwardly turne and change his heart; but God he doth ſo outwardly command his people to be aſſured and comforted, that he doth inwardly faſhion and form their hearts to receive it. That ſame power of God in converting grace which is called by the Father *vorticordium*, is ſeen alſo in this of conſolation. God therefore would by this teach us, That Aſſurance is not a flower that will grow of it ſelf in the garden of our hearts. 3.

Fourthly, *Is there the truth of Grace in thee, and thou art not aware of it? Is it with thee as with* Hagar, *who had a fountain of water by her, and ſhe did not ſee it? yet ſtill go on the conſtant exerciſe of thy graces.* Thou art bound to love God, truſt in him, performe all Duties, though thy heart ſhould never feel Gods love to thee; for although the aſſurance of Gods favour be like coals of fire poured upon the ſoul to melt it, yet we ſtand obliged to the ſpiritual exerciſe of holy Duties, though God ſhould not give us this encouragement thereunto, *To him that overcometh, I will give the white ſtone, and the hidden Manna.* This priviledge of Aſſurance is given to thoſe who have a long time been acquainted with God, much exerciſe in his wayes, and enduring much for him. Not but that God doth to new Converts alſo many times diſcover the love of his Eſpouſals to them, becauſe they are moſt tender and need it, being much oppreſſed with ſin. As *Ariſtotle* obſerveth it a ſpecial inſtinct of nature, whereby parents are moſt tender of the youngeſt childe, becauſe that can leaſt take care for it ſelf. 4.

The third Queſtion, *Why doth God when he hath wrought Grace in us, not preſently enable us to believe, and ſee it in our ſouls?* *David*, though the Prophet told him his *ſinne was taken away*, yet in that *Pſal.* 51. how importunately and earneſtly doth he pray for pardon and Joy. Which implyeth, that though God cauſeth this outwardly to be declared to him; yet he did not by his almighty power effectually perſwade him of it, and the Queſtion ſeemeth the greater, becauſe this Aſſurance would be wings and legs in a mans ſervice to God. It would enflame him more to promote Gods glory: and beſides, God loſeth much of his glory and honour; for how can the ſoul rejoyce to give God the praiſe for that mercy which he knoweth not that he hath received? ſo that not to know our pardon, and not to have it, are all one, as to the matter of thankfulneſs: yet for all theſe reaſons, how frequently doth God keep his own people in Darkneſs? How many times are they ready (with *Zion*) to ſay, *God hath forſaken us!* Why God doth not give Aſſurance preſently to thoſe that have true grace wrought in them.

But for all this there are divers good reaſons, why God, though he hath put grace in our ſouls, may yet not publiſh it in our conſciences.

First, *That hereby we may taſte and ſee how bitter ſinne is.* The longer the guilt with the conſequents of it is upon our ſoul, the greater cauſe have we to bewaile it and abhominate it. If grace or the Aſſurance of it were in our power to have it when and as ſoon as we would, how ſlightly and perfunctory would our thoughts be about ſinne? *Davids* length of time under the guilt of murder and adultery, wrought in him greater hatred and diſlike of thoſe ſins. And howſoever it may ſeem to be a ſervile low ſpirit to awe ſinne, becauſe of the bitterneſs of it, and not only becauſe of the love of God, & delight in him; yet no better is the frame of the moſt refined and reformed godly man that is. Be therefore con- 1.

tent under those black desertions, though thou knowest not how it is with thee, yet Gods end is good, to keep thee low and weary of sin.

2. Secondly, *Hereby God would keep us low and humble in our selves.* We many times upon the discoveries of Gods works on our hearts are apt to grow high and contemn others; we are apt to think God hath raised us up above others, that we know & feel more of God than other men do. Now that all such worms of pride may be killed in us, God hides his face from us, and thereby we see nothing but sin and weaknesses in us; all our whol life appeareth to us nothing, but as *Anselms* did to him, *Aut peccatū, aut sterilitas*, either sin or barrennes, When thy heart seeth nothing but sin round about thee, then thou canst lie before the throne of God who is rich in grace, like *Lazarus* before the rich mans gate full of sores; and as *Chrysologus* said of him, that he had *Tot clamantia ora, quod vulnera*, as many mouths crying for helpe, as he had sores, so wilt thou have as many mouths begging for pardon, as thou hast sins and infirmities. It is said of *Moses* his face, that it did shine so, as the people of *Israel* were not able to behold it, and yet he knew not of it. How excellent is it when others can behold and admire the graces of God in thee, yet thou apprehend none of these in thy own self! It was *Gregories* expression, That a man ought *Nesciendo scire, & sciendo nescire*, by not knowing to know, and by knowing not to know the graces of God in him.

3. Thirdly, *God may therefore keep Assurance from our knowledge, that so when we have it, we may the more esteem it, and the more prize it, taking the greater heed how we loose it.* We see the Church in the *Canticles*, when she had despised her Spouses love, how earnest she was to get it again, but it cost her much ere she could have it. *Sol nisi deficit spectatorem non habet*, said *Seneca*, No body admires the Sun unlesse when eclipsed. so neither do any highly esteem the favour and love of God, unlesse when in the losse of it. As it is in temporal mercies, so in spiritual, they are prized *Carendo magis, quam habendo*, by the wanting of them more than the having of them: Dost thou therefore pray, and again pray for Assurance, yet canst not obtain it? then think this delay may be to encrease my appetite the more after it, the more to blesse God when my soul shall enjoy it.

4. Fourthly, *God doth it that thou mayst demonstrate thy obedience unto him, and give the greater honour to him.* For to relie upon God by faith, when thou hast no sensible testimonies of his love to thee, is the purest and meerest act of obedience that can be. Such faith of adherence did Christ put forth in his agonies. A man may desire Assurance, as it breeds peace and ease to his soul, but to depend upon God in spiritual desertions, is wholy to give all to God and nothing to himself; such a faith is a kinde of a spiritual Martyrdome. The way of Assurance brings more comfort to thy self, but the way of believing gives more glory to God. When *Abraham* did not *stagger in his Faith*, though *Sarahs* womb was a *dead womb*, this was giving glory to God. No lesse is thy action, when thou overlookest all thy own sense, feeling and sad temptations, trusting in God for acceptance. To walk by Assurance is a kinde of walking by sense, and it supposeth us children, if we cannot be quiet unlesse in the mothers bosom.

5. Fifthly, *God withholdeth the sense of pardon, that thou mayest be an experienced Christian able to comfort others in their destresse.* This is true of Christ himself, that he was tempted about the wrath of God, that so he might have a sympathy & fellow-feeling with those who are in the like manner exercised. *Paul* makes this end of Gods comforts in his tribulations, that he might comfort others in the like case. He that is not tempted about the pardon of sin, wonders at those who are so afflicted, and therefore is altogether unskilful to apply fit remedies. We see carnal and natural people judge such mad and distracted, they bid them go to merry company, feast and recreate themselves, thinking this carnal plaster will heal their spiritual sore. *Job* 33.23. *Elihu* describing the condition of a man chasten-

chastened for sin, so that he utterly refuseth all comforts, makes it a great mercy to have a messenger that can shew to such a man his uprightness. This messenger he calls *one of a thousand:* make therefore this good use of such temptations, God hereby would raise me up to be a *Joseph* to my brethren in their need.

Let the Use be to raze up the foundations of all carnal presumers. This is a common sin and damneth thousands, insomuch that presumption is made a more grievous sin than despair, for in despair a man is weary of himself, abhorreth his own estate, would if he could admit better counsel; but a presumer pleaseth himself, and so will not hearken to any good admonitions; Oh how sadly art thou deluded, how frustrated will thy expectations be, when thou shalt see nothing but hell and confusion instead of all that joy and comfort thou didst promise to thy own self! The foolish Virgins saw their undone condition, when it was too late to help themselves: do thou fear least thou be plunged into such horrid extremities. The nearer the Haven thou art, if thou suffer shipwrack, the more lamentable it is. The Church made this an aggravation of misery, *We looked for peace, but behold trouble.* *Use.*

SERM. VIII.

Holding forth divers Propositions and Distinctions about Marks and Assurance.

2 COR. 13. 5.

Examine your selves, whether ye be in the Faith &c.

WE come now to the second general part of the second Doctrine, which is, *That there are such Characters and Signes of Grace, whereby a man may know whether he be in the state of Grace or no.* It is a point worth discussion, and I know not any thing more necessary at this time, seeing there are many who wholly cry down Ministers that preach signes of Grace, and discourage Christians that use such a Method for a trial. It is also necessary, because there is much prudence required in the Minister, while he preaches about signes; and it is an art of arts for a Christian, to manage that way, so as not to split himself upon some rock or other. Therefore that this whole Doctrine may be more exactly discovered, consider these introductory particulars.

Introductory Propositions, and distinctions about Assurance.

1. By inherent grace we come to have a supernatural being.

First, *That by the inherent Grace of Sanctification in us, we come to have a supernatural being.* So that as natural things have a natural being by that natural form which is in them: Thus also the godly have a spiritual and supernatural by that infused principle of an holy life in them, 2 Pet. 1.4. we are hereby said to be *Partakers of the divine nature*, 2 Cor. 5.17. Such a regenerated man is called a *new creature*, and indeed the very word of regeneration, or new birth, supposeth a new being, not essentially, but in respect of those gracious habits and qualities which the Spirit of God worketh in him; This also is called the *inward man*, 2 Cor. 4.16. *Nerimbergius* the Jesuite thinketh Paul fetcheth that distinction of an inward and outward man from *Plato*, who maketh such a difference; This work of Grace is that image of God in us, whereby we resemble him, so that godliness is not a notion, a meer fiction, but a supernatural, powerfull reality, whereby a man hath a new denomination, of ungodly he is become godly, even

as in natural things by a phyſical motion, there is a reall tranſmutation, as of cold to become hot; or in moral things, as of a fool to become wiſe. Let not therefore any dream of holineſs in themſelves, unleſſe there be ſuch a powerfull alteration from the ſtate of ſinne. Hence it is compared to the Reſurrection, and indeed Regeneration makes no leſſe glorious change of the ſoul, than that doth of the body, as by the latter *Our vile bodies are made like his glorious body*; ſo our vile and corrupted ſouls are become like his gracious and holy ſoul. *Tully* ſaid, in regard of our ſouls, which he thought a divine ſpark from the glorious Eſſence of God, *Scito te eſſe Deum*, Know thy ſelf to be God: This was upon a dangerous foundation; but we may truly ſay, becauſe of thoſe ſupernatural principles, even the image of God within us, what God once did ironically, *Behold, man is become like one of us.*

2. Inherent grace hath ſomething internal and conſtitutive of it, and ſomething that is flowing from it.

Secondly, *Inherent Grace being thus in us as a ſupernatural permanent principle of holy actions, it hath therefore as all other things have, ſomething that is internal and conſtitutive of it, and ſomething that is conſecutive or flowing from it.* That which is conſtitutive of godlineſs is the nature of the habits of graces with all their particular differences, as *animal rationale* is that which intrinſecally makes a man. 2. There are properties which do flow and iſſue from theſe, and theſe are properly the marks and ſigns, whereby we come to know that grace in us: for as in Philoſophy, *Formæ nos latent*, we do not know the forms or internal conſtitutive differences of things, *Vitrum lambimus, pultem non attingimus*, as *Scaliger* ſaid, only we come to know the nature of things by their properties and effects; hence we have few definitions, but many deſcriptions of things from their properties and effects, all our knowledge being for the moſt part *à poſteriori*, rather than *à priori*, as a man that cannot ſee the Sun it ſelf, becauſe of its glorious luſtre, can behold it in a baſon of water. Hence ſome have denied that we have a demonſtrative knowledge of things, which is from the cauſes to the effects. To apply this to our purpoſe, the inward principle and immediate nature of Grace, is not evidenced unto us, but by the effects and proper motions, even as in a natural life there is no diſcerning of it, but by the motions of life; hence by inherent grace we are ſaid to live, *Gal* 2.19,20. *Rom.*1.17. So that as natural motions evidence natural life, thus do ſupernatural a ſupernatural life; with this difference, that to this latter there is required alſo a peculiar illumination of *Gods* Spirit, *Rom* 8.

3. There are differences about the ſigns of grace.

Thirdly, *There are differences about the ſignes of Grace, even as Grace it ſelf is diſtinguiſhed.* The ſcripture calls thoſe ſeveral gifts of extraordinary Office, Apoſtleſhip, &c. χαρίσματα, *Graces*; ſo that all who have an immediate call from God to any Duty, they have a grace from God; now howſoever all extraordinary Prophets have not wrought miracles to confirm their Doctrine, as *Iohn* wrought no miracles, yet many times they were furniſhed with ſuch a power; hence Chriſt and his Apoſtles by vertue derived from him, wrought divers miracles, inſomuch as *Gal.* 3. this is made an argument of the preſence of Gods Spirit among them.

1. Gift of miracles.

2. Common graces evidences an outward Call.

2. *There are common Graces of Gods ſpirit, and to this there are common effects and ſigns ſufficient*, ſuch are an hiſtorical belief, a viſible profeſſion, an outward acceptation of Chriſt and his Laws, when there may be no inward change of the heart at all: for as God doth call many by an outward call, whom he doth not inwardly call; ſo many do outwardly accept of, and profeſſe the faith of Chriſt, which do it not inwardly; and by this means they have a viſible holineſſe as oppoſite to the unconverted world, 1 *Cor.*7 14. There is holineſs and believing oppoſed to Heathenim and Paganiſm; hence *Heb* 10.29. that Apoſtate who never had true ſanctifying grace, is yet ſaid to be *ſanctified by the bloud of Chriſt*. Hence alſo becauſe of the outward Sacraments men are ſaid to be *in Chriſt*, and to have *put on Chriſt Ieſus*; and upon this ground the Apoſtle writeth to the Churches as a company of Saints, regarding the term from which they are called, *viz.* the world,

world, and the term to which, *viz. Communion and fellowship with Christ.* Now the notes and marks of this common grace are easie and plain, and it may fall out that a visible number of people may have these, so that they are to be accounted a visible Church, and the Ordinances not denied to them, yet be without those signs that do indeed accompany Salvation. But we intend not to speak of such notes and characters that are enough to make one a visible member of the Church, and so to qualifie us that we may not have the Ordinances denied us: in which sense the Apostle, *vers.* 7. of this present 13th. Chapter prayeth to God, that the *Corinthians may do no evill*, which is not meant of evill absolutely, but restrictedly, *viz.* such an evill for which the Apostle should punish with Church-censures, as the context doth abundantly witnesse. It is true, the greatest sort of Christians satisfie themselves with common characters and signs, such as Baptism, external profession, and outward abstinence from sin; from hence arguing for their Sanctification and Acceptation with God: but more of this hereafter. As we must not make the signs of grace higher than the Scripture makes them, so neither ought we to draw them down lower.

4. Marks whereby others may know we believe.

Fourthly, *The Scripture speaks of such marks of grace, whereby others may know that we belong to God, and of such as we may in our own hearts be evidenced thereof.* Of the first see *John* 13 35. *By this shall all men know ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another*; He doth not say, If ye work miracles, if ye raise up the dead, but if ye love one another; now what a kinde of love this ought to be, the Scripture in other places describeth, *viz.* not a love in word, but in deed and in truth; now the knowledge we have of other mens graces is but charitative and conjectural; The Apostle expresseth it by a supposing and a perswasion that faith is truly in such; Though men may give clear & undoubted signs of their wickednes & naughtines, yet they cannot of their godlinesse and piety; because there is not any thing in Religion which may be expressed to another, which may not flow from an hypocritical heart, as well as a sound; yet the Scripture 1 *Cor.* 11. speaks of the end of heresies, *That the approved may be made manifest*, viz. *to others*: So 2 *Cor.* 3. 3. the *Corinthians* are said to be manifestly declared, *To be the Epistle of Christ*, but this in respect only of a moral certainty, so far as men can perceive, otherwise it is made Gods prerogative to know who are his: Therefore the Apostle cals the inwards of a man, τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς καρδίας, *The hidden things of the heart.* In the second place, The Scripture makes such signs, whereby we may know in our selves that we are of God, and his Spirit dwelleth in us, 1 *John* 2. 3. *Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments*; and *John* is very frequent in describing grace by way of signs, in his Epistles, as is more largely to be shewed; now this knowledge & evidence which the godly have in themselves of their own grace, is far more clear and certain, than what they have of anothers; Insomuch that it is made by some to be a certainty of faith, or at least the sense and experiment of faith, howsoever such a knowledge it is that it cannot deceive us, or be deceived.

Signs whereby we our selves may know we are of God.

5. Signs of grace proper to the godly only.

Fifthly, *Those signs which the Scripture gives of grace are proper and peculiar to the godly man only.* So that whosoever hath these hath grace, and he that is without them must also be without grace. Thus *Matth.* 13 the good ground, which is also the good and honest heart, is described by such a temper and constitution, that it differs specifically from those works which are upon hypocrites: So that howsoever that be true of *Calvin*, Reprobates *simili fermè sensu afficiuntur ac electi*) are affected almost in like manner with the elect, yet it is but almost, and the difference between them is not gradual, but specifically, as is more largely to be shewed against *Antinomians* on the one side, and *Arminians* on the other; so that the sorrow, the faith which the godly have differ from that *tanquam*, as it were, sorrow and faith, which the hypocrites have, as the Philosophers say, The matter of the heavenly bodies, which they make quintessential, differeth from that

that of the ſublunary; ſo that no extenſion of parts, intenſion of degrees, protenſion of time, could ever make temporary faith ſaving faith, for *Species non fit ex ſpecie*, as the maxim in Philoſophy is, One diſtinct kinde is not compounded of another, but this matter is of larger debate.

6. Poſitive makes ſignifie more evidently then the negative.

Sixthly, *The Scripture deſcribing the Marks of a godly man makes them of diſferent ſorts, ſome Negative, ſome Poſitive, and the Poſitive do ſignifie more evidently than the Negative.* James 1. 27. *Pure Religion* is deſcribed by many Poſitives, and by one Negative: to be *unſpotted from the world.* Pſalm 15. is a profeſſed deſcription of a godly man, wherein are ſix Poſitives and ſix Negatives; Now it is true, neither Negatives or Poſitives, as they are outwardly and viſibly expreſſed, can be a ſure teſtimony of godlineſs; for a man may do that which is good, and abſtain from that which is evil upon ſeverall corrupt grounds, every one of which is a dead Flie in a Box of Ointment. In the firſt Pſalm, a godly man is deſcribed by his Negatives; firſt, *That he doth not ſit in the counſell of the wicked, nor walketh with the ungodly*, onely Negative ſignes do not come up to ſo full a manifeſtation of grace, as Poſitive; and the reaſon is, becauſe grace lieth moſt in the things we ought to do, and good is more good than evil is evil, and therefore our love to the one is more to be exerciſed than our hatred of the other; Therefore it is a deceitfull and vain way, to argue our grace from Negatives onely, as the Phariſee did, *I am no extortioner, no adulterer.* For God at the day of Judgement will proceed in this form, according to the good things we have done; yet the generality of people have no other claim or plea, but what is upon Negatives, they are no ſuch wicked or prophane perſons; But godlines doth not denote a meer abſence of evil, but a Poſitive concurrence of good.

7. The properties and effects of grace conſidered abſolutely and relatively.

Seventhly, *The Properties and effects of Grace, may be conſidered Abſolutely, as they are Properties, or Relatively, as they are Signs.* Now the Scripture ſpeaks of theſe both wayes, *Gal.* 6. 25. *He that is Chriſts, hath mortified the fleſh with the affections and luſt thereof.* So 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *He that is in Chriſt is a new creature; Old things are paſt away, and all things are become new.* Thus alſo *Rom.* 8. 1. *Thoſe that are in Chriſt Jeſus* are ſaid *to walk after the ſpirit, not after the fleſh.* All theſe Texts and the like, are only indicative, and deſcriptive to thoſe ſubjects who are godly in their Properties; but *John* in his Epiſtles doth ſpeak of theſe as they are ſignes, whereby we know we are of God; as more largely is to be ſhewed. There is a great difference between theſe two, for a Chriſtian may have all the adjuncts and fruit of grace, and yet they not be ſignes to him, for he may be ignorant that they are in him, yea, he may be ſtrongly perſweded through temptation that he hath them not; and how often are the people of God in this ſad darkneſſe, concluding themſelves hypocrites, *A barren wilderneſſe, unſavoury ſalt*, when yet they are the pleaſant Garden of Chriſt! Now if theſe Effects were in them by way of ſignes, it is impoſſible but they ſhould conclude themſelves in a ſtate of grace and peace: *So that to be a ſigne is a Relative Being, by which we are brought into remembrance of ſomething elſe.* Thus the Sacraments are ſignes. Thus *Rahabs* red thred was a ſigne to remember the *Iſraelites* for her preſervation. Then are the Effects of Grace by way of Marks and Signs, when in the beholding of them, we ſee the cauſes that wrought them, we ſee Election, Juſtification, Adoption and Regeneration from whence theſe flow, concluding thus, All theſe great and heavenly things could not be in my ſoul, were not Chriſt and his Spirit there; this rich and glorious furniture could not be in my ſoul, were not the King of Glory there. The flowers of this garden would not ſmell ſo ſweetly, did not the winde blow upon them.

8. Eighthly, *Signs (as to our purpoſe) may be divided into two ranks: Natural*, which by a neceſſary conſequence ſignifie; Thus ſmoke doth ſignifie there

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is a ſire; or *Voluntary* by will and appointment, ſuch as the Sacraments are; for howſoever there be ſome natural Analogy and fitneſſe in the Sacraments between the ſignes and the things ſignified, yet the determinate appointing of ſuch a ſignification, is meerly by the appointment of of God; now concerning the Properties and Effects of Grace, as they are ſignes, we cannot ſay, they are meerly Natural, nor meerly Voluntary, but of a mixt Nature; They are not meerly Naturall, becauſe then whoſoever hath grace working in him, would perceive and know he hath ſo, but experience confuteth that; therefore the Spirit of God witneſſing and aſſuring is required, beſides the preſence of grace in us. It is true, that ſaying of *Auguſtines* is much celebrated and uſed againſt Popiſh doubting, *Quiſquis credit, ſentit ſe habere fidem in corde, Whoſoever doth believe, perceiveth in himſelf that he doth believe.* Hence it is that our Divines ſay, *As he that hath fire in his boſom feeleth fire is there; He that taſteth of a ſweet object, perceiveth the ſweetneſſe of it, and he that is awake, knoweth he is awake; ſo he that hath the operations of Gods Spirit, knoweth that theſe are wrought by God in him, and that he is not deceived.* But howſoever theſe are true in reſpect of the genuine and proper work of that ſupernatural life in us, yet there may be ſeveral impediments from *within* through ſinne, eſpecially unkel ef intervening, or obſtructions *without*, by Gods deſertion and forſaking of us, that we cannot perceive the good things God hath done for us, *Thus they are not Signes in a meer Natural way.* Nor yet can we ſay they are meerly Voluntary ſignes, for the Effects of grace are the proper and genuine fruit of grace; and whereſoever Sanctification is, there is ſuppoſed Juſtification inſeparably. They are therefore evidences of our intereſt in Chriſt, yet ſo as they manifeſt this, *Onley by the light of the Spirit*; as ſome Philoſophers ſay of the Starres, that they have an innate light of their own, but yet they are not conſpicuous and viſible without the light of the Sunne. The gracious fruit of thoſe ſupernaturall principles in us have an aptitude and fitneſſe to make us know that we are in Chriſt, but they cannot actually remove all darkneſſe without the Spirit of God, even as the light of the Sunne onely, not that of the Starres, can diſpell the darkneſſe of the night.

Hence in the ninth place, *We muſt take heed that we do not ſo gaze upon our ſelves to finde graces in our own hearts, as thereby we forget thoſe Acts of Faith, whereby we cloſe with Chriſt immediately, and rely upon him onely for our Juſtification.* 9.
The fear of this hath made ſome cry down totally the uſe of ſignes, to evidence our Juſtification. And the truth is, it cannot be denied but many of the children of God, while they are ſtudying and examining, Whether grace be in their ſouls, that upon the diſcovery thereof, they may have comfortable perſwaſions of their Juſtification; are very much neglective of thoſe choice and principall Acts of Faith, whereby we have an acquieſcency or recumbency upon Chriſt for our Acceptation with God. This is as if old *Jacob* ſhould ſo rejoyce in the Chariot *Joſeph* ſent whereby he knew that he was alive, that he ſhould not deſire to ſee *Joſeph* himſelf. Thus while thou art ſo full of joy, to perceive grace in thee; thou forgetteſt to joy in Chriſt himſelf, who is more excellent than all thy graces: But of this more afterwards.

Tenthly, *The Scripture attributeth Bleſſedneſſe and Salvation to ſeveral Signs thereof.* Sometimes *Fear of God* is a ſigne, ſometimes *Poverty of Spirit*, ſometimes *Hungring and Thirſting after Righteouſneſſe*, ſometimes *Repentance*, ſometimes *Love*, and ſometimes *Patience*: So that if a godly man can finde any one of theſe in himſelf, he may conclude of his Salvation and Juſtification, though he cannot ſee all thoſe in him; and many times the people of God perceive one ſign in them, when they cannot another. So that it is not here in the ſignes of our Juſtification, as the Learned ſpeak about the marks and ſignes of *Chriſt* and 10.

Antichrist, it may fall out that some other have some of the signs which did belong to the *Messias*, but none could have them all, but he that was truly Christ indeed: So there are many descriptions of Antichrist, and it may fall out that some other besides him may have some of those marks, but none have them all cumulatively and collectively, but the true Antichrist It is not so with the marks of grace, for if a man upon good grounds can be perswaded but of one, he may undoubtedly conclude he hath all the rest, though he do not yet feel them in himselfe.

11. Eleventhly, *The signes and Marks which the Scripture makes of true grace, are to be insisted upon or used, although it may fall out that Hypocrites may be strongly confident they have them, when indeed they have them not.* It is therefore no argument against signes of grace, because an hypocrite is confident he hath them, and yet is deceived. The wise Virgins who had prepared oyl, knew their Bridegroom, and went out to meet him; although the foolish who wanted oyl, went out at first to meet the Bridegroom as confidently as the wise; do not therefore despair of discerning the true marks of grace in thy self, because many have falsly perswaded themselves thereof, many a dreamer hath pleased himself that he enjoyed such riches or delicacies in his dream, yet that hindreth not, but that the man awake knoweth when he hath riches, and is not deceived. An hypocrite then, he may be bold, he is secure of Gods favour, he dieth with confidence, calling God his God, and Christ his Christ, it cannot be denied; but this hindreth not that the true believer knoweth he is in the right, and not deceived. As in matter of Religion, the *Turk* is confident of his, the *Jew* of his, the *Papist* as he, yet it followeth not that the Protestant therefore may not confidently know he is in the truth, and all other deceived.

12. Twelfthly, *Signes or Notes of any thing must be according to the Nature of that which they notifie*: So that if the Essence be imperfect, then the marks thereof have also imperfection. This is a rule of grand comfort in practice, for the godly they look for perfect signes of grace in themselves, and if they finde hypocrisie, carnal ends, lukewarmness, or any such distempers, they begin to doubt of their whole estate, but they must consider, that as their graces themselves are not perfect; so neither can the signes thereof be perfect. Hence it is, that although we grant that the godly may, as *Hezekiah* and *Paul* did, take comfort from the truth of grace in themselves, yet it was not from it as a cause, or merit of their Justification, for even at the same time they did also espie much imperfection in themselves.

Serm-

SERMON. IX.

Shewing the Lawfulneſs and Duty of proceeding by way of Signs, and proving that inherent gracious Qualifications within a man evidence his Juſtification.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

Examine your ſelves, prove your own ſelves, &c.

WE have laid down ſeveral Propoſitions tending to the clearer diſcovery of this truth about Signs or Marks of Grace. I now come to ſhew *The Lawfullneſſe, yea the Duty both of Miniſters and people to proceed by this method.* For although my proper work is onely to ſpeak of the fruits of Grace, as they evidence a principle of Sanctification within, yet I ſhall in this graſp alſo that other Queſtion *Of evidencing our Juſtification by inherent gracious Qualifications within us*, this latter being expreſly written and preached againſt, ſo that by this means godly Chriſtians are plunged into ſeveral intanglements of conſcience, and know not how to come out. I ſhall therefore (God aſſiſting) bring Arguments to confirm us in this Duty: onely let us firſt underſtand, What the true practical Caſe and Queſtion is. And firſt the Queſtion is not, Whether a Chriſtian in his firſt act of Faith, whereby he cloſeth with Chriſt, applieth him and is ingraffed in him, ought to ſee inherent Qualifications in him, by way of Signs and Evidences? for this is not poſſible: we muſt firſt by faith be implanted in Chriſt, before there can be any fruits demonſtrating this our inſition in him. The Apoſtle *John*, John 2. 5. maketh the obſervation of Gods Commandements a ſign that we are in Chriſt, therefore we are in Chriſt before by faith; and thus in all the Promiſes, where a Chriſtian loaden with ſin is invited to Chriſt, there is not required a knowledge or Certainty of what condition he is in, Whether his graces be true or no, but only out of the ſenſe and feeling of his own unworthineſſe to approach Chriſt. It is therefore a falſhood to preach thus, Thou maieſt not rely upon Chriſt for Juſtification, till thou haſt certainty and evidence in thy heart, whether grace be truly in thee or no? for the Scripture makes them *bleſſed that hunger and thirſt, that mourn*, and calls thoſe that *are burdened, and they ſhall have eaſe.* although they may not have certainty of the work of grace at that time. This therefore is diligently to be attended unto, becauſe it cannot be denied but at this Rocke many a tender Chriſtian ſplits himſelf.

Inherent gracious Qualifications within us evidence our Juſtification.

The Queſtion ſtated.

Nor ſecondly is the queſtion, *Whether a godly man in ſad temptations, having no light at all, ſhould then make ſearch for the motions and workings of grace in his ſoul?* for that would breed further fears & uncertainties. The ſoul in temptations being like the mudded water, where nothing can be clearly repreſented, & as in the night the imagination is prone to repreſent nothing but objects of fear and terrors; ſo is the heart apt to do in thoſe deſolations: Hence *David* in ſuch exi-

gences calls upon his ſoul *to truſt in God*, and *to wait on him as the only remedy*. And indeed in ſuch caſes, the proper duty of a godly man is to throw himſelf boldly upon the promiſe, and as *Peter* ventured to go upon the waters, when Chriſt called him; ſo becauſe of the Promiſe and gracious invitations, to go unto God, and relye upon him, in which ſenſe *Job* ſaid, *Though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him.*

Thirdly, The Doubt is not, *Whether a godly man ſhould look for perfect Signes, ſuch as will fully riſe up to the obligation and perfection of the Law?* for it is plain ſuch Signes can never be found. Therefore it is but an odious miſtake, when an *Antinomian** argueth againſt univerſal Obedience as a ſign, becauſe no man can perform ſuch, or if it ſhould be limited to purpoſe of heart, yet none hath ſuch a conſtant purpoſe, becauſe of many corrupt ſuggeſtions and concuſſions within by luſts; for none do urge ſuch Signs, and therefore the leaſt grace diſcovered in the ſoul, that is ſincere and upright, though it be not grace to ſatisfie the deſire of a Chriſtian, yet it ought to be a ſign ſure enough to confirm his judgment of his intereſt in Chriſt.

* Dr. *Criſpe* in his Sermon of inherent Qualifications.

Fourthly The caſe is not, *Whether inherent Qualifications of grace, be evidences of themſelves without the luſtre of Gods Spirit?* For all ſay, this certainty ariſeth efficiently from the Spirit of God; Therefore *Epheſ.* 1. ſealing is attributed to the Spirit of God; ſo that we muſt not oppoſe a godly life, or graces to the Spirit of God, but conjoyn them together; even as in the certainty we have about the Scripture, we do not oppoſe thoſe *Argumenta inſita*, imbred arguments that prove the Divinity of the Scripture, ſuch as the ſtyle, majeſty, purity, &c. to the Spirit of God: but we ſay, Gods Spirit doth perſwade in, and by thoſe Arguments; ſo it is here, Gods Spirit doth ſeal unto us our intereſt in Chriſt by thoſe graces which are wrought in us.

Fifthly, The ſcruple is not, *Whether theſe works of Gods ſpirit in us, be to be reſted on as cauſes or merits of our Juſtification?* This is ſuch Phariſaical Popery as is juſtly to be deteſted, we ſay not that a Chriſtian finding ſuch graces in him, ſhould build the comfort of his Juſtification upon them, or reſt on them inſtead of Chriſt, but he is to make uſe of theſe, as Signes of Chriſts dwelling in him, whereby as from an effect of Gods love he may rejoyce in, and be thankfull unto God.

Sixthly, I will not draw in that diſpute neither, *Whether this certainty Gods ſpirit works in the godly, in and through the graces of Sanctification, be the only witneſſing and ſealing that is?* or, *Whether there be not an immediate teſtimony of Gods Spirit to the ſoul, either before or without thoſe gracious fruits of holineſſe?* For my part, I think the former kinde of witneſſing, *viz.* by fruits of holineſs, the only ſafe and ſure way, and which the Scripture doth for the moſt part commend. *Theſe things premiſed, I bring the grounds of this Duty, to proceed to certainty of Juſtification and regeneration, by the fruits of holineſſe iſſuing therefrom.*

Argum. 1. The firſt ſort of Arguments ſhall be *from thoſe places of ſcripture, which are deſcriptive and characteriſtical of true grace from counterfeit*; For therefore are thoſe differences ſo diligently preſſed, that every man may take heed, and diſcern the one from the other: *Matth.* 13. how copious is our Saviour in that Parable to give exact differences between the ſeveral grounds that received the ſeed, that is, the ſeveral workings upon mens hearts by the preaching of the Word, wherein ſome go very farre beyond others, yet onely the good and honeſt heart was indeed accepted. Now upon this our Saviour ſaith, *He that hath ears to hear let him hear*, as if he ſhould ſay, This matter doth deeply concern you, *Examine your ſelves* in what rank you are, how farre the word of God hath prevailed over you. If therefore the auditor could not have told when he was good ground, and when thorny, ſuch deſcriptions had been to no purpoſe; ſo *John* 10. 4, 5. there you have a deſcription of Chriſts ſheep, *They hear his voice, a ſtranger they will not follow, but flee from him*; where it is good to obſerve, that as in other places it is made

made a marke of grace to take heed of ſin, and to love holineſs; ſo here it is made a ſign of Chriſts ſheep, to take heed of errors and falſe teachers; They are afraid of falſe doctrines, as well as wicked wayes: Oh how neceſſary is this ſign of grace to be preſſed in theſe times to people, how afraid ſhould you be of being led aſide from the true faith by any deceitfull pretexts whatſoever. *Col.* 3.12. there you have a catalogue of ſeveral graces, which flow from Election; *Put on (as the elect of God) bowels of mercies*, &c. and generally whereſoever you finde deſcriptions of the properties of godlineſs, there ought we to parallel our lives with thoſe precedents and ſee whether we expreſs them or no.

A ſecond ſort is *From exhortatory places, where we are commanded to make this ſearch, Whether grace be truly in us or no?* Now if ſuch a trial were not lawfull and uſefull, who dare ſay, the holy Spirit would preſcribe it? The Text I am upon, how clear is it, *Examine, prove your ſelves, whether ye be in the Faith?* Now if any one ſhould reply againſt the Apoſtle, this is ſuch a duty as cannot be done, its derogatory to Chriſt, It will make us reſt in our ſelves: how unſufferable had ſuch gain-ſaying been, *Gal.* 6.4. *But let every man prove his own work*, &c. where you have the duty of examining and ſearching the works we do, in the nature, ground, & intentions of them; and this is commanded as a remedy againſt arrogancy and pride, as appeareth *v.* 3. and this is alſo commended from the profitable effects thereof; he ſhall have rejoycing in himſelf alone, that is, his excellency ſhall not to be apprehended by comparing himſelf with others that are worſe, or becauſe he is reputed godly in the judgement of others, but his comfort will be from within: and obſerve, in ſome ſenſe a rejoycing in a mans ſelf is lawfull, *viz.* as it is accompanied with a thankfull acknowledgment of the grace of God beſtowed on a man. But if we ſpeak in reſpect of Juſtification, then all matter of rejoycing or boaſting is excluded. In 1 *Pet.* 1.10. you have a text that putteth this duty out of all queſtion, *Wherefore the rather brethren, give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure*; You will all grant election cannot be made more ſure in reſpect of God or it ſelf, but only in reſpect of us, that we may be more perſwaded of it. And how is that? he ſheweth in the verſes before, by adding grace to grace and cauſing thoſe things to abound in them. This was the way to make all ſure, ſo that to proceed by way of Signes and Marks, is plainly enjoyned out of Scripture. *Argum.* 2.

A third rank is *From thoſe places of Scripture which by way of example and inſtance, do prove, that the godly took their graces for ſigns and teſtimonies of Gods love, and thereby received much comfort*; Yea, urged theſe, as an argument in prayer for mercy, not by way of merit or cauſality, but as the effect of Gods grace, and ſo a further engagement for God to perfect his own work, 2 *King.* 20.3 *Hezekiah* after he had laboured in a further Reformation, than any ever did before him, being the true *Hercules* that purged the *Augean* ſtable, is ſtricken with a mortal diſeaſe from God, and now in what exigencies is he plunged? a great Army againſt him, no viſible ſucceſſour in his Throne, all his reformation is like to goe backwards! In the midſt of all this darknes ſee with what he ſupports himſelf, *Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before thee with an upright and perfect heart*, &c. Thus he uſed his graces for a ſign to confirm. The like did *Nehemiah*, Chap. 13 ſeveral times, eſpecially ſee his expreſſion *verſe.* 14. *Remember me, O my God, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the houſe of my God.* This place proveth no popery, as if *Nehemiah* thought his good deeds perfect, and ſo a cauſe of mercy, for mark his expreſſion *verſ.* 22. *Remember me, O my God, and ſpare me according to the greatneſſe of thy mercy.* Thoſe good deeds needed mercy and pardon, yea greatneſſe of mercy; as it goeth not ſo high to eſtabliſh perfection or merit of works, yet it doth fully confirm this truth, That a godly man may take comfort from his graces as ſignes and teſtimonies of Gods love to him. And whereas *Grotius* upon that paſſage of *Hezekiahs* maketh ſuch a naration of graces by the godly, peculiar only to the Old Teſtament; it is like many other of his notions falſe *Argum.* 3.

and rotten; for *Paul* who was a continuall Trumpet of the grace of God, who counted all his own righteouſneſſe *dung and droſſe to ſet up Chriſt*, yet he proceedeth alſo by way of ſignes, 2 *Tim.* 4.5. *I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, henceforth is laid up for me a crown of glory*; 2 Cor. 1.12. *Our rejoycing is this, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in godly ſincerity, we have had our converſation in the world*, &c. So that by this of *Paul*, you may ſee, that a Chriſtian may at the ſame time exalt Chriſt and his grace, going out of his own righteouſneſſe for Juſtification, yet take comfort alſo from it. The Hiſtory of *Iob* doth alſo abundantly confirm this truth, for when in the opinion of others God had caſt him off as an hypocrite, yet he would not part with the comfort of his integrity till death. In this caſe *Iob* had no immediate conſolations from God, *The arrows of the Almighty ſtuck deep in him*, he poſſeſſed the ſins of his youth, and there was nothing which did ſtay him, but the comfort of his upright heart; ſo that a godly mans ſenſe and feeling of Gods grace within him, is a great bulwark in time of temptations: Neither is that of the Papiſts able to weaken this Aſſertion, when they ſay, Theſe experimental ſuavities which are felt in religious duties, do only beget a conjectural knowledge, not an aſſurance of faith, becauſe the object thereof is not revealed in Scripture; for it may well be granted that this ſenſe of believing is not an act of faith, and that a man doth not properly believe he doth believe, but inwardly perceiveth and feeleth he doth believe, and ſo love God, &c. Yet this ſenſe is not fallacious, becauſe it is from a ſupernaturall principle within.

Argum. 4. A fourth rank ſhall be *From thoſe comparative expreſſions the ſcripture uſeth, when it ſpeaks of Grace.* Thus they are called fruits, *Luke* 3.8. *Gal.* 6. 2 *Cor.* 9,10. Now our Saviour laieth down an undeniable Maxim, Matth. 12.33. *The tree is known by its fruit, a good tree by its good fruit:* Hence a good heart is alſo called a *good treaſury from whence good things flow*, now although trees becauſe without reaſon and ſenſe, know not themſelves by their fruit, but others only do: yet the children of God are by their good fruit both known to themſelves and others, yea more to themſelves than others, *Becauſe no man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of a man:* Grace alſo in the workings thereof is often compared to life, *Gal.* 2.22. Now as a natural life is diſcerned by the actions thereof, as by ſo many ſigns, ſo alſo is ſupernatural life: but as in ſome diſeaſes the party affected perceiveth not any life; ſo neither do the godly in ſome ſad temptations.

Argum. 5. The fifth rank of Arguments may be *From all thoſe promiſſory places of ſcripture, which ſpeak comfort and encouragement to thoſe that have ſuch and ſuch exerciſes of grace: now theſe Promiſes would afford no comfort at all, if a Chriſtian could not by way of ſigns gather when he had them.* The Scripture in ſeveral places attributes *Bleſſedneſſe to him that feareth always*, To him *that keeps the Law of God*, To him *that is undefiled therein*, To him *that endureth perſecution for a good cauſe*, To him *that is pure and meek in ſpirit.* Now what encouragement could any godly man have, if he could not have this practical ſyllogiſm, The Scripture makes him that feareth believeth &c. *Bleſſed:* but I am ſuch an one that doth fear, believe &c. therefore I am bleſſed; now although the *major* of this Propoſition be Scripture, yet the Aſſumption is from experience, a godly man being aſſiſted therein by the holy Ghoſt, and therefore the concluſion is undeniable.

Argum. 6. Sixthly, Another rank of Arguments may be *From all thoſe places of ſcripture that are indicative, or oſtenſive of this truth*; And for this, let us take *Iohn* in his firſt Epiſtle, who is moſt expreſſe in this way, as if he would on purpoſe deſtroy the contrary errour, 1 *Iohn* 2. 3, 4, 5. *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandements*, &c. The Apoſtle compareth our imperfect or hypocritical knowledge with a true knowledge of Chriſt. The true knowledge is operative, and bringeth obedience: The hypocrites knowledge is light only, and no heat at all. Now the Apoſtle laieth down two Propoſitions, firſt, That where there is a true knowledge of Chriſt, there is an obſervation of his Commandments; Secondly, That

That by this observation of his Law we may know that our knowledge is good. To the same purpose also he speaketh in the two following verses; first, For our faith, that it must not only be carried to Christ as a propitiation for sin, but also to him as an example whom we are to imitate, he ought to walk as Christ walked, and by this imitation of Christ (saith the Apostle) we know we are in him, where observe two things; First, That by faith we come to be implanted in Christ. Secondly, That we discover this our being in him by an holy walking; None therefore that plead for sanctification as an evidence of Justification, make our graces to be those things that put us into Christ, and by which we are justified: but these are testimonies and witnesses to declare the truth of our real being in Christ. Proceed we to the third Chapter, *verse* 10. In this the children of God, and the children of the devil are manifest, ἐν τούτῳ in this, that relateth to the axioms going before, *He that is born of God sinneth not*, which is thus to be understood, *viz. He sinneth not*, from such a full and habitual purpose of will, so as that his sin extinguisheth the seed of grace within him; now howsoever this manifestation of the children of God and of the devil to others be but conjectural, yet to the godly man, whose heart by regeneration is cured in part of that innate guile which cleaveth to it, it is clear without any deceit. At *v.* 13. the Apostle exhorteth the godly not to wonder, if the world hate them; and to amplifie their consolation herein he addeth *v.* 14. *We know we are translated from death to life, because we love the brethren.* This is the great sign of godliness, to love another godly man, because he is godly, and the more any is godly, the more to love him: as on the other side, to hate another because his wayes are good, and thine evill (which is too ordinary) is a demonstration thou art of the devil; now this love of our brethren is not a cause of our translation from death to life; for the very word [*translated*] supposeth it a grace of God from without us, but it is a sign only. Now although a Papist loveth a Papist, a Jew a Jew, thinking them more godly, when they are deceived therein, yet that doth not hinder a true godly man from loving another that is godly, and he have solid comfort therein: but more of this hereafter. The Apostle having made love of the brethren a sign, he further explicates what this love is, not a complemental feigned love, but real and operative, for love is like fire, Si *non operatur*, *non est*, if it do not work it is an argument it is not at all, whereupon he maketh this again a sign, by that expression peculiar to the Apostle, hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him, perswade our hearts, as it is in the Greek, which implieth, That though the heart be full of doubts and unbelief, yet the discovery of such grace within us, is able to satisfie our hearts, hereupon *v.* 10. he saith, *If our hearts condemn us not, we have confidence towards God*: Now here are two doubts; first, Whose heart doth not condemn him of much pride, vanity, neglect, &c. therefore none can have confidence: But the Apostle speaks of such a condemning, as is for total and reigning hypocrisie, not for partial corruption which is in the most godly. A second doubt may be of those who persecute the truth and the people of God, as the Jews and *Paul* did, whose hearts did not condemn them, but rather they thought they did God good service; but the Apostle speaketh of Christians endued with the true Doctrine of, Knowledge of Christ out of his Word, and as for such, if their hearts reprove them not for hypocrisie, they have boldnesse with God. This Apostle is very frequent in urging the fruits of godlinesse by way of signs; but these may suffice to confirm the Doctrine. Rule.

The last Argument to prove this method by way of signs, may be thus urged, If a Christian may not gather the grace of Justification and Sanctification by the fruits thereof, it would be for one of these grounds, either first the impossibility of it, as the Papists urge, it would not be possible for a man to know when grace is in him: but that is false, for howsoever a mans heart is naturally deceitfull, yet when regenerated, God takes away that guile in it, and so far as it is spiritual it is sincere and cannot lie; Or secondly, This would be useleſſe, having Assurance *Argum.* 7.

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by Gods Spirit, what needs evidences by inherent graces; This is to light a candle when the Sun ſhineth; but the teſtimony of the Spirit, and the evidence of graces make up one compleat witneſſe, and therefore are not to be diſ-joyned, much leſs oppoſed, as is further to be cleared. Thirdly, It may be thought prejudiciall. and that two wayes, either to Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, as if the comfort from theſe would take us from relying wholly upon Chriſt; but we told you *Paul*, who did ſo omnifie and exalt Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, yet took comfort from his graces wrought in him; or elſe it may be thought the diſcovery of grace in us may make us proud and ſecure; but neither will this follow, becauſe hereby the gracious heart is ſtirred up to more thankfulnes, watchfulneſſe, leaſt we loſe ſuch a treaſure, and to fruitfulneſs.

Let the Uſe be to try our ſelves by this way of marks and ſigns which the Scripture giveth, and certainly there was never a time, wherein marks of grace may be more urged than now: how many place Religion in Opinions, in Diſputations, in Revelations, and the true power of godlineſſe and mortification is altogether neglected; This made the Apoſtle *James* in his Epiſtle, and *Paul* frequently in his to ſpeak againſt the Gnoſticks, a ſect riſen up in their time, that placed Religion in Knowledge, and arrogated that to themſelves only, for which reaſon the Apoſtles ſo much preſſed a godly and holy life: Therefore that thou mayeſt not deceive thy own ſelf, ſtudy the Scripture-characters of grace, it may be all thoſe ſigns, by which thou comforteſt thy ſelf, ſuch as abilities in duties, great enlargements, maintaining a different Church-government from others, are not in Scripture any marks of holineſſe, eſpecially conſider its the property of Chriſts ſheep, not to hear ſtrangers, to flie from errours. Certainly our Saviour *Iob.* 15. deſcribing the branches that are in him, takes no notice of their leaves, their bloſſoms, but their fruit: Oh be afraid leſt Chriſts coming to thee be like that of his to the fig-tree, he ſaw leaves on it, but no fruit; Whereupon he pronounced that curſe, *Never fruit grow on thee more:* So Chriſt did find opinions, diſputations, many abilities and outward duties but no true holineſſe, and therefore he curſed thee, ſaying, *Never fruit grow on thee*, Shoot forth into leaves and branches, but never bear fruit. It is to be feared many live with ſuch a viſible curſe upon them; Holineſſe of life muſt be joyned to the abilities of the head, *Quæ bona opera Chriſtianus facit, tot aureos annulos in digitos miſerit*, As many good and holy actions thou doeſt, ſo many rings thou haſt upon thy hand; Theſe adorn thee more than gold or ſilver.

Serm-

SERM. X.

Further proving the Lawfulneſs and Obligation of proceeding by way of Signs, *and Anſwering many Doubts about* them.

2 COR. 13. 5.

Examine your ſelves, prove your own ſelves, &c.

THere remain more places of Scripture to prove the lawfulneſs and obligation alſo of proceeding by way of ſigns, but becauſe there are different Expoſitions of them, I ſhall rank them in the order of controverted places, which probably at leaſt confirm this truth.

And the firſt is *Rom.* 8 16. *The Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſſe with our ſpirit, that we are the ſons of God.* In which words we may obſerve the Author of the teſtimony, the manner, and the object of it. The Author is ſaid to be *The Spirit it ſelf*, where the Apoſtle makes it no Preſumption or Arrogancy for the people of God, to call God Father, becauſe they are encouraged and emboldened hereunto by the Spirit of God. It is not a deluſion from the Devil, but an Aſſurance from Gods Spirit. In the next place there is the Manner of the Teſtimony, it is a conjoyned Teſtimony, not a ſingle Witneſſe; Therefore it is ſaid *συμμαρτυρεῖ*, it witneſſeth with. It is true, *Grotius* takes the word, though compounded, for a ſimple, *συμμαρτυρεῖ* for *μαρτυρεῖ*, alledging two places for a parallel, 1 *Cor.* 2. 17. 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. where the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of the *Conſcience bearing witneſſe*, but theſe Texts are not cogent, for the conſcience in teſtifying doth witneſſe with another, which is God, and therefore it is called *συνείδησις*, ſo that the witneſſe of the conſcience is not a ſingle Teſtimony. It being therefore to be underſtood of a *Joint-witneſſe*, the Queſtion is, What is the other partner that is joyned with Gods Spirit in this action? Some underſtand the ſpirit of a man not to be the co-witneſſer, but the ſubject onely receiving the Teſtimony, and they render it thus, *The Spirit beareth witneſſe to our ſpirit*, not with our ſpirit. and then, ſome make the joynt witneſſe to be Chriſt, that as *verſ.* 10. the Apoſtle had affirmed, *Chriſt dwelleth in us*, then his Spirit, and that the ſpirit made us *to cry Abba Father*; ſo here, the Spirit, with Chriſt, and the Father alſo ſuppoſed, as if it were the ſame with that 1 *Iohn* 5 7. *There are three that bear witneſſe in heaven.* But others refer it to that *Voice* cauſed in us by Gods Spirit, and that is to be underſtood of the gift of Regeneration. Thus *Chryſoſtom*, the Spirit of God, by or in that gift, which he beſtoweth on us; and in this ſenſe it will be all one whether we tranſlate it, *to* or *with* our ſpirit. So then the meaning is, The Spirit of God *beareth witneſſe unto us*, with thoſe gifts and graces that are the fruit of the ſame Spirit. So that he ſpeaks not of ſuch an immediate Teſtimony, as the Prophets had in their viſions, when they heard God ſpeak immediately to them, but mediately by and with our ſpirits, being enlightned and ſanctified: ſo that although the Spirit of God be the alone Author of this Aſſurance, yet it is in an ordinary way by the fruits of the Spirit. Now the Spirit of God may be conceived

witneſſing this infallibly and ſurely, or elſe conjecturally, and by way of probability. Popiſh Commentators expound it the latter way, but it is very unworthy and derogatory, to make the Spirit of God Author of a conjectural Certainty only, for it being a divine Teſtimony, it cannot but have infallibility: and certainly if he ſaid of the conſcience, which yet hath much errour and falſhood in it, that it was *mille teſtes* a thouſand witneſſes, how much rather may this be ſaid of the Spirit of God? but more of this place hereafter.

Epheſ. 1. 13. The ſecond place is *Epheſ.* 1. 13. *In whom after ye believed, ye were ſealed with the holy Spirit of Promiſe.* Where you have this Witneſſing or Aſſurance expreſſed metaphorically by ſealing, which is uſed to ratifie and confirm things; now God doth thus ſeal us, not for his ſake, but ours, that we may be perſwaded of his love; God doth not ſeal as a Merchant his wares, that he may know them, but as a Father doth his Teſtament, or deeds of Gift, to aſſure his Childe of ſuch favour towards him. But you will ſay, What is this ſealing? The Metaphor will declare it: As in ſealing, the Seal makes an impreſſion of its own likeneſſe in the wax; ſo God in ſealing unto us makes an impreſſion of his own holy image in us, and by this we are aſſured. They therefore who underſtand this ſealing of the extraordinary and miraculous gifts of Gods Spirit, hit not the mark, becauſe theſe were not neceſſary ſigns of Adoption, and alſo they were not beſtowed upon every particular believer; we muſt therefore underſtand it of the ſanctifying graces of Gods Spirit: And here you may alſo obſerve that faith whereby we receive Chriſt firſt, is not the evidence, as ſome plead, becauſe it is after their believing, for the word is in the time paſt: that it is meant of holineſſe, doth appear alſo by the words following, *Sealed by the holy Spirit of Promiſe*, where the Spirit of God is called the Spirit of the Promiſe, either becauſe he doth confirm the Promiſes, or elſe becauſe he is the fruit of the Promiſe; and holy, becauſe of the holineſſe he works in his children, which is their ſealing; ſo that as God the Father is ſaid to ſeal Chriſt, when he gave him thoſe abilities which were required to a Mediator, annointing him with all grace, and witneſſing by miracles he was his Son; Thus doth God the Father ſeal his children to him by furniſhing them with all the graces of his holy Spirit, and by theſe they know they are of God.

1 John 5. 8. The third Text and laſt is, 1 *John* 5. 8. *There are three that bear witneſſe on earth, water, and bloud, and the Spirit.* I ſhould quickly tire you out, to ſpeak all that is ſaid by Expoſitors on this place, I ſhall therefore briefly aſſert this Expoſition, as moſt ſutable to other places of Scripture; *By Water* is meant that purifying and cleanſing from the filth of ſinne, which we receive by Chriſt, ſignified in the outward ſeal of Baptiſm: *By Bloud* is meant that expiation of the guilt of ſin, and ſatisfying of Gods wrath, which is alſo ſealed in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper: And *by Spirit* is meant Gods Spirit, not immediately teſtifying, for ſo it is a Witneſſe in heaven, but by the fruits thereof, ſtirring up faith to a vigorous and powerfull way of holineſſe, by which means we perceive the fruit of water and bloud accompliſhed in our ſouls. But I muſt not ſtay longer on theſe places, I ſhall propound ſome Doubts onely to make this duty of going by ſignes more clear and eaſie to you.

Object. As in the firſt place, *Doth it not argue weakneſſe and unbelief in a Chriſtian to walk by ſigns? Is not this to derogate from the glorious promiſe of grace, as if that were not enough?*

Anſw. 1: But to anſwer, Firſt, *Signs do not argue an abſolute weakneſſe, but comparative only.* In heaven, all Sacraments, which are ſigns and ſeals, ſhall ceaſe. Whether *Adam* had any Sacrament in the ſtate of perfection, is diſputed. The Tree of life is judged ſo by ſome, but it could not be a Sacrament in that particular ſenſe as ours are, which ſeal Remiſſion of ſin and Mortification of it, but in a more general way, for Sacraments have two things in them, 1. That which is general, to continue God to be our God, and we his children, its alſo our communion with others.

others. And in this ſenſe Chriſt was baptized, and was made partaker of other Sacraments (for we may not ſay Chriſt therefore uſed the Sacraments, that he might ſanctifie them, for they were ſanctified by their inſtitution.) 2. There is that which is ſpecial in the Sacraments, *viz.* Remiſſion of ſinne, encreaſe of grace, *&c.* and thus onely the members of the militant Church do partake of them.

Secondly, *It cannot be denied but that it is a more noble and excellent way to believe in the Promiſe, by a faith of dependency and adherence, than to believe upon the ſenſe and evidences of Graces in us, yet this latter alſo is lawfull and encouraged by God.* For therefore it was that God gave the gift of miracles, that by ſuch wonderfull things appearing to ſenſe, they might be perſwaded to believe in God. We have a clear inſtance in *Thomas* John 20. where he is reproved for his unbelief: but upon his ſeeing and feeling the wounds of Chriſt, he makes a clear confeſſion, *My God, and my Lord.* This was lawdable in him, but yet ſaith our Saviour, *Bleſſed are they that believe and ſee not.* Where *Thomas* is not excluded from bleſſedneſſe, though he did believe and ſee, but only the former ſhew forth a more bleſſed work of grace upon themſelves. We may therefore believe becauſe of Gods Word; and we may believe becauſe of ſenſe: this may be an help to our faith, and therefore God hath appointed Sacraments for this end, not that the things we ſee are properly the object of our faith, for *Vbi vides, non fides; Faith is the evidence of things not ſeen.* Thus *Thomas* had one thing for the object of his ſight and feeling, which was the wounds of Chriſts body, and another thing for the object of his faith, which was, That Chriſt was God. Thus in the Sacrament, That which is the object of our ſenſe is not the object of our faith; only we are helpt by theſe, as motives to believe, although therefore to have any help from ſenſe to believe, be a comparative weakneſſe, yet ſuppoſing this condition we are in, it is a duty to be encouraged thereby. Hence he that did believe becauſe of miracles, did his duty, and ſinned not therein: yea, *Ahaz* is ſeverely rebuked, becauſe he would not take a ſigne to confirme his faith in the promiſe God made for the Kingdoms deliverance. 2.

A ſecond Doubt, *When we receive evidence from our graces, do we not receive an humane teſtimony to witneſſe the things of God, and how incongruous is that?* Such as the object is, ſuch the teſtimony ought to be, but the object witneſſed is Divine, *viz.* that we are the children of God, and therefore the Witneſſe alſo ought to be Divine. This ſome have preſſed againſt evidences by ſanctification. Doubt 2.

But firſt, *An humane teſtimony may be an introductory preparation to believe that which is Divine.* And in this ſenſe, there is an humane Witneſſe to the things of God. Thus the woman of *Samaria* witneſſed of Chriſt; and they were moved by her teſtimony, although afterwards they did believe, becauſe of Chriſt himſelf. Thus alſo *John Baptiſt* bare Witneſſe of Chriſt; and in this ſenſe our Divines acknowledge the Authority of the Church, and ſo explain that of *Auguſtine*, who ſaid, *He would not have believed the Scriptures, had not the Authority of the Church moved him.* Anſw. 1.

Secondly, *We ſay not the Graces of Gods Spirit, can or do witneſſe of themſelves, The ſealing and witneſſing is efficiently from the Spirit of God, they are only the means by which Gods Spirit makes known it ſelf.* And therefore as colours, though they be the object of ſight, yet they cannot actually be ſeen without light ſhining upon them: ſo neither are we able to behold the good things God hath wrought ſo us without the Spirit of God. 2.

Thirdly, *The Graces of God thus colluſtrated, are not an humane teſtimony, but divine and infallible.* For its a ſupernatural teſtimony, both in the efficient cauſe, and in the means by which: ſo that as the godly actions we do are not humane, or by the power of free-will, but divine ariſing from a ſupernatural principle of grace within us: ſo neither is this teſtimony or conſolation flowing from it, to be 3.

attributed to our reaſon and underſtanding, but unto God only. The Papiſt indeed makes theſe experimental works of grace within us to be onely moral conjectures, and probable indications of Gods Spirit dwelling in us: onely they ſay, it is ſuch a certainty as many morally exclude all doubting, for they inſtance that we may be as ſure that we are in the ſtate of grace, as that there is ſuch a City as *Rome* or *Conſtantinople* (if we have not ſeen thoſe places) but this is not enough, becauſe they deny them to be the infallible witneſſe of Gods Spirit.

Doubt 3. A third Doubt, *Are not evidences of Grace by ſigns uſeleſſe, ſeeing the Spirit of God doth immediately work in our hearts a ſtrong Aſſurance of faith? and having this Aſſurance, what need we any other?* If we have the Sun, what need is there of a candle? Hence ſome have reduced the whole Doctrine of evidences to two heads; 1. The revealing evidence, and that they make an immediate Revelation made by Gods Spirit to the ſoul. Even as when the Sun beames are immediately darted into a dark room. And the ſecond is a receiving evidence, and that they make faith, and you know it hath formerly been generally received, *That Faith is a full perſwaſion of Gods love to a mans ſelf in particular*; which if ſo, the whole buſineſſe of evidence ſeemeth to be accompliſhed before we come to any ſignes.

Anſ. 1. But to anſwer firſt, *It may juſtly be queſtioned, Whether out of the Scripture there can be proved any ſuch immediat voice ſpoken by Gods Spirit to a man that his ſins are forgiven him and he is in the ſtate of grace?* So that although they take this for granted, that God doth immediately come into the ſoul, and witneſſe unto it, yet we ſee by the Texts opened before, that its more conſonant to Scripture, to make the Scriptures teſtimony active in reſpect of the effects and fruits thereof: Some Divines do not indeed deny the poſſibility of ſuch an immediate Teſtimony, but yet they conclude the ordinary and ſafe way, is, to look for that Teſtimony, which is by the effects, and fruits of Gods Spirit. Therefore when we ſpeak of the Spirit of God revealing, which is often mentioned in the Scripture, we may either conceive of it, as it did reveal in an *Enthuſiaſtical manner* by an immediate influence, or elſe that the Spirit of God doth enlighten the underſtanding to ſee grounds and reaſons, why it ſhould be perſwaded ſo. And here is a vaſt difference between theſe two; we may explain this about the Scripture, A believer is fully perſwaded of the Divine Authority of the Scripture, through the Spirit of God revealing this to him; now this may be underſtood two waies, either *by immediate Dictates of the Spirit*, telling the ſoul it is ſo, or elſe *by enlightning the underſtanding* to ſee thoſe implanted arguments in it, and by them to perſwade of the Authority thereof. As it is thus for the Word, ſo for the work of Gods Spirit in us, we come to be perſwaded of Gods love to us and aſſured of it, not becauſe of an Authority teſtifying this immediately, but becauſe Gods Spirit doth ſo efficiently enlighten the heart, that ſeeing ſuch gracious operations there, we come confidently perſwaded of Gods love to us: Thus the Sunne manifeſteth it ſelf to be the Sunne by the light that cometh from it. A learned man proveth himſelf to be learned by the learning he diſcovers, and thus the Spirit of God by and with the holy operations thereof, manifeſts it ſelf to be the Spirit of God dwelling in us, *Argumento inſito, non extrinſecus aſſumpto*; but of this more in time.

2. Faith not a full perſwaſion. Secondly, *It ought to be denied, That faith is ſuch a full perſwaſion.* The Scripture words which expreſſe faith, ſpeak of it as *Affiance*, and *Adherence*, rather than a *Perſwaſion*, for that is a *reflex Act* in the ſoul, whereby we know that we do know (as the Apoſtle *John* expreſſeth it) and that we do *truly repent and believe*.

3. Thirdly, *Suppoſe ſuch evidences were granted yet, this by way of ſignes were not in vain, for it hath pleaſed God to multiply thoſe things which may confirm our faith.* Thus though every word of God hath immutable variety in it, *Yet he confirmed it alſo with an oath*, after the manner of men, to end all thoſe controverſies which

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diffidence and diſtruſt may raiſe between God and us. The Apoſtle aggravateth this *Heb.* 6. 18. *That by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have ſtrong conſolations.* Again, although God hath given us his Promiſe, and nothing can be ſurer than that, yet he addeth Sacraments to ſeal and confirm his Promiſe unto us; Therefore though ſuch Aſſurances were granted, yet there is great uſefulneſſe of the evidences we have by ſignes.

A fourth Doubt *may be from that univerſall received Maxim, None may be at the ſame time* Reus *and* Judex, *the Perſon queſtioned and the Judge: but this abſurdity would follow, if we proceed by evidences,* for the heart of a man is queſtioned, whether it hath true grace in it, and the heart alſo muſt be Judge of this at the ſame time. Doubt 4.

We anſwer, *This would not follow, for although the heart be in ſuppoſed guilt, and ſo queſtioned, yet the judging of this, is by the Spirit of God, and our hearts not as guilty, but as ſanctified; and all this according to the rules of ſcripture.* Indeed this abſurdity following in a phariſaical or formal man, who is altogether carnal, and hath not the Spirit of God, or any ſupernatural principles; when he acquitteth himſelf, he is both the guilty Perſon and the Judge too; and by this means they give falſe judgment, calling evill good, and darkneſſe light, but it is not thus with believers. Anſw.

A fifth Doubt *may be from the difficulty, if not impoſſibility of any certainty by ſignes:* for to take we any ſign, ſuppoſe love of the brethren, that muſt be explained of ſuch love as is becauſe they are brethren, and of ſuch a love as proceedeth from upright principles, and pure motives, and with many other qualifications, which will be as hard to know, as the inward root of grace it ſelf. Doubt 5.

Now to this we anſwer theſe things: Firſt, *That the Scripture giveth many ſignes and ſymptoms of grace*; So that if a man cannot finde all, yet if he diſcover ſome, yea, if but one, he may aſſuredly gather all the reſt are there, for the whole harmony and connexion of grace is compared to the Image of God, which doth conſiſt of all its due lineaments; ſo that it is hard if a Chriſtian doubt of all, ſo that he can finde nothing of Gods ſpirit in him. Anſ. 1.

Secondly, *There is a twofold Knowledge*, one *Diſtinct and Demonſtrative*, which is *à priori*, from the cauſe to the effect, and that is, when we know the principles and root of grace within us, and ſo proceed to the effects of it. The other is more *General*, and that is from the effect to the cauſe, and this is a knowledge *à poſteriori*, we proceed from the ſtreams to the fountain, and this kinde of knowledge as it is moſt eaſie, ſo we are prone to, and the Spirit of God guideth us in this way, as being moſt ſutable to our natures. 2.

Thirdly, *Although a man may doubt of ſome ſignes, yet it doth not follow he will doubt of all, becauſe his temptation may be ſtronger about one ſigne than another, and one ſigne may be more eaſily perceived than another.* And ſo a godly man may argue from that which is leſſe known, to the other that is more known, even as in the matter of the Canon of the Scripture, ſome have doubted whether ſuch books were Canonical or no, becauſe the Arguments of Divine Authority were more irradiant in the other than in them, yet from thoſe Books concerning the Authority of which they were not tempted, they were at laſt induced to believe the Authority of thoſe that were controverted. In this manner it may be about the ſignes of grace. It is more difficult to finde ſome of them in our ſelves than others, yet we are to proceed from thoſe that are more facile, to thoſe that are more difficult. 3.

The ſixth Doubt, *A man may be eaſily deceived in theſe wayes of ſignes, for this Knowledge conſiſteth of a practical ſyllogiſm thus, Every one that loveth the brethren is tranſlated from death to life, But I love the brethren, Therefore I am tranſlated from death to life.* Therefore a late Authour (*Cornwell* in his Treatiſe of Juſtification, Doubt 6.

pag. 17.) denieth, *The faith wrought in ſuch a practical Syllogiſme, to be by the power of the Lord Almighty, but only in the ſtrength of humane reaſon, and therefore is onely an humane faith.* But this is a very dangerous Aſſertion, and like that which the Jeſuites would impoſe upon the Proteſtants concerning a doctrinal Faith thus, There is *Veroniana Methodus*, by which the Jeſuits would conclude the Proteſtants have no faith, becauſe (ſay they) the object of faith muſt be according to the Proteſtants, *Purum putum verbum Dei*, the meer word of God, but now there is nothing, which the Proteſtants believe, but they conclude it by way of a Syllogiſme, and in this Syllogiſme, the Aſſumption or the meer inference is not in Scripture, or they may erre in making the inference, and ſo they have no concluſion *de fide*. But all this is ſophiſtry, for a proxim and immediate concluſion is in the principle, and ſo believed with the ſame faith that the principle is, and when a man by reaſon makes a concluſion, his reaſon is only the Inſtrument, not the Argument of his faith, his reaſon is not the ground of his faith, nor doth it ſuggeſt the matter to be believed, but is the inſtrument to diſcover it. As he that diggeth in a myne of gold, his inſtruments he uſeth in removing the earth that covered it, do not make the gold, but diſcover it. And as for this practical Syllogiſm, it is not made by meer humane reaſon, for when the ſoul makes the aſſumption, it doth it, being ſanctified and enlightned by the Spirit of God, and ſo is an inſtrument in his hand, for there is the ſame proportion between the Spirit of God in ſpiritual things, and reaſon in philoſophical things; ſo that as in Philoſophy, reaſon makes the *major* and *minor* in any Syllogiſm; ſo in ſpiritual things, the Spirit of God enableth a man to make a whole Syllogiſm for a believers comfort and eſtabliſhment.

Uſe. Uſe of Inſtruction, How much they are deceived, who viſibly expreſſe the power of ſin and Satan in their lives, yet acquit themſelves as the children of God! Oh ſay to thy ſelf, Whoſe Image and Superſcription is this pride, is this earthlineſſe, is this malice and hatred of what is good? Though our Saviour told the *Phariſees*, *They were the children of the Devil, and his works they did*, yet they would flatter themſelves that they were the *Children of Abraham*. Doth not the Apoſtle ſay, *The works of the fleſh are manifeſt, envyings, railings, drunkenneſſe, &c.* Yet how bold are men that live in theſe impieties? Do the Sacraments ſeal theſe things to be done? Doth the Word command theſe? Did Chriſt die to make us ſuch a people? Oh what a mad deluſion is that, that thou ſhouldſt live in lying, ſwearing, uncleanneſs, any groſs wickedneſs, and yet perſwade thy ſelf to be in a good eſtate!

Serm-

SERMON. XI.

Shewing how many wayes men may miſcarry in the work of Self-examination by Signs.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

Examine your ſelves, prove your own ſelves, &c.

I Shall now cloſe up this Text, finiſhing alſo that Diſcourſe about the ſigns of Grace. The work that remaineth at this time, is to advertiſe you againſt thoſe many rocks you may ſplit at, while you proceed by ſigns; for although this method (as you have heard) be lawfull, and a duty, yet there is required much art and skill to mannage this work, inſomuch that herein he ought to have his ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern between good and evill.

Now the miſcarriages about Signs may be divers wayes: As

First, *About Signs themſelves*; and that either on the right hand, or left; 1.

on the right-hand, *By preſcribing to our ſelves ſuch ſigns as are impoſſible to be attained in this life.* Thus there is an Anabaptiſtical and a Popiſh perfection, whereby men are taught to finde ſuch a perfect mark of grace, as that no ſin ſhall be in them, at leaſt for ſome ſpace of time: but it is no marvel if the ſoul be perpetually tormented that ſeeketh for ſuch a ground of comfort within it own ſelf. *John* who 1 *Iob.* 3. makes the keeping of Gods Commandements a ſigne whereby we are of the truth, doth yet *Chap.* 1. 8. ſay, *That if we ſay we have no ſinne, we deceive our ſelves*; yet herein Gods children make many ſad wounds for themſelves, not diſtinguiſhing between the truth and eſſence of grace, and the degrees of it. Whereas the Scripture makes them *bleſſed that hunger and thirſt*, yea it doth often deſcribe the godly by their deſires, and *ſeeking of his face*; now this errour is the more faſtened upon them, becauſe when they read in books, or hear Miniſters preach about the nature and properties of any grace, they are not able to finde it in ſuch a vigorous and powerfull manner in themſelves, whereas they ought to know, it is one thing to ſpeak of grace *in Idea in ſe*, in its own nature and definition, another thing to ſpeak of it, as *in ſubjecto*, as the Subject partakes of it. When the Miniſters of God preſſe any grace upon you, they commonly do it in the abſtracted nature of it, as it hath its perfecteſt lineaments and ſhape, but as this grace is received in the ſubject, ſo it is much debilitated. Dangers on the right hand

But as ſome torture themſelves by ſeeking that in themſelves which cannot be found, *So there are more that turn to the left ſide, making many things ſigns of grace, which are not proper characters.* Thus the Sacraments, outward Ordinances, matter of Opinion and Judgment, great abilities in religious Duties, but all theſe may be in a heart unregenerated, as appeareth in thoſe, who ſaid, *Have not we prophеſied in thy name?* Hence the Apoſtle ſaith, *That neither circumciſion, or uncircumciſion availeth any thing, but a new creature.* They therefore that deſcribe godlineſſe by theſe common Marks, do as *Socrates* (if I miſtake not) that defined a man to be *animal bipes implume*; and *Diogenes* brought a Cock plucked of his feathers, to ſhew this was *Socrates* his man. As a man is to be defined by that onely which is eſſential, ſo muſt a godly man be notified by that only which notifieth Danger on the left-hand.

notifieth godlineſſe. Therefore thoſe many Symptoms, by which many impropriate grace and godlineſſe to themſelves, as outward ordinances, a different way of Church Government, great inward enlargement are no infallible tokens; Therefore to drive people out of their holds, I ſhall in time ſelect the choiſeſt falſe ſigns,, and make diſtinct Sermons upon them; for as the falſe Prophets and Antichriſt ſhall come with falſe ſignes, which ſhall be ſo ſpecious that the very elect will be in danger to be deceived; ſo the hypocriſie and guile of our own hearts is ſo exceeding great, that we many times take our coppet graces for gold. Know then that whatſoever ſigns are taken up by thee, if they be not ſuch as are eſſential, from which there is a neceſſary inference of the ſtate of grace, thou ventureſt thy ſoul upon uncertain reeds.

2. There is danger when we try not our graces by a true touchſtone.

Secondly, *There is a danger about marks of grace, when we try not our graces by a true touchſtone.* When the Apoſtle commands us *to examine and prove our ſelves*, it ſuppoſeth there is a ſure Canon and Rule to go by, which is to meaſure & regulate thoſe things we doubt of, and that is the word of God, which *David* calls *the light and lanthorne to his feet*; and *Paul* commends them as thoſe that are *able to make us wiſe to Salvation*; So that as when we are commanded to *try the Spirits*, and Doctrines of men, there is implied a recourſe to the Scriptures, which is the only Starre to lead us, inſomuch that the whole building of our faith muſt be cut out of this Mountain, and from this brook are all *Davids* to fetch their ſtones, which they ſhall ſling in the head of every *Goliah* (I mean every heretick) inſomuch that in matters of Doctrine, a man doth truly ſay, *Non credo, quia non lego*, I do not believe it, becauſe I do not read it. Thus it is alſo in thoſe injunctions, which are to ſearch and try our hearts, for thoſe do ſuppoſe the Scripture to be the true Standard, and what ſoever is too light or faulty muſt be diſcovered by this; for as God is the *Principium eſſendi*, the beginning or cauſe of the being of grace; ſo Gods word is the *Principium cognoſcendi*, the principle by which we know what is true grace; now from this it is that moſt men do ſo eaſily perſwade themſelves of their being in a good eſtate, becauſe they judge of godlineſſe, by the principles of the world and humane grounds, not by Scripture-directions; Scripture-godlineſſe is as different from the moral mans godlineſſe as the Sunne is from a Glow-worm. Though this hath a little luſtre in a dark night, yet indeed it is nothing but a ſlimy, earthy worm, in ſo much that we may truly ſay of all the civil, morall and refined lives of men in Chriſtianity, who have not the power of Regeneration in them, what *Eraſmus* ſaid of *Seneca*, *Si inſpicias illum ut Paganus, Chriſtianè ſcripſit, ſi ut Chriſtianus, Paganicè.* If you look as an Heathen upon him, then he ſeemeth to you to write as if he were a Chriſtian; but if you look upon him as a Chriſtian, then he ſeemeth to write as an heathen. Thus it is here, look upon many mens lives, they are ſo full of ingenuity righteouſneſſe and juſtice in their dealings, ſo much ſweetneſs and candour in their ſpirits, that if as an Heathen you would look upon them, you would call them divine and holy men, but then look upon them as a Chriſtian, inſtructed out of the Scripture, and obſerve how unacquainted they are with a broken & a contrite heart, how ignorant of Faith and the inward work of Regeneration, then you will ſay, they are only baptized Heathens, for even among them we can ſhew ſuch men. If therefore you would not precipitate your ſoul into a gulf, take up the right rule, before you go to meaſure your ſelves. Thou maieſt be admired and much applauded by others for thy goodneſſe and piety (as the Phariſees were) and yet be abominable before God.

3. Or when we make uſe of ſigns in a prejudicial way to the immediate acts of faith.

Thirdly, *Then do we miſcarry about Signs, when we make uſe of them in a prejudicial way to thoſe direct and immediate acts of Faith, whereby we receive and apply Chriſt to our ſeu's.* For the great work of a Chriſtian is out of the ſenſe and feeling of its own want and ſpiritual poverty, to roll himſelf, and reſt only upon Chriſt for Atonement and Reconciliation, that is that faith ἐπὶ τὸν χριστὸν, (a phraſe not known to humane Authors, which the Scripture ſo often requireth and commands:

mands; This is that whereby we are justified; this is that whereby we set up Christ, and give glory unto God. Now it many times falls out, that while a godly man is poring and digging into his own heart to finde grace there, he forgets to exercise applicative acts of Faith, so as thereby to close with Christ. Alas, though the sight of the graces be comfortable, yet that of Christ ought to be much more. These graces are but the handmaids and servants that wait upon Christ, they are but tokens from him, they are not himself: A man is not only to go out of his sins, but also out of his graces unto Christ. See *Paul*, Phil. 3. how excellently doth he debase all his own graces to be found in Christ. Let not therefore the desire after inherent righteousnesse make thee forget imputed righteousnesse; This is to take the friend of the Bridegroom for the Bridegroome it self; and for this end (without doubt) it is that the people of God are so often in darknesse and have no light, see no comfortable sign or token of Gods love unto them, that so they may stay themselves upon God. This trusting in God and in Christ, when we feel nothing but guilt and destruction in our selves, is the greatest honour we can give God, and therefore though the living by signes be more comfortable to us, yet the living by faith is greater honour to God. Hence it is that the life of a godly man, is called a life of faith, because though God may many times encourage him with those sensible evidences, yet he doth more frequently call them to combate and conflict with sense & reason. Do not therefore be unacquainted with this way of relying on Christ in the midst of all darknes, for God many times will cause an eclipse of thy signs, thou shalt many times look into thy heart, & find no comfort at all, see nothing but barrennes, hypocrisy & every thing that may make thee tremble & be astonished at thy self, & then the immediate depending upon, & adhering unto a promise, will be thy only refuge.

4. *We miscarry about Signs, when we make them more than Signes, even grounds and causes of our comfort and hope, thus making them in Christs stead.* The fear of this hath made many so hot against signs; but these things may well be composed; comfort by signs and recumbency only upon Christ, and when we go further to take pride in them, or put carnal confidence in them, this is woful wronging our soules. It is worthy our observation, when Peter in the name of the apostles *Mat.* 8. 24. had professed *they had left all and followed Christ*, with some kinde of pride and carnal confidence, thereupon asking, what should they have? our Saviour to humble them, and to keep them low in their own eies, speaks a parable to infer this truth, *That many which are first shall be last, & many that are last, shall be first*, which whether you expound in this sense (as some do) many that were first, both in order of time and zeal of affection to do God service, yet wanting the truth of grace and inward humility, *Shall be last*, that is none at all in the Kingdome of heaven, or if you explain it (as others) *Many that are first*, that is, who have been exceeding forward and active for God, and that with truth of grace, yet being puft up with pride, and trusting in themselves, as the Apostles at that present were; *Shall be last*, that is, shall have lesse glory and honour in heaven. Whether (I say) of these Expositions you take, they are both terrible, and sufficient to take us from pride and security, when we discover Gods graces in us, the discovery of grace in thee, is to make thee walk more comfortably and thankfully unto God, not to cause any tumors or swellings in thy own self.

4. Or when we make them more than signs.

5. *When we try our selves by signs, we shall deceive our own selves, if we cast not out two cursed corrupt principles out of us, the former is* Self-love, *and* Self-flattery, *whereby we perswade our selves of grace, when there is no such matter.* Hence the Scripture bids us, *Commune with our own hearts, and search and try our wayes*, which supposeth that without diligent scrutiny, we shall alwayes be strangers to what is in our own souls. Thus many deceive their own souls, saying, They do repent, they do believe, they do Love God with all their heart, when (alas) they know not the power of these things upon their own souls, thy heart is naturally a liar, and therefore believe it not. Thus the Pharisees did not know

5. And when we cast not away self-love and self-flattery.

their own hearts, when they prayed, faſted and gave alms: Thus the Jews did not know their own hearts, when they cryed *The Temple of the Lord*, and abounded in Sacrifices. This knowing of our own hearts is a ſupernatural leſſon, taught only by the Spirit of God. Oh this ſelf-flattery, how doth it damn its thouſands, men making it no queſtion, but they do repent and love God, when yet Chriſt hath ſaid, *Many are called, but few are choſen*, that is of thoſe many that are called by God to the enjoyment of Church-Ordinances and Priviledges few have thoſe true works of grace, which are proper to the elect only! O how ſhould this terrible ſentence ſpoken by Chriſt himſelf, make the queſtion again and again, yea a thouſand times again, whether thou art called only, and no more, not choſen at all! for they are few.

The other ſinfull principle to be ejected, is *unbelief and ſuſpicious jealouſie over our ſelves*, not giving credit to what we ſee and feel in our own ſouls, but argue and cavil againſt it. For as while a man is in the ſtate of unregeneration, he is alwaies in love with himſelf, and cannot be brought to loath and diſlike himſelf, as you ſee in *Paul* while unconverted; ſo when the Spirit of God hath throughly humbled us, made us ſee our beaſtlineſſe and filthineſſe, then we run into another extream, not taking notice of, but even denying the work of God upon our hearts; Their hearts did once ſo deceive them, that now they know not how to truſt them any more. Hence the people of God are ſubject to no temptation ſo much as this, Whether they be ſincere and upright, they look only to the evil they finde in themſelves, not the good God hath wrought in them; whereas it is their duty to take notice of all the good God hath vouchſafed to them; for how ſhall they be thankfull unto God, and acknowledge him, if they be ignorant herein?

6. And when men take not the fit ſeaſon to examine themſelves in,

Sixthly, *When they do not take the fit ſeaſon, then they alſo are in danger of miſcarriages.* Now then it is unſeaſonable, when they are full of dark, and black temptations, for then are they in a miſt, and not able to ſee things aright, while *He-man* is diſtracted with Gods terrors upon him, that doth eclipſe his judgement; How often doth *David* in ſad exigents think God hath forſaken him? When the looking glaſſe is broken in ſeveral pieces it doth repreſent the face of a man much deformed; The muddied water is not fit to give the true ſhape of the face, and thus it is here, the heart full of temptations within, and ſollcited with Satans injections from without, putteth the ſoul upon an amazement. The inceſtuous perſon, though truly repenting of his ſin, yet takes no comfort, but is even ſwallowed up by Satan, Signs thereof from within do not at ſuch times affect, and no marvel when Gods ſigns without, the Sacraments that are ſeals of his love, do not perſwade him.

7. Alſo when no ſign will ſuffice till they have an actual perſeverance to the end.

Seventhly, *When they apprehend no Sign ſufficient, unleſſe they have had an actual perſeverance to the end.* Now although it be true, that the good ground differed from the bad, in that it held out to the end, yet that was not the only, nor the principal difference, but this perſeverance was an effect flowing from the nature of the good ſoyl. Although therefore afflictions and perſecutions do detect the falſeneſs of many as appeareth *Matth.* 13. yet it doth not follow, that therefore none can have Aſſurance, but ſuch who are come to their journies end. The *Arminians* indeed much preſſe this, and therefore they hold, *There is no abſolute and peremptory Election, but upon perſeverance in faith and obedience.* Hence they joyn with that of the Poet, *Ante obitum*, No man is happy before his death, becauſe they may decline and apoſtatize from what they had. It cannot be denied but the revolt and degeneration of thoſe who have ſeemed pillars in the Church of God, hath much affrighted the godly, making them alſo fear, as if one day or other, in one temptation or other they ſhould fall away: but they are to conſider, That whereſoever grace is already truly wrought in a mans heart, there God hath made a promiſe to keep us till the end, ſo that we may be aſſured of perſeverance as well as of our preſent righteouſneſſe, for *God who beginneth a good work*

works in us, will alſo make an end, and we have a gracious promiſe of Gods care to us in the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *That as he gave us being at firſt, and bore us in his arms, ſo he will alſo carry us on to old age it ſelfe*, as Gods grace hath planted, ſo he will water it, and give encreaſe to it.

Isa. 46. 3, 4. 8.

Eighthly, *When in the ſearching for evidence by Signs, we do not above all pray to God for his Spirit, ſo to enlighten our eyes, that in and through theſe Marks we may come to be perſwaded.* For the Spirit of God is the efficient cauſe of all this Certainty; Even as it is in matter of Doctrine, though a man reade the Scripture again and again, though he diligently peruſe all Authors that are diligent in writing of Arguments for the truth, yet all theſe do not move him, till the Spirit of God ſet it home upon him; So likewiſe about ſin, though a man read the threatnings over and over, though he know himſelfe guilty of thoſe ſins the word of God condemneth, yet all this doth not touch his heart, to make it bleed, till Gods Spirit doth convince him: After this manner it is in matter of evidence. Although thoſe godly exerciſes of grace be plentifull and copious in thee, yet thy heart is not perſwaded of this, till Gods Spirit eſtabliſh and confirm thy heart. Do not therefore think that by the ſtrength of thy natural light thou canſt attain to this certainty.

8. And when in ſearching for evidence by ſigns, we do not above all pray for the Spirit to enlighten us

Ninthly, *When we think it a duty not to lay hold on Chriſt at all, till we have this Certainty by Signs.* Believers are very prone to think, that the firſt work they have to do, when called to God, is to ſee whether they have true qualifications in them; and upon the Certainty of this, then to apply Chriſt for Juſtification. But this is not the Scripture method, for that cals the hungry, the thirſty, the loaded and burdened; and where this need and deſire of Chriſt is, ſuch are called *to come unto him*; Therefore certainly that we have truth of grace is not an antecedent to juſtifying faith, but a conſequent fruit of it. Hence that received opinion, *That faith is a fiducial or ſtrong perſwaſion that my ſins are pardoned*, hath juſtly cauſed many doubts, for this is not juſtifiying faith, but a fruit of it. Hence *Epheſ.* 3. we are ſaid *To have boldneſſe and acceſſe to him through faith.* And when the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 2. ſaith: *The life he liveth is by faith in Chriſt, who gave himſelfe for me, and loved me*; he was not juſtified by this believing, but this did rather ſuppoſe him juſtified before, and united to Chriſt by a precedent act of faith.

9. Or when we think it a duty not to lay hold on Chriſt till we have this certainty by Signs.

If therefore a Chriſtian ſhould not come into Gods preſence, or lay hold on a promiſe, till he have this aſſurance of his inward qualifications, he may be debarred all his life; and the truth is, the ſoul in time of ſtraits, is like *Eſther* to go into the Kings preſence, though it perceive not the ſcepter held out. We muſt not be aſſured and then lay hold upon Chriſt, but by laying hold on Chriſt we come to be aſſured: Chriſt, many times doth that for a godly man, which in another caſe he ſaid to *Peter*, *Thou knoweſt not yet what I do to thee, but thou ſhalt know.*

Laſtly, *We miſcarry about Signs, when we compoſe not our ſelves, and put our ſelves in a diſpoſed and prepared way to receive this evidence of Grace*; For we muſt not expect that God will aſſure us whether we will or no. We by our unbelief and peviſhneſſe may refuſe thoſe good conſolations the Spirit doth offer; So that although this ſealing of Gods Spirit be efficiently from him as converſion alſo is, yet we may in the former as well as in the later reſiſt the Spirit of God: And it is a great ſin to rebell againſt Gods Spirit, whether convincing of ſin and duty, or comforting againſt doubts and diſtruſts: yea, this is a greater ſinne, for though the Spirit of God do convince, reprove, yet it hath a denomination from this operation eſpecially, that it is a Spirit of Adoption enabling us to call *Abba Father*: Therefore when we do peeviſhly refuſe the Spirits work herein, we do in a moſt eminent manner oppoſe it in that wherein its greateſt glory is.

10. And laſtly, when we compoſe not our ſelves, &c.

SECT. II.

Containing many true and false Signs of Grace.

SERM. XII.

Handling Obedience as a Sign of Grace.

1 JOHN 2.3.

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.

I Have at large discussed the Doctrine and Usefulnesse of Signs, I shall now propound in so many distinct Sermons, several choice and select Signs, by which you may know how it is with you in reference to God. For if the Heathens did so much admire that saying as an Oracle, *Nosce teipsum*, Know and be acquainted with thy own self, when yet they had neither true eyes, nor light to discover themselves by, how much rather doth this duty lie upon us, when by Gods grace we may have the seeing eye, and a sure light of Gods Word to guide us therein? And the first sign shall be, *An universal respect unto, and observation of Gods Commandments*, out of the words read unto, whereof the coherence is as followeth: The Apostle in the verses before, having comforted the children of God against their daily sins of infirmity, which cannot be avoided, he returneth again to his scope, which is to presse holinesse of life; and certainly our faith ought to be as busie in embracing the precepts for holinesse, as the promises for comfort. The Argument for sanctity pressed by the Apostle, is from the profitable effect thereof, it will be a sure and comfortable sign to confirm us that we are in Christ; for to know God, to love him, to be in him, to dwell in him, to have Communion with him, are all one with this Apostle.

So that in the words you have two Propositions.

First, That the knowledge of God makes us to keep Gods Commandments.

Secondly, That this observation of Gods Commandments is a sign by way of an effect, to assure us that we know God, which is the cause.

In the first Proposition you have the Antecedent and the Consequent. The Antecedent is knowing of God; howsoever according to the Hebrew rule this

word *Knowing* ſignifieth *Affectus & effectus conſequentes*: the affections and effects flowing from it, and ſo includeth love of God, and the like; yet it doth more properly ſignifie faith, according to that, *This is eternal life, to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent*; for faith having ſeveral acts, knowledge, aſſent, fiduciall application, the Scripture doth by a *ſynecdoche* expreſſe the whole nature of faith by one act of it. Now becauſe there is a threefold knowledge, The firſt perfect, which is onely in heaven; the ſecond imperfect, but true and ſaving, which the godly only have; Hence Regeneration, *Jer.* 31. is expreſſed by this, *They ſhall all know God and be taught of God*: A third knowledge which is imperfect and inſincere, is that common gift of Gods Spirit upon temporary believers, whereby though they know the ſenſe and meaning of divine truths, yet have not the ſaving effect and power of them upon their hearts, in which ſenſe our Saviour making that open confeſſion, and celebrating Gods power and ſoveraignty, ſaith, *The things of God were hidden from the wiſe and prudent*, Matth. 11. 25,26. That is, the Scribes, Prieſts and Phariſees, who though very intelligent of the meaning of the ſcripture, yet having not their eyes in a gracious manner enlightned, therefore had thoſe divine things hid from them. A notable thing it is, and worthy all your conſideration, and trembling at it, that the very things you know in Religion by parts and abilities, may yet be hid from you, in reſpect of any ſaving knowledge; Therefore to declare what kinde of Knowledge this is, obſerve the conſequent, it is that which is operative and quickens us up to the Commandments of God; for that proper and ſpecifical difference, whereby ſaving faith is diſtinguiſhed from the hypocrites, is in the cleanſing and purifying nature of it, whereby it *worketh by love*, ſo that love is not the form of true faith, but to be operative and effective of love. Now according to the three-fold knowledge ſpoken of, *Zanchy* doth well obſerve, there is a three-fold keeping of the Commandments; for as our knowledge is, ſo is our holineſſe. The firſt is, *perfect and compleat*, as Chriſt did, and the Saints in heaven do perfectly love God. The ſecond is *imperfect but ſincere*, though the Scripture calls it perfect, becauſe of the eſſential perfection, though it hath not a gradual. The third is *external, with ſome internal affections, but altogether unſound*. The Apoſtle as he meaneth the ſecond kind of knowledge, ſo the ſecond kinde of obſervance of the Commandments, and howſoever the tranſlation be in the preſent tenſe, *We know that we know him*, yet in the original it is, *We have known him*, whereby its plain, That good works do not go before Faith or Juſtification, but follow it. The ſecond Propoſition is, that the keeping of Gods Commandments is a ſign that we do know him, ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν, by which he doth not mean a conjectural knowledge, as the Papiſts would put it off, but a ſure and certain knowledge. Now although the Apoſtle ſpeaks indefinitely, when he ſaith, *Keeping the Commandments of God*, yet becauſe it is in a neceſſary matter, the Aſſertion is equivalent to an univerſal.

A three-fold Knowledge.

A three-fold keeping the Commandments.

Obſerv. 2. Obedience to God a ſign of Grace.

Hence the Doctrine is,

That an univerſal reſpect to, and keeping of Gods Commandments, is a ſure ſigne and infallible of our being in the ſtate of Grace.

Thus *Chap.* 3. 22. he makes this to aſſure us in our prayer, becauſe we keep his Commandment, and do that which is well-pleaſing in his ſight.

Wherein it is impoſſible to keep Gods Commandments.

The Doctrine is to be opened in many particulars:

Firſt, There are ſome conſiderations in which it is impoſſible to keep the Commandments of God, not *abſolutely* and *in ſe*, as it is for a man to fly, for ſo it would be blaſphemy to ſay, He commands impoſſible things, to do ſo cannot ſtand with his Juſtice, Wiſdome and Holineſſe: but only its impoſſible by accident through our corruption, who as the Saints in heaven have *Felix neceſſitas* as *Auguſtin* called it an happy neceſſity of obeying God alway, ſo have we *infelix neceſſitas* an unhappy neceſſity of diſobedience continually. Now this impoſſibility is two ways.

First, *In reſpect of every unregenerate man*, who is dead in ſinne, not ſick or diſeaſed, but dead in ſin, and God juſtly doth require of us under pain of condemnation

nation to obey his Law, though we have lost the power. Neither is this as the *Arminians* say, as if a Judge should sentence a mans eyes to be put out for a former fault, and then afterwards hang him, because he cannot see, for it lieth not as a moral duty upon a man to see; nor hath any Magistrate such supream power over a man, as God hath over us. And by these commands of God is demonstrated our duty only, not our ability: hence God makes it his promise, *To give us a new heart, and to make us to walk in all his statutes*; and although *Arminians* think it an absurdity to make the same thing *Requisitum* and *Promissum*, a condition required, and yet a gift promised; there is nothing more ordinary in Scripture.

2. A second impossibility of keeping the Commandments is, *In respect of the Regenerate, to whom God giveth not such a measure of grace, as that they are able to keep them according to the perfect obligation of it.* Rom. 8. 3, 4. We keep Gods Commandments in truth, not in perfection, not but that God is able to give us perfect grace, but he hath thought good to exalt imputed righteousnesse, rather than inherent in this life.

3. A third impossibility of keeping the Commandments of God, is not only *Collectively*, that we are not able to keep them all, but fail in some, but *distributively*, there being not one Commandment we are at any time able to keep in any duty perfectly. And although it be easier to bring Arguments to prove we sin sometimes, and do not keep all the Commandments we should, than to prove we sin in every good duty, yet *Rom.* 7. 19. *Gal.* 5. 17. do strongly confirm, that because of the innate corruption still abiding in us, we are not able to do any thing so perfectly as the Law requireth: in the most holy men there are both *Defectus privantes*, and *Affectus obstantes*, defects depriving us of the inward purity that ought to be in us, and affections contrarily withstanding the obligation of the Law.

How it is possible to keep the Law.

In the next place we will shew the possibility of it, and that is, first, *By a sincere inchoate Obedience*, whereby we know God in part, love him in part, though not to such a full degree. This is affirmed of the godly, therefore it is possible, *Luke* 1. 6. Thus *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* are said to be *Righteous before God, walking in all his Commandments. David* saith, *Psal.* 119. *He shall not be confounded when he hath respect to all his Commandments.* As the people of God have done this, so God hath promised this, *I will circumcise their hearts to love me with all their heart and minde.* So *Jer.* 31. and this is the universal keeping of Gods Commandments spoken of in the Text, and much pressed in several places; for there is the truth of all Obedience, though not the gradual perfection. It is no wonder that the people of God are said to keep the Law of God, seeing they endeavour after it, and its usual in *Philosophy* to call motions from the *terminus* to which they tend. Regeneration is the *writing of the Law in their inward parts*, whereby the Law is not a burden, but pleasing and matter of delight to them, as *Paul* professeth it was to him, *Rom.* 7. And by this means the Apostle saith, *We do not abolish the Law, but establish it*, because the grace of God giveth such ability and strength, that in some measure we are able to obey it: So that the act of Faith *ad intra*, which is receiving of Christ, must not be opposed to, but conjoyned with that act of faith *ad extra*, whereby we walk in all the Commandments of God. 1.

2. Secondly, *The possibility of keeping them is in an evangelical sense*, that is, when whatsoever we fail in, is pardoned unto us, for so it is through the Covenant of grace, that when we have sincerely applied our selves to the obedience of the whole Law, and falling short of our duty in many respects, God through Christ doth forgive us, and so our righteousnesse consists more in the remission of what is imperfect, than in doing what is perfect. In this sense *Rom* 8. 3, 4. Christ is said *to come in the flesh, that the righteousnesse of the Law may be fulfilled in us*: and Rom. 10. *Christ is the end of the Law for righteousnesse to the believer*, not to the worker, so that in all exercises of sanctification we are to have a greater respect to what God doth forgive, than what we do, which hath made some say, Our perfection is to acknowledge our imperfection.

Thirdly

3 Thirdly, *We may be ſaid to fulfill the Law, when although through daily infirmities we fail of the ſtrict obligation, yet we do not by any groſſe ſin break it.* In this ſenſe we keep it *ſine crimine*, though not *ſine vitio*, as *Auguſtine* ſometimes, that is, without a crime, though not without ſin. And although they are but few that do ſo, yet ſometimes God gives ſome of his children to walk in ſuch harmleſſe and ſpotleſſe lives. Thus *Luke* 1. 6. *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* are ſaid to *be blameleſſe*. *Phil.* 2. 15. That ye may be *blameleſſe and harmleſſe, the ſons of God in the midſt of a crooked generation*: So it's required in a *Biſhop that he be blameleſſe*, that is, not without ſin, but without crime, for which he may juſtly be cenſured, in which ſenſe the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 13. prayeth, that the *Corinthians may do no evill*, that is, no ſuch crime, for which the Apoſtle ſhould inflict a Church-cenſure, as formerly we aſſerted. Thus you have heard in what ſenſe we are ſaid to keep the Commandments, the former and the latter being pertinent to our ſcope.

In the next place, let us conſider how it is a ſign, for even when ſigns are agreed on, yet there may be much deceit about the explication of the ſign, cutting it too ſhort, or ſtretching it out too long.

How obedience to Gods Commandments is a ſign of grace. 1. Therefore in the firſt place, *This univerſal obſervance is ſeen, when our Obedience is internal and ſpiritual as well as external.* Could a man anſwer all the affirmative and negative precepts in the outward converſation, yet if not ſpiritual in all theſe, they were as a body without a ſoul. And herein the Phariſees hypocriſie was diſcovered, they reſted wholly upon the outward obedience of the Law, when their hearts were *Dens of thieviſh luſts*; Hence our Saviour did ſo often preſſe them to make clean and waſh the inward man: *The Law is ſpirituall*, ſaith *Paul*, and *God is a Spirit*, ſaith our Saviour, *ſeeking them that worſhip in ſpirit and truth*. Hence *Mat.* 5. our Saviour ſpends many words to convince the Phariſees that they were horrible violaters of Gods Law, wretched *Adulterers* and *Murderers*, though guilty of no ſuch outward crimes. Oh what a piercing and diſcovering ſign muſt this be. This makes the moral, yea and religious man, whoſe piety is only in the outward exerciſes of grace, to be without any hope. Alas all theſe externals are nothing if there be not an inward ſpiritual rectitude of the whole man. Hence *Paul* excellently, *Rom.* 7. *I delight in the Law of God, in the inward man.*

Object. The *Antinomian* pleads, *That this univerſal Obedience cannot be a ſign of grace, becauſe* Paul *while unregenerated performed it, as appeareth* Act. 13. 1. Act. 24. 16. *where* Paul *ſaith*, He lived with a good conſcience void of offence both towards God and man; *Here* (*ſay they*) Paul *lived in an univerſal Obedience unblameably, and kept intirely to his conſcience, yet was not in Chriſt.*

Anſw. A diſtinction about a good conſcience. But to anſwer this, A good conſcience may be called good in a two-fold reſpect, either when a man liveth not againſt the dictates of his conſcience, or doth any thing againſt that, as thoſe Chriſtians did, whom *Paul* compelled through fear of death to blaſphem: & thus *Paul* had a good conſcience, becauſe he verily thought he was bound to do as he did: in this ſenſe a Papiſt, a Jew, any Heretick may be ſaid to have a good conſcience. Or elſe a conſcience is ſaid good, when renewed by Gods Spirit, and rightly informed and regulated by Gods word; and thus *Paul* had a very evil conſcience, in which reſpect he called himſelf a *perſecutor*, and *the greateſt of all ſinners*, and ſo by the way you may ſee its no argument of comfort for thoſe who broach any damnable hereſies, to excuſe the matter, ſaying, Are they not conſcientious men? Are they not to be pitied rather than puniſhed? Is it not according to their light? All this might have been ſaid for *Paul*, yet for all this his conſcience was a very evil and wicked conſcience, partly becauſe it was not renewed, partly becauſe it was not informed out of Gods word.

Secondly, Though *Paul* walked with a *good Conſcience, and that towards God as well as man*, yet that was for externals onely, he was not acquainted with all the ſinfull motions of his heart, how much diffidence, ignorance, lukewarmneſſe, love to the world, his credit and glory was in him more than of God, he did not perceive. Now Gods Law requireth that internal good frame above all. That *Paul*

wa[s]

was thus at that time, appeareth evidently Rom 7. where the Apoſtle mentioning that former time of his life, ſaid *He knew not luſt to be ſinne till the Law ſaid thus againſt it, and that he was alive till then*, had good confidence and perſwaſion in himſelf, but afterwards *he died*, he was quite out of love with himſelf, and loathed all that was in him: ſo that by this you ſee how unblameable ſoever his life appeared, yet it was farre from being in a right way. Oh therefore be perſwaded to conſider your ſelves, you that live unblameable lives, diligent in the duties that relate to God and man, though thy outſide be thus painted; thy inwards may be a noiſome ſepulchre! how uncomely is it for man to have his porch and out rooms very clean, but his chambers and in-rooms full of noiſome filth? This is thy caſe, look in thy life, no irreligion or impiety to God, no injuſtice or oppreſſion to men, yet thou art deſtitute of the Spirit, and void of all ſupernatural life.

2. As our obedience muſt be thus internal, as well as external, ſo it muſt be external as well as internal; We muſt not pleaſe our ſelves with contemplative Meditations or pretended Revelations, neglecting an active induſtrious life for God in our places and relations. In Popery there is the contemplative life, and the active life; the one they compare to *Mary*, the other to *Martha*; and they ſay that contemplative life, like *Mary hath choſen the better part*, but this is *to hide our talents in a napkin*; and as *Tacitus* ſpeaks of ſome men, That they were *Solâ ſocordiâ innocentes*, becauſe of their ſloathfulneſſe, they did not come in harmsway, as others did. It was not wiſdom or juſtice, but meer ſluggiſhneſſe kept them from meddling in dangerous matters; ſo we may ſay theſe are *Solâ ſocordiâ pii*, godly only by ſlothfullneſſe: To theſe we may adde ſome that pretend now adaies to live upon immediate Revelation, crying down all the Ordinances, Miniſtry, Sacraments and Sabbath, as empty forms: But how doth this ſtand with that univerſall Obedience unto all the injunctions of God made to his Church. 2.

3. *Univerſal Obedience is a ſign when it doth carry us out equally to the duties of the firſt table concerning God, and the ſecond our neighbour.* To pretend much devotion in matters of God, and to ſhew no conſcience or equity in matters with man, is horrible hypocriſie. The Phariſees were notorious in this, who had their *long prayers*, and yet *devoured widows houſes*, who taught that neither father or mother might be relieved by their children of any thing they had, if it were *Corban*, that is, *a gift conſecrated to God*. Thoſe that are skilfull in the Jewiſh cuſtoms tell us, That the Phariſees taught any man might vow the Goods he hath to God, abſolutely, or onely in reſpect of this or that ſingular perſon, ſo that he ſhall have no benefit by it, and then when this vow was made, they thought they might relieve no body, no though their Parents and that in extream neceſſity, but notwithſtanding all this ſeeming Religion to God, how corrupt and carnal in their carriages to men? *Fides eſt copulativa*, and ſo muſt our Obedience be *copulative*. Thy Religion to God is no ſign of grace, if there be unconſcionable dealing towards men Again if thou beeſt carefull in duties to men, and negligent in the religious ſervice of God, hence thy rottenneſſe of heart is manifeſted. thou doſt with all thy heart love a civil, juſt and righteous man, but thou canſt not abide a forward religious man, thou loveſt not ſtrict keeping of the Sabbath, diligent and powerful Family- duties, Oh, what little hope is here of true grace in ſuch a mans heart! It is ordinary with Scripture to deſcribe all Religion and Piety by one duty ſometimes, and ſometimes by another, ſometimes by praying to God, ſometimes by keeping his Sabbaths, ſometimes by fearing of an oath, becauſe where one duty is graciouſly performed, there all the others will be alſo. 3.

3. *Univerſal Obedience is a ſign when we are carried thereby to receive the* Credenda, *as well as the* Agenda, *the things to be believed, as well as to be practiſed.* Hence it's called, *The obedience of faith*; and this Apoſtle, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23, divideth the 3.

Commandments of God in two parts, 1. Thoſe things that concern faith in Chriſt, 2. Thoſe things that relate to our love of others; therefore Gods Commandments muſt not only be limited to the prohibition of wicked lives, but muſt alſo be extended to falſe doctrines; therefore obſerve the Apoſtles in all their Epiſtles, they are as vehement & zealous againſt falſe teachers, as wicked livers, and therefore preſſe with an equal neceſſity true faith, and a good conſcience; Therefore thy heart is then ſincere, when its ſet againſt hereſies, as well as prophaneneſs, & prophaneneſs as well as hereſies: If you have a man hot & vehement againſt ungodlineſs, but indifferent about falſe doctrines, that man may juſtly ſuſpect his heart. Again, if a man cry out of hereſies & the toleration of them, yet can abide prophaneneſs, can tolerate that in his family, or elſe where, this man alſo ought to fear himſelf. Whatſoever the Scripture ſpeaks of impiety as deſtructive to ſalvation, the ſame it alſo applieth to falſe doctrine. Is that the fruit or work of the fleſh? ſo are hereſies: Is that damnable? ſo are hereſies: Is that to be caſt out of the Church? ſo is falſe doctrine: Are wicked men *prepared of old to deſtruction?* ſo are falſe doctors: Are the ſheep of Chriſt meek and innocent in their converſation? ſo they will *flee from a ſtranger, and not hear the voice of a ſtranger.* So that if thou wouldſt try thy ſincerity, mark whether thou deſireſt more liberty in matters of faith, than in maters of life. No doctrine revealed in Scripture to be believed, may be any more diſpenſed with, than the precepts declared in Gods word for practice.

4. 4. *Univerſal Obedience is a ſign, when it comprehends not only general Duties, but particulars of relation*, not as a Chriſtian abſolutely onely, but as a Magiſtrate, Miniſter, Husband, Wife, Child or ſervant; if a man diſcharge not the commands of theſe Relations, though his general converſation as a Chriſtian be never ſo admirable, yet he hath cauſe to ſuſpect himſelf; relative and domeſtical graces do more demonſtrate piety and true godlineſs than publick, general duties; for a mans pride, ſelf-ends, may put him upon theſe, as we ſee in the Phariſees, according to that rule, *Ambitio ſcenam deſiderat*, but it argueth truth of grace, to be diligent in fulfilling of thoſe relations we are ingaged in. Hence it is obſervable how diligent the Apoſtle is in the cloſe of his Epiſtles to declare the duties of relations, and to be large in the motives for them.

Uſe. The Uſe is of exhortation, to judge your ſelves by this ſign. Art thou univerſal in thy Obedience, for all the waies and duties required by God, then thou maieſt take comfort; otherwiſe know, if thou haſt not reſpect to all theſe, thou wilt be confounded though with *Ahab, Herod, yet do many things*, yet if not all things, confuſion will be upon thee. Oh then how few are they, who may claim a right to grace! Many men have an external Obedience only, and no internal, but moſt have a partial and not entire compleat Obedience, therefore it is, *That many are called, but few are choſen.* Conſider that terrible expreſſion of *James*, Jam. 2. 10, 11. where the Apoſtle informeth believers, that if they be guilty but of that one ſin, *viz. Accepting of perſons, they are tranſgreſſors of the Law* in the general, which he further urgeth by this Aſſertion, *He that keepeth all, and offends in one, is guilty of all*, not diſtributively with a gift of every particular ſinne, but in reſpect of the authority of the Law-giver, and the obligation of the the Law, according to that, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in every thing commanded by the Law*; ſeeing therefore God in regeneration doth *write his Law in our hearts*, which doth ſeminally contain the exerciſe of all holy actions; ſo that there cannot be an inſtance of any godly duty, of which God doth not infuſe a principle in us; and ſeeing that glorification will be univerſal of ſoul and body, in all parts and faculties, how neceſſary is it that Sanctification ſhould be univerſal. Take heed therefore that the works of Grace in thee be not abortive, or monſtrous, wanting eſſentiall and neceſſary parts. Let not thy ſhip be drowned by any one leak, dwell upon this, univerſality is a ſure rule of ſincerity.

SERMON

SERMON. XIII.

Handling Sincerity as a Sign of Grace.

2 Cor. 1. 12.

For our rejoycing is this, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in godly ſimplicity and ſincerity, &c.

AT the eighth verſe in this Chapter, the Apoſtle beginneth a Narrative of his troubles, which he deſcribeth from the place where (*in Aſia*:) Some think this relates to the tumult raiſed by *Demetrius* againſt him, *Act.* 19. but it may referre to the many troubles he had ſeverally in *Aſia*. In the next place theſe are amplified by the quality of them, it was a preſſure above meaſure, above ſtrength, it was not ἀνθρώπινος πειρασμός, an humane temptation; It was above the ſtrength of nature, though not of grace. The heavineſſe of it is expreſſed in that it made deſpair of life, to be altogether anxious, not knowing any way to eſcape, inſomuch that he had *received the ſentence of death in himſelf* ἀπόκριμα, Though ſome underſtand it of ſome anſwer to be given immediatly by God, yet *Beza* doth moſt probably underſtand it as an expreſſion from Malefactors, who are ſentenced to die: Further the Apoſtle illuſtrateth this from the finall cauſe, which was two-fold, firſt not to truſt in *our ſelves*; ſecondly, but *in God which raiſeth the dead*. This is a comfortable conſideration in all times of calamities, God *who raiſeth the dead*. In the next place he declareth his deliverance, amplified partly by their praiers for him, and partly by his ſincerity towards them, ſo that in the words you have a twofold propoſition: the firſt expreſſeth *Pauls* carriage in the world, eſpecially in reſpect of his *miniſtery*, and that poſitively, then negatively; *Poſitively* in two emphaticall words, 1. ἁπλότης, *ſimplicity*, an heart that is not guileful, double, oppoſed to διπλῆς, and πολλαπλῆς; 2. εἰλικρινεία ſincerity, a word they ſay from the *Eagle* that tryeth her genuine young ones by the *ſun-beams*, or rather in the *ſun-beams*, there being both ἀυγὴ, *lux*, or light, and by the light thereof we ſee the leaſt motes and thus it ſignifieth a man whoſe heart being inlightned findeth out all the ſecret and hidden motions of ſinne, or elſe in the *ſun-beames* there is θερμασία, heat, which doth ſeparate thoſe heterogeneal things that cold had congregated, and thus it doth ſignifie an heart purged from droſs, unmix'd with corrupt and ſinfull ends, for as *Aquinas* obſerveth well, *the ſoul may be joyned to things more noble* than it ſelfe (as when ſilver is mingled with gold) and this doth not debaſe but enoble the ſoule, for when it loveth God or is joyned to Chriſt, herein the ſoul is advanced: or ſecondly, it may be joyned to things inferior to it, as when gold is mingled with lead, and this doth much debaſe and corrupt: now ſuch a kinde of mixture is here denyed. The Apoſtle expreſſeth his carriage *negatively*, when he ſaith it was not in *fleſhly wiſdom*; wiſdome may be called carnall or fleſhly, either originally in reſpect of the fountain whence it floweth, or efficientlie becauſe it enclineth to, and produceth the works of the fleſh, or finally becauſe it rules only for fleſhly motives, and carnall ends. The ſecond propoſition in the Text is, that this ſincere deportment of *Paul* in the work of his miniſtery, was a ſign unto him, a μαρτύριον, a teſtimony and witneſſe of that goodneſſe and grace which was in him, and ſo by conſequent the object of much joy and comfort to his ſoul.

Doct. *That ſincerity and uprightneſſe of heart in our motives and ends, is a ſure Obſerv.*

Sincerity an infallible ſign of grace.

and infallibl ſign of our being in the ſtate of grace. To this purpoſe *John* alſo ſpeaks, 1. *John* 3.21,22. *If our hearts condemn us not, we have boldneſſe with God.*

For the opening of this point, let us conſider how unſafely it may be preſt for a ſign in ſome particulars, and then wherein the nature of it lyeth.

1. How Sincerity may be unſafely preſt as a ſign by an ill managing it on the right hand.

Firſt, *It is unwarrantably preſt when uprightneſſe is urged to the excluſion of all reſpect unto any reward.* For thus ſome do teach, Unleſſe thou love God for himſelf, ſo that thou lookeſt neither at heaven or hell, unleſſe in thy humiliation for ſinne, thou art ſo farre debaſed as to be willing to be damned, thy heart is not right. Hence I have read of one who paſſionately wiſhed, there were neither heaven or hell, that ſo the party might know whether there was love to God purely, becauſe of God. Whereupon many godly people are much troubled, and think the ſerving of God with eye to our ſalvation, is nothing but unlawfull ſelf-love. But the preſſing of uprightneſſe to ſuch a ſtrain and meaſure is unlawfull and uncomfortable.

We may eye the recompence of reward as a motive to Holineſſe.

1. Becauſe the Scripture propounds heaven and ſalvation as a motive to obey him, now no Scripture-motive can draw out any lawful affection, and whatſoever Gods Word requireth, the Spirit of God worketh in the heart of believers, which could not be if this deſire of ſalvation be a ſin: therefore we read of *Moſes*, yea, and Chriſt himſelf, that they had an eye (yea, a fixed, conſtant eye, and firm, as the word ſignifieth) upon the reward: yet theſe cannot be denied to have upright hearts, all *amor mercedis* is not *amor mercenarius*: let not therefore the people of God condemn themſelves for hypocrites, becauſe of ſuch affections. It is true there is in the people of God an ingenuous and ſupernatural principle whereby they love God, and holy things, becauſe of the excellency of them: Even as a carnall man loveth ſinne, becauſe of the ſuitableneſſe of it with his own heart, but yet this is not excluſive of the love of our own happineſſe: ſome make Gods glory and our happineſſe, to differ as the ſupreame and ſubordinate ends, ſome as coordinate ends only; but to be ſure, God hath ſo infallibly conjoyned them together, that one cannot be without the other.

2 It's uncomfortable, becauſe it putteth a man upon the ſearching and finding out that which is impoſſible, for how canſt thou ever come to know whether thou couldeſt be content to love God and ſerve him, if there were no heaven? Thou maiſt make metaphyſicall abſtractions about theſe things, but there can never be any reall ſeparation of one from the other, and therefore it is impoſſible to know what thy heart would do in ſuch caſes. It is true, *Paul Rom.*9. uſeth an hyperbolicall expreſſion, I could wiſh to be an *Anathema for my bretherens* ſake, that is, to be ſeparated from Chriſt, and all communion with his priviledges, that ſo the Jews might be ſaved, for the ſaving of all them might ſeem to make more for Gods glory than the ſalvation of one man; but the Apoſtle ſpeaks not abſolutely *I do wiſh*, but *I could wiſh*, viz. if it were poſſible, or if it were lawfull; and in this he doth declare the vehemency of his love towards them. It is therefore good both for Miniſters and people to be wary, that they lay no ſnares upon others or themſelves in this point.

2. Secondly, *This ſign of uprightneſſe may be preſt unſafely when it is underſtood of ſuch a perfect uprightneſſe that hath no deceit or falſhood at all joyned with it*: but as other graces are but *in part, we know in part*, we love in part, ſo we are ſincere and upright in part. *David* though noted for ſincerity, and a *man after Gods own heart*, yet cryeth out *Pſal.*19. *Who can underſtand his error?* There is more hypocriſie, ſelf-ends in thee, than thou doſt perceive, although there is ſo much diſcovered in thee as to make thee humble, and to truſt in Chriſt only; and *David* failing in ſincerity, made him ſo cry out *Pſal* 51. for *truth in the inward parts*, expect not therefore to finde thy heart freed from all guile and carnal reſpects thruſting of thee, and ſtirring in thee, more than from the reliques of other ſinnes that ſtill cleave cloſe to thee This is to mannage the ſign of integrity ill on the right hand. Then on the life, We may abuſe this ſign by going too low; and that may be theſe waies

First,

First, *When we take ſincerity for quietneſſe of conſcience, that it doth not accuſe.* Thus civill and formall men not being inlightened out of Gods Word, clear themſelves, think their hearts and intentions good, when if they did throughly know themſelves, they would be amazed. Thus *Paul* alſo, who ſaid he *walked with a good conſcience*, his conſcience was good in that it was quiet, it did not check him, when as if truly informed out of Gods Word, it would have given him as ſad buffetings as thoſe of Satans: In this ſenſe ſome of late have excuſed an heretick, that is willing to loſe all temporall advantages for his conſcience ſake, yea, to die in the moſt exquiſite way of torments rather than to forſake their judgement: how can theſe be judged any other (ſay they) than ſincere upright men? But it is good to obſerve that then only may our hearts be ſaid to be upright in a godly manner, when they are according to Gods Word, which is the rule of uprightneſs. Therefore if a man be now ſo fully perſwaded of an hereſie, that it is the truth of God, and take up his croſſe and follow this errour, yet his heart cannot be called upright, for that is right which is according to the rule, to the meaſure, which is the Scriptures. We grant therefore, that a Papiſt, a Socinian, or Arminian, may for his conſcience ſake endure joyfully the ſpoiling of his goods, refuſe all earthly advantages that would thruſt him againſt this, and thereupon finde incredible joy and peace in his ſoul, yet for all this, this man cannot be ſaid to have an upright heart, becauſe there wants true light within, *and if the eye be dark, the whole body is dark alſo.* In theſe times it is good therefore to have it preſſed again and again, that in matters of opinions and doctrines a man may have a great deal of eaſe and comfort, and yet be in a very falſe way, and though ſuch a man be not an hypocrite in a groſſe ſenſe, he doth not walk againſt the checks of his conſcience yet he is an hypocrite in a more refined ſenſe, as hypocriſie is oppoſite to that which is true and unfeigned: As we ſay a man doth many times lye, *mendacium dicere*, tell that which is falſe (a ſin prohibited) when yet he doth not *mentiri*, go againſt his minde, or the light thereof. Therefore the conſcience of every heretique, while under the ſaddeſt calamities for his opinion, is polluted and unclean. 1. How Sincerity may be unſafely uſed as a ſign by the ill managing of it on the left hand.

Secondly, *We abuſe this in going too low, when we limit ſincerity to one particular fact, or to ſome particular paſſages only:* For now even a naturall man, though not regenerated, may do ſome things in a naturall integrity and uprightneſſe of his heart. Thus *Abimelech Gen.* 20. 5. ſaid concerning *Sarah*. *In the integrity of my heart, and innocencie of my hands have I done this.* Thus ſome take that *Uriah* whom the Prophet *Eſay* called to be *a faithfull witneſs* unto him, to be the ſame with that *Uriah* the groſſe idolater, who brought in the *Altar of Damaſcus:* If ſo, then as to that particular reſpect he was an intire man; Indeed no man is ſo to judge of himſelf by any particular time, but the conſtant courſe of his life is to be regarded. Hence a godly man is ſaid to walk in the wayes of uprightneſſe; It is walking, and it is a way. 2.

Thirdly, *We then alſo go too low when we judge of ſincerity by the proxime and immediate ends of actions, not at all attending to the principal and main, Whatſoever you do, do all to the glory of God.* Every gracious action comes from God originally, and tends to him finally, now a man may do many glorious and good actions, and that with reference unfeignedly to the immediate ends, yet ſhoot not ſo farre as the utmoſt white and mark of all, which is *Gods glory*: Take many Heathens for example, *Ariſtides*, *Cato*, *Themiſtocles*, and divers others, who did many good things unfeignedly for the *common-wealth*; they ſought not wealth, neither did they inrich themſelves, but the publique good was their end, they went no higher; now as a natural conſcience may much diſquiet and accuſe a man, witneſſe many Heathens, ſo it may alſo if obeyed give great comfort and content, as ſome of the Heathens alſo had, but it is not enough to make an action ſupernaturally good, to referre it to its proxime end, but it muſt be to the chiefeſt. 3.

In the next place, let us conſider what this uprightneſſe is, and ſo where in it is a ſign.

1. What uprightneſſe is, and wherein it is a ſign. There muſt be a change of the whole man where there is Sincerity.

And 1. *There is no ſincerity, but where there is a full and powerfull change of the whole man by the grace of God.* For every mans heart is naturally full of guile, and doth *uti* not *frui Deo*, refer God to humane ends and himſelf, but not himſelf and all his ends to God, *Omnes homines ſunt latrones, & quotidiè latrocinantur gloriam Dei:* It was a ſaying of one which *Caſſianus* doth much approve: The heart of a man naturally is ſaid to be *deceitfull above all things, who can know it?* There is no truth, no integrity, till God hath changed it. It is as *Tertullian* ſaid of the Peacock, *verſicolor, multicolor, ſemper idem & nunquam idem.* If therefore thou wouldeſt have a plain and even heart, deſire it may be poliſhed by grace, for till this be, a man makes himſelf the center, and all lines to meet in him, but this is inward, and ſo cannot be perceived but by the motions and actions which flow therefrom; As *Lazarus* perceived he had life, not by the principle of life put in to him, but by the effects thereof: and *Saul* perceived he had another ſpirit by the operations that did flow from it: ſo in converſion a man doth not perceive the immediate habits and principles of grace, but by the effects and fruits of them he comes to know he hath ſuch.

2. Uprightneſſe is a ſign when we do any good duty becauſe God commands.

2. *Vprightneſſe is a ſigne and then acknowledged to ſincerity, when we do any good duty becauſe God commands.* As in matters of faith, then we properly produce a divine act, when we believe *quia ipſe dixit*, becauſe God hath commanded it: ſo then is it properly upright obedience when it is *quia ipſe voluit*, becauſe he willeth and commands it. A man may obey a command becauſe thoſe actions may conſiſt with ſome carnal ends, but to do it becauſe of Gods ſoveraignty, this is acceptable. Hence *Saul* for that act of diſobedience, though he pleaded carnal pretences, yet was judged to commit a ſin as hainous as *witchcraft*. *Adams* ſin was to be aggravated from this, in that it was expreſly diſobedience; for there being no other ground of the command, than Gods will to command, it was *bonum quia mandatum*, not *mandatum quia bonum*; hence his ſin was in a high manner diſobedience. Do not therefore this or that, becauſe this will agree with thy ends, this will ſtand with thy luſt, but do it becauſe God hath required it.

3. Sincerity is ſeen in the univerſality of obedience.

3. *Vprightneſs is ſeen in the univerſality of obedience*; We do not pick or chooſe, but becauſe God commands all, therefore we obey all: do that which croſſeth us, which is troubleſome unto our fleſh, which is ſelf-denying, as well as thoſe things that do not ſo much offend us. The Apoſtle *Jam.* 2. urgeth this argument, *He that ſaid, Thou ſhalt not ſteal, ſaid alſo, Thou ſhalt not commit adultery. A quatenus ad omne valet conſequentia*, to obey any commandment, becauſe it is Gods will, doth incline a man to obey every commandment, becauſe it hath the ſame ſuperſcription; *Herod did many things*, but not all things. therefore not any thing upon a right ground: *Ariſtotle* uſeth the firſt word ἁπλῶς, frequently for that which is oppoſite to κατὰ τὶ *ſecundum quid*. Thus ſaith he, a Blackmore though he hath white teeth, yet cannot be called white ἁπλῶς, becauſe it is in ſome reſpect only, ſo neither may a man be called ſincere that hath only partiall obedience.

4. And when the motives of all our actions are pure and heavenly.

4. *Then is uprightneſſe a true ſign when the motives of all our actions are pure and heavenly*; when all is done becauſe of the glory of God, or for ſuch motives that Gods word doth require: The Phariſees how glorious in prayers, faſtings & alms, yet all they did was πρὸς τὸ θεαθῆναι to be on a Theater and admired by others applauſe: This is penetrating and diſcovers thouſands of hypocrites: *Iehu*, who more zealous than he; who more active in reformation? yet it was not Gods glory he aimed at, but his own greatneſſe. *Mundus cadaver eſt, & petentes eum ſunt canes*, ſaith the Arabick Proverb, The world is a carcaſe, and thoſe that hunt after it are dogs; Oh how few then are Chriſts ſheep, who are guided by direct and ſincere motives, following Chriſt becauſe of his precious ointment. All glorious actions without pure ends, are like ſweet herbs upon a noiſome dung hill.

5. Sincerity ſhews it ſelf by being conſcientious, &c.

5. *Vprightneſſe is when a man is very diligent and conſcientious in internal duties or ſecret, to perform them, and in ſpiritual or heart-ſins and ſecret luſts to avoid them; God is a ſpirit*, and *Ioh.* 4. *he ſeeketh ſuch that worſhip him in truth and ſpirit*; and

Paul

Paul expresseth himself thus, *whom I serve in my spirit*: The Pharisees (who were so often upbraided with their hypocrisie) were diligent in external obedience, when their inward vitals were wholly corrupt and rotten: Our Saviour directs us to private duties in a most secret manner, with this encouragement, *He that seeth in secret will reward openly*: observe then how carefull thou art about the frame of thy heart, whether that be prepared and fitted with the graces of Gods Spirit; see how thou art in those things which none but God knoweth, and this be a true touchstone: *Joseph* made a notable discovery of his integrity when he said *how can I do this and sin against God?* no secrecy or privacy could intice him. Therefore consider, that howsoever men know thee not, yet God knoweth thee; *walk before me and be perfect*, saith God to *Abraham*; eying of God sheweth sincerity.

6. *Uprightnesse is a sign when a man doth zealously set against those sins that he most inclineth to*, either through outward or inward temptations, & hateth sin most in himself, and in those that are neerest to him; as a man hateth a Toad most in his own bosome. *David* professed he kept himself from *his iniquity*: Hypocrisie hath commonly some *Dalilah*, some wolf or other in its breast, to whose sheaf (as it were) all other sins must make their sheaves to bow. *This is the good old mark that godly Divines in former ages did so much presse*, and you shall see when all false doctrines and corrupt notions go out in a stink, such truths as these will be precious with the godly; Our Saviour in nothing more discovered the hypocrisie of the Pharisees, than that they were not sensible of their own sinfulnesse, they judged others, but understood not how noisome they themselves were: *You are they which justifie your selves, but what is highly esteemed before men, is abomination before God*; see therefore how loathsome and abominable thy own sins, thy family sins are unto thee.

6. And when a man zealously sets himself against those sins he is most inclined unto.

7. *Uprightnesse is seen in taking those wayes and using those means onely God hath appointed for the obtaining of lawfull ends:* Many times lawfull means are not so visibly advantagious, as shifts and carnal projects are, we see how *Jacob* got the blessing by fraud; *David* often became guilty of that deceitfulnes and guile, which he so much in his Psalms complaineth of in others, and so far as they engaged in unlawfull wayes, so farre hypocrisie acted in them; They did not trust in God, neither believe in him for the accomplishment of his own promise. But this is a grosse mistake of flesh and bloud, for *Gods means only brings about Gods ends in a mercy*. When by unlawful or unwarrantable wayes we get any thing, *it is as the Eagle got a coal from the sacrifice, she carried it to her nest, and setteth all on fire*, Jonah 3. *They that seek to lying vanities forsake their own mercy*. Hence it is that so many promises are made to the upright man, especially in the Proverbs, that his *integrity shall preserve him*, because in outward probabilities he is most likely to be undone.

7. And in taking those waies and using those means only which God appoints.

8. *Uprightnesse is seen not only when we have respect to all Gods Commandments, but when we have it in that due order and respect, as God commandeth.* The duties of the first table before the second, the Commandements of greater duties above those of lesse duties: As in faith there are fundamentals absolutely necessary to salvation, and *præter* or *circa* fundamentals, so in obedience there is that which is wholly necessary for every one to have, and those things which in some respect come only to be so. The Pharisees hypocrisie was made manifest in that they *tythed mint and cummin*, but neglected *righteousnes and judgement*. Many times it fals out, that where men are diligent where they ought to be, there they are negligent where they should not be. As *Melanchon* sharply reproved the Italians, *Vos Itali Deum vultis esse in pane, quando non creditis eum esse in cœlis*; Ye Italians will believe God to be in the bread, when ye do not believe there is a God in heaven. Therefore observe the gradual difference God appointed concerning duties.

8. Uprightnes is seen when we respect all Gods Commandements in that due order as he commands.

Use, To discover the paucity of those that are in the state of grace. If uprightnesse and sincerity thus in all our ends and means be an inseparable sign of grace, may we not cry out with the Psalmist, *help Lord, for the upright man is perished out of the earth*:

Use.

earth: And in what age may the abſence of it be more deplored than now, when *Parties, Factions, Intereſts* have devoured and eaten up ſincerity? But as the body carcaſſe without the ſoul, ſo is all religion without integrity. It is a blazing is a Starre, though it make a great luſtre for the time, yet it ends at laſt in noiſome vapours. This was a comfort to *Hezekiah* in his ſad diſtreſſe, *That he had walked before God, with an upright and perfect heart, He that walketh uprightly walketh ſafely.* He that liveth uprightly, and dieth uprightly, liveth and dieth ſafely. This is acceptable even where many failings are, and where this is abſent, the moſt perfect Sacrifices are rejected.

SERM. XIV.

That oppoſition againſt, and Abſtinence from ſin is a Sign of Grace.

1 Joh 3:9,10.

Whoſoever is born of God ſinneth not, becauſe the ſeed abideth in him, neither can he ſinne, becauſe he is borne of God; in this the children of God are manifeſted.

THe apoſtle at the firſt verſe having declared the glorious priviledge of being the ſons of God, he doth *verſ* 3 mention alſo their Duty: for external grace and inherent are inſeparably joyned together. Their Duty is to avoid ſin, which is preſſed from ſeveral Arguments;

1. From the native filthineſs of it, *It is a tranſgreſſion of the Law.*

2. From the end of Chriſts coming, which was *To deſtroy the works of the devil.*

3. From a collation or compariſon between the two Fountains or Fathers of him that doth *ſinne*, or him that doth *righteouſneſſe*, the one is of the *Devil*, the other *is borne of God*: and this difference my Text amplifieth: So that in the words you read, you may obſerve five Propoſitions; firſt, *He that is borne of God ſinneth not*; what it is to be born of God is eaſily known, *viz.* to have the image and holineſs of God ſtampt upon us by his Spirit quickning of us; we muſt not imagine any communicating of the divine eſſence to us; in which ſence the *ſecond Perſon is born of the Father*, and ſo called, *The Sonne of God*; but by participation of thoſe ſupernaturall graces which make us reſemble him; The greater doubt is about the predicate, *He ſinneth not*; which hath much exerciſed the thoughts of men: ſome underſtand it of a perfection attained to in this life, not to ſin at all. Thus *Papiſts*, *Pelagians*, ſome *Anabaptiſts* and divers of late; but if this were the meaning, the Apoſtle within a very little ſpace would expreſly contradict himſelf, for *Chap.* 1.8.10. he ſaith expreſly, *if we ſay we have no ſinne we deceive our ſelves, and make God a liar.* Not to ſinne therefore is not wholly to be without ſinne. Others limit it to a certain kinde of ſinne, in this ſenſe, *He ſinneth not*, viz. *unto death*, ſo that he ſhall be damned; and without queſtion to this purpoſe the Apoſtle ſpeaketh *Chap.* 5, 16, 17, 18. But this ſeemeth to ſtreighten it too much. Others, as *Arminians*, *he ſinneth not*, *viz.* in this reſpect, and ſo farre as he is born of God; but what an abſurd ſenſe would this be; and who knoweth not that a godly man doth not ſinne in that he is godly, or becauſe he

is

is born of God. The moſt genuine and unforced interpretation therefore is, to underſtand it not univerſally, but according to the ſubject matter, *he ſinneth not, as one who is of the Devil his father*, , he ſinneth not *as Cain*, all within him is not corrupted; ſo that he makes ſin his trade, his cuſtome and delight. The very oppoſition makes this the meaning, I do not ground this oppoſition upon the phraſe ποιεῖν ἁμαρτίαν, as if that did alwayes ſignifie more than ἁμαρτάνειν, for I grant that that phraſe ſometimes ſignifieth no more than barely to ſin, not denoting cuſtom or delight, as *Rom.* 7.

But my foundation is upon the context, the oppoſition *Paul* makes between a righteous and unrighteous man, in reſpect of the roots whence they are, and then from the ſecond Propoſition, which is the reaſon why he ſinneth not, becauſe *the ſeed abideth in him*, by which metaphorically is meant the principle of grace wrought in him by the Spirit of God, and that not onely ſo, for *Adam* had the ſeed of grace, yet ſinned it away, but becauſe its preſerved by the Covenant of grace. This place is brought to prove perſeverance in grace, and no ſtrength of wit hath yet been able to overcome it. The third Propoſition is higher than the former, for it doth not only deny the act of ſin, but the power of it. Neither can he ſin, *viz.* in the ſenſe before explained; and, the fourth Propoſition is a ground of the third, *becauſe he is born of God.* Some make this reaſon the ſame with the former, but there ſeemeth to be this difference, the one ſignifieth that inward permanent principle of grace: The other that divine reſemblance of God which is in us by this regeneration. The firſt Propoſition is, *That this difference between the righteous and unrighteous about ſinn is a ſure ſign, whereby the godly man is manifeſted both to himſelf and others that he is godly.*

That an oppoſition againſt and abſtinence from ſin is a ſure ſign, by which a man may be perſwaded that he is in the ſtate of Grace. *Obſerv.*

For there can be no better ſign to diſcover principles by, than their proper incommunicable actions; thus we diſcover fire by burning, a rational life by ſpeaking, now of all actions, this is moſt connaturural to the permanent habit of grace to encline us to loath and abhor thoſe things that are deſtructive to the nature of it, which is only ſinne: but becauſe we may eaſily be deceived about this ſign, for every one that is afraid of ſin, yea, bitterly crieth out of it, and leaveth it, is not yet regenerated, Therefore let us diligently conſider how it is a ſign. And,

First, *It is a ſign, When we perceive a ſetled fixed frame of heart againſt ſin.* As the reaſon in the Text implieth; The ſeed of grace abideth in a man, *he is born of God*, now theſe expreſſions do denote ſomething in us by way of a new nature, whereby we have an enmity and hoſtility, yea, and irreconcilableneſs with ſinne; As ſome creatures have an antipathy againſt others; As on the contrary, he that is of the Devil, and ſo hath a fixed root of ungodlineſs in him, he hath a conſtant enmity and hatred againſt godlineſſe, and thoſe that are godly, Why ſo? *Becauſe their works are good*, and his are *evil*, as *John* expreſſeth it; on the contrary the godly cannot agree and delight in evil, or evil men, *becauſe their works are evil*, and his *good*; The Apoſtle *Rom.* 12. cals it μυσῦντες, hating ſin as hell it ſelf, and the exhortation is to caſt away their tranſgreſſions, *abjicere* not *deponere*, becauſe of the loathſomneſſe they ſee in ſin; So then, let *Pharaoh*, let the *Iſraelites* in ſeveral calamities bewail their Idolatries, and ſins againſt God, yet here is no ſign of grace, becauſe their hearts were not ſtedfaſt within them. Theſe were ſudden tranſient motions not permanent principles, if thou wouldſt take comfort from this ſign, do not judge of thy ſelf by ſome fits or ſeaſons, but by the habitual inclination of thy ſoul. God in regeneration doth firſt change our natures, new mould us; and from this ſupernatural principle iſſue gracious actions. How it is a ſign. 1.

Secondly, *Then is this a ſign, When there is an univerſal repugnancy in every part of a man againſt ſin, not only in his reaſon and conſcience, but in his will, affections and* 2.

whole man. For this ſeed of grace is nothing, but Regeneration diffuſing it ſelf into the underſtanding, will and affections of the whole ſoul; ſo that in every part there is that which is regenerate & purified, as well as that which is corrupt and defiled. *Paul*, Rom. 7. giveth you a large inſtance of this in himſelf, *He delighted in the Law of God in the inward man*, There was the Law of his mind in him (which was the ſeed of grace diffuſed through his whole ſoul) that did encline him to every good thing commanded in the Law; ſo that although there was at the ſame time *a law of the members, and the body of ſinne captivating of him*, yet he had alſo a ſetled life of grace oppoſing all thoſe motions of ſinne; and this particular is diligently to be marked; There is many a man comforts himſelf in this, my heart is ſet againſt ſinne, & if I be overtaken at any time, my conſcience checks me for it, and I condemn my ſelf; ſo that I ſay with *Paul*, *The good I would not do that I do.* Oh take heed thou do not deceive thy ſelf! for there is a vaſt difference between the check or reſiſtance of conſcience againſt thy corrupt affections and luſts, & between the oppoſition of the regenerate part in a man againſt the unregenerate; for the former is only between two particular faculties, the conſcience againſt the affections, but the later is univerſal, there is the regenerate part of the will & affections againſt the unregenerate part. So that in ſuch a caſe a Chriſtian doth not only ſay, my conſcience bids me do otherwiſe, I know better things, as *Ariſtotle* ſpeaks of his incontinent perſon, but he alſo ſaith, *I will better things, I love and delight in better things.* Oh therefore conſider this ſign aright! when thy heart crieth out of ſinne, Oh thou wilt meddle with it no more! Is this oppoſition only from conſcience enlightned? Is it from that faculty only? Alas if ſo (as commmonly it is no more) thou haſt no more ſign of grace in thee, than many Heathens have had. When a man is regenerated, not only his conſcience is made ſpiritual to diſcover the loathſomeneſſe of ſin, but his heart alſo, his love, his delight, whereby he is carried out in all the power of his ſoul againſt ſinne; and if this be ſo, may we not cry out with the Pſalmiſt, *Help Lord, for they are few that do truly hate ſin.*

3. Thirdly, *This is a ſign, As hereby it works in a man a difficulty, yea, a kinde of an impoſſibility to ſinne with willfulneſſe and purpoſed continuance.* He *doth not ſinne, neither can he ſinne*, ſaith the Text. There being a root of grace in him, it's impoſſible he ſhould ſinne with ſuch an univerſal content of ſoul, as wicked men do. There is a two-fold *cannot*, one *moral*, and is no more than that which difficultly is not ſo. Thus 2 *Cor.* 13. 8. *We cannot do any thing againſt the truth, but for the truth.* Acts 4. 10. *We cannot but ſpeak the things we have heard and ſeen.* And in this ſenſe, the children of God may be ſaid, they cannot ſinne, becauſe they have an averſneſſe of heart to it. Secondly, There is a *cannot*, *abſolutely*, ſo that the thing can never be, whether eaſily or difficultly, and in this ſenſe the godly man cannot ſinne totally and finally, ſo as to be wholly deſerted of God. As for the inſtance of *Peter*, *David*, and others, and whether the ſins of the godly may be called reigning ſinnes, I have already ſpoken to that matter. This is certain, it's impoſſible for a godly man ſo to delight and live in ſinne, as that the ſeed of grace ſhould be quite extinct. Although the grace that is in Gods children may for a time make no actual reſiſtance, yet the principle of it by reaſon of Gods promiſe will never be fully removed out of the heart. The Apoſtle Peter, 1 *Pet.* 1. makes that new nature oppoſite to all earthly glory and greatneſſe, becauſe that is corruptible and fading, but this abideth for ever. If therefore thou would'ſt have any comfort from this ſign, ſee how the ſeed of grace within thee doth ſo affect & overpower thy heart, that thou canſt not ſin with willingneſs, content, no nor commit the acts of groſſe ſins, *How can I do this and ſinne againſt God?* How can I? and by this means you have a palpable diſcovery of many amongſt us, not yet to be in the ſtate of grace, How can I lie, ſwear, deal unjuſtly, neglect Family-duties? Thou would'ſt finde ſuch a conſtraining and overruling power of grace, that thou couldſt not do it: & mark if this impoſſibility

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to ſin ariſeth wholly from a kindly work of grace within, otherwiſe a wicked man cannot ſin ſometimes, becauſe God puts a terrible reſtraint upon his conſcience; *Balaam* he could not ſinne in that wherein he was ſolicited, *If thou wouldſt give me* (ſaith he to *Balaak*) *this houſe full of gold, I cannot curſe them, but muſt bleſſe thoſe whom God bleſſeth.* God many times puts a bridle upon the conſcience of a wicked man, that he dareth not, nor cannot commit ſuch a ſinne, as his heart would carry him to, but this *cannot ſinne*, is farre different from the godlies *cannot ſinne*; The one is a violent motion, the principle is from without, the other is a natural motion, and hath its ground from within it.

Fourthly, *This is a ſign, in that hereby a godly man in ſome meaſure, and by degrees, doth not only leave outward groſſe ſins, but even conquer and crucifie the inward body of ſinne.* Gal 5. *He hath crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts thereof*; and he is ſaid *to crucifie the body of ſinne, and the deeds of the fleſh*; and herein this ſign is moſt eminently ſignificant; for a man cannot ſimply take comfort from this, he hath indeed once been ſuch and ſuch an ungodly ſinner, he hath wallowed in ſuch mire, but now he hath given over all thoſe courſes; a man (I ſay) cannot barely take comfort from this leaving of actual groſſe ſins, unleſſe there be a mortifying of them in the root, in the affections and motions thereunto; for *Peter* ſpeaks of ſome, *who had eſcaped the pollution of the world, and that through the knowledge of Chriſt*, yet were Swines and Dogs in their nature. Wherein doth *Paul* Rom. 7. ſo paſſionately bewail his captivity to ſinne, but only in reſpect of the inward motions thereof? Thus *David*, Pſal. 51. ſtaieth not upon his murder and adultery, but goeth to that foul fountain, *He was conceived in ſins*, and intreats God *to create in him a clean heart.* If therefore thou would fain know whether thou art born of God or no; See how pure and clean thou deſireſt to make thy ſelf within, how doth the fountain of blood within thee dry up? 4.

Fifthly, *This is a ſign, When a mans oppoſition to ſinn, and leaving of it, is becauſe of the foul nature of ſinne.* It is contray to God, it's *a tranſgreſſion of his Law*, and upon this ſpiritual motive he is bent againſt it. The Apoſtle (as you heard) giveth this as a reaſon, why the ſons of God ſhould not ſinne, becauſe *ſinne is a tranſgreſſion of the Law*; and *David* Pſal. 51. bewails his ſinne, though pardoned, becauſe God was offended thereby; ſo that though a man pour out floods of tears for ſins, though his converſation outwardly becom *white as ſnow*, yet this is no ſymptome of grace, a man can take no comfort from hence, unleſs it be upon this ground, becauſe God is diſpleaſed and his Law broken. Look over the Scriptures, you may ſee wonderful examples of mens remorſe and ſorrow about ſinne, yet thoſe very tears were ſo foul that they needed waſhing; Take *Ahab*, obſerve the Jews, conſider *Judas*, how were they caſt down about their ſin? with what horrour of conſcience did *Judas* caſt away his thirty pieces? Oh men may go very farre in ſorrow for ſinne, and in reforming of their lives about ſinne, and yet this be no ſign to them of the truth of grace. Why (you may ſay) what ſhould work upon them, if it be not grace? Oh there are many other motives that work upon them, terrors of conſcience, fear of Gods judgements, and the preſſing calamities that lie upon them! Inſomuch that true unfeigned hatred of ſinne is very rare; I deny not but the judgements of God upon a man ought to work in him a ſenſe and feeling of his ſins, a ſevere judging and condemning of himſelf under Gods hand. But to have this the only ground argueth not the preſence of grace in them. They are tied up from ſin as Maſtiffs and Wolves are, their natures are not changed. 5.

Sixthly, *This is a ſign, When the inclination and bent of the heart againſt ſin, is univerſal in reſpect of all ſinne.* For a man highly in love with ſome ſins, may yet extreamly ſet againſt other ſins. Therefore as ſins run out in ſeveral ſtreams, ſo do their affections proportionably: as there are ſins of the heart, and ſins of the 6.

ward man visible to others. The Pharises who were free from outward wickedness, yet abounded with heart-defilements, as our Saviour chargeth them. But *Paul* doth deeply bemoan the evil motions of his heart, and *Hezekiah* humbled himself for *the pride of his heart*; That pride, unbelief, earthlinesse, and several lusts of soul are discovered by him, and crucified, and we read of no hypocrite that went so farre. Again, There are sins done in *secret*, which none, or few know, such as theft, uncleanness, unlawful trading, crafty policies: or *publick*, that are as it were upon the Theatre in the eyes of all: now the godly man abhorreth the former as well as the later, he dareth not commit a sin in the eye of Almighty God, which is every where, he feareth Gods knowledge of it more than all the world.

Again, *Sins are either of commission, by a positive disobedience unto the Law of God, or omission, by defect or neglect*, such are holy religious duties, neglect, lukewarmnesse, and distraction therein. A gracious heart abhorreth not only grosse sins, but defects in holy Ordinances. As God is angry, *When we fall from our first love, when we strengthen not the things that are ready to dye, when we are not fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.* So also is a godly man much troubled and grieved herein.

Further, *There are sins against the moral Commandments of God, which are of good things intrinsically so; and against positive commands, which are only good, because commanded.* A sanctified person feareth the sin against the one, as well as against the other; thus he feareth to prophane the Sabbath, to use any false worship, to come to the Sacrament in an unprepared manner, as well as to be unjust and oppressive.

Lastly, *There are sins that become indeared by custome, education, complexion, by profit or pleasures.* Now notwithstanding all these temptations, the godly man throweth them away like menstruous cloth, yea the sins they have been most enticed with, they manifest the greatest zeal against, *and desire in all things to shew themselves approved.* Oh (Beloved) if these marks and signs be in you, then may your joy abound. Do not henceforth argue thus, he must needs be a godly man, for he hath such revelations, such enlargements in duties; he hath had such experimental workings upon him, he is of such opinions for such a Church government. These are nothing, Is he a man that dareth not sin? Is he a man that is afraid to offend God in any of those wayes mentioned? This man is godly by *Scripture-judgement*, whereas the other may be only in the *sight of themselves and others*. And Oh that the good old scripture-way of bringing men more into the sight of sinne, the loathing of it, were more preached and urged amongst us. If *Jehu* be not afraid to sinne, if *Judas* be not afraid to sinne, let them have all the glorious appearances of godlinesse that can be, they carry not a true badge of holinesse upon them.

7. Seventhly, *This frame of heart against sinne, is so real and operative, that although it cannot wholly dry up the fountain of corruption within them, yet it doth dil the foggy and miery puddles of grosse and enormous courses.* The Apostle saith, *The fruits of the flesh are uncleanesse, lasciviousnesse, idolatry, wrath, envyings, drunkennesse, revelling, with such like; and that they which do these things shall not inherit the Kingdome of heaven.* Therefore an habitual, constant, prophane person cannot say, *He is born of God.* Oh do thou tremble, who livest and wallowest in thy gore bloud! Thy prophane Oaths, thy malicious hatred of the things that are good, do they not discover thou art in the gall of bitternesse and wormwood? *Be not deceived*, there are but two sorts of men, *Either the children of light or of darknesse, of God, or of the devill.* There is not any hearer this day, but is either in the state of *grace*, one of Christs sheep, or in the state of *sinne*, one of Christs goats; Now in which number art thou? Do not actions betray some? Do not words betray others? Do not commissions some? Do not omissions others? Oh that the word of God might fall like fire into your brests! Why

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fit you ſtill? Why are not your conſciences reflecting upon you? What am I, Lord, and what is my way?

Eighthly, *This is a ſign, as it doth not only oppoſe it in our ſelves, but ſet againſt it in others.* For *being born of God*, we now (though with great diſproportion) reſemble him; and therefore as *God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*; and *he is angry with the wicked all the day long*: ſuch is a *godly man* in reſpect of his zeal againſt ſinne where he liveth. Thus *David*, *I hate them that hate thee, with a perfect hatred*: And *Lot*, *His juſt ſoul was tormented with ſeeing and hearing the wicked actions of the Sodomites.* If therefore thou art born of God, thou wilt not bear ungodlineſſe in thy family, the zeal of Gods houſe will make thee ſee it be not a den of thieves; Oh that men in great place and power would put forth ſuch a divine *Indoles* againſt ſinne. What a ſhame is it to ſhew animoſities, and an high ſpirit in a carnal way, and not able to demonſtrate an heroick ſpirit againſt ſinne, and the workes of Satan every where! 8. An item to great men.

Ninthly, *It is a ſign as it putteth a man upon the chooſing of any outward affliction rather than to ſinne againſt God.* *Job* was charged to chooſe ſinne rather than affliction, but herein he was wronged. It is a true touchſtone of the powerfull work of grace, that it makes a man fear the evil of ſinne, becauſe it depriveth us of an *infinite good*, rather than the evil of puniſhment, which takes away a *finite good*; Hence where this work of grace is, though ſtorms and tempeſts ariſe, yet they are built upon a rock; They fear not miſeries, death, they fear only to ſin againſt God. 9.

The Uſe is of exhortation, *To lay this ſign cloſe upon your hearts.* Are you ſuch that cannot, that dare not, that have an habitual averſneſſe from ſinne, that are of God, hating evil as he hateth? behold what a ſure evidence here is of thy eternal Salvation, But alas, where are the men? how few are they of whom this Text is true, *They ſinne not, neither can they ſinne*? The contrary is true, They love not that which is holy, neither can they, becauſe *they are of the wicked one.* *Naturæ ſequitur ſemina quiſq; ſuæ.* *Fortes creantur fortibus*; See an excellent Antitheſis, *John* 8.38,39,40,41,44,45. How did the Phariſees ſee the devil do that which they did? They thought not ſo, for they ſaid, *They were of Abraham*, but becauſe they expreſſed in their lives ſuch wickedneſſe as was in the devil. No boube but many will take it ill to be ſaid, *They are of the devil*, but their actions demonſtrate it. *Uſe.*

SERMON. XV.

That for a man to be willing to have his Soul ſearched by God, is a ſign of Grace.

PSAL. 26. 2.

Examine me (O Lord) and prove me; try my reins and heart.

David in the firſt verſe of this Pſalm, *Prayeth for Gods preſervation and defence of him in the midſt of all his adverſaries*, which he preſſeth from a twofold conſideration,

Firſt, His *Integrity and Sincerity*, which is not to be limited unto the righteouſneſs of his cauſe onely, but the innocency alſo of his whole life, as the Pſalm evidenceth.

Secondly, His *confidence and truſt in God*; for this is an ingaging argument with God, as it is with men.

Now as verſe 3. He makes Gods *Loving kindneſſe the ground of his truſt*; ſo he *manifeſteth his ſincerity*,

Firſt, By appealing unto God in my text. *Examine me, and try me.* And

Secondly, By the ſeveral effects of it, *verſe* 4, 5, 6.

I ſhall conſider that ſign of his ſincerity, wherein he deſireth God would *Try him, and ſearch him:* So that if there were any Hypocriſie, any falſe way, any unſound or imperfect principles he walked in, it was his hearty deſire to have all diſcovered. And certainly there cannot be a greater argument of the truth of Grace, than a willingneſs to come to the light, and a readineſs to be weighed in the balance; as on the other ſide you have not a ſurer character of an hypocrite & an unſound Chriſtian, than fear of the light, & unwillingneſs to be ranſaked and ſearched into the very bowels by the word of God: But *Davids* hearty willingneſs in this particular appeareth, 1. In the ſeveral words he heaps up together in this Petition, *Examine me*; as Artificers doe whether their gold be weight or no: *try me* by diſcovering whether I am inwardly ſound or no: *Prove me*, (as the word ſignifieth) as when the Artificer melteth his ſilver in the fire, that ſeparateth the droſs. 2. This doth appear in the object matter which he would have thus proved, and that is, *His heart, his reins*, which are the moſt inward and ſecret motions of his ſoul, he would have a deeper ſearching into, and winnowing of him than the world can do. Certainly *David* in this Petition doth diſcover great honeſty, and faithfulneſs of Spirit. Now, here may be two doubts.

There is a double temptation.

1. How God can be ſaid to tempt, or try any man, ſeeing *James* 1.13. *God is ſaid to tempt no man*; & the divel is called ὁ πειράζων, as if it were his work onely. The Anſwer is obvious, *That there is a double Temptation:* one evil, which is defective either in the principle, or means, or end of the Temptation, And thus the Devil and our own fleſh Tempt. The other is a good Temptation ariſing from a good principle, in a lawful way, to a good end; and thus God doth Tempt, that is, doth make a diſcovery what is in man; not as if he were ignorant of

of it, but that hereby the perſon truſted may be better known to himſelf, and to others.

In the ſecond place we may doubt how *David* could lawfully pray to be tempted, ſeeing our Saviours rule is to pray, *That God would not lead* (*or caſt us*, for *ne inferas*, doth better Anſwer μὴ εἰσενεγκῃς than *ne inducas*) *into temptation*? But that is to be underſtood of the evil of temptation: ſo as God ſhould withdraw his grace, either internal, ſubduing our corruptions, or external, repreſſing Satan and all outward power againſt us.

Theſe things thus explained, obſerve, *That is a ſure and comfortable ſign of grace, when a man is willing to have his ſoul and all within ſearched by God.* That which here *David* prayeth for, *Pſal.* 17.3. he there acknowledgeth what God had done, *Thou haſt proved my heart, thou haſt tried me, and haſt found nothing*; which is not to be underſtood as if *David* had no droſſe in him, (for thoſe words are taken from the Artificers that melt their gold and ſilver) ſeeing *Pſal.* 19. He cryeth out, *Who can underſtand his errors: cleanſe me from ſecret ſins.* But of total and univerſal Hypocriſie; neither doth *David* ſpeak this arrogantly, as preſuming of himſelf, but takes comfort from this in his grievous troubles, as a teſtimony that he belongs to God.

Job alſo in his calamities hath his face and heart anſwering *Davids*, *Job* 23 10. *When he hath tryed me, I ſhall come out like gold*; ſo that from hence we may ſee, that a love and willingeſs to have our hearts ſearched by God, is a teſtimony of the truth of Grace, that it is a great bulwark in times of ſad afflictions: It is therefore worth the enquiry into the nature of this ſign; for if the wiſeman ſaid even of theſe petty outward things, *Falſe weights are an abomination unto the Lord*, how much more abominable muſt thoſe falſe ballances be wherein men through blindneſſe and ſelf-flattery weigh themſelves.

In the firſt place. Let us conſider how God doth try, that ſo we may perceive our willingneſſe therein. And the firſt way is by his word, *Epheſ.* 5.13. *Whatſoever doth manifeſt, and ſo reprove evil is light.* Now the Scriptures are like the Sun, into which God hath put all light, and other things ſhine with light borrowed from thence. *David* commends Gods word *for a light and lanthorn to his feet*; and that by which he was forewarned from ſin; and for this profit coming by them, he commends them for preciouſneſs and ſweetneſs above *fine Gold, and the bony combe*: See here a true touchſtone of grace; thou loveſt the word of God above any treaſure in the world, not only for the promiſſary part of it, but the diſcovering part of it: It acquainteth thee with all the evil of thy heart, and thy wayes: It ſpeaks bitter things againſt pride, luſts, lazineſs, immoderate love of the world: It makes me an undone man; it will give me no comfort in any evil way, and therefore I can read it, and meditate on it with hearty delight, *Heb.* 4 *The word of God is quick and powerful, diſcerning the* Intima, *and the* Minima *moſt deep things of man, and the leaſt ſins in him.* How many ways God tries men.

As by the light of the Sun-beams we ſee the little motes and flyes in the air, ſo by Gods word ſhining into our hearts, we come to ſee many things ſinful and unlawful, which we did not perceive before: Oh then conſider your ſelves herein; do you love the word of God becauſe it finds out thy ſins, never ſpeaks any good to thy corrupt wayes? doſt thou pray, O Lord, let thy word ſtill enter with more light and power upon me? this is a comfortable ſign; but on the other ſide, if thou art in a continual fear of the light, dareſt not look into the Bible, becauſe it ſpeaks againſt ſuch and ſuch ſins thou art guilty of, be afraid thou art not right. *Tertullian* called Hereticks *Lucifugæ Scripturarum*, they were like Bats and Owls, they could not endure the light of the Sun: And our Saviour ſaith, *The thief hates the light, becauſe his deeds are evil.* Oh then take heed you who have a leproſie of ſin plainly appearing upon you: Doth not the word of God meet thy drunkenneſſe, thy luſts, thy oath, thy pride, as a Bear robbed of her whelps: Oh thy ſoul muſt needs hate the word of God, becauſe is is ſo contrary to thee.

2. A ſecond *Way whereby God proveth, (and the ſincere rejoyce therein) is a powerfull and ſoul-ſearching Miniſtry*, which thunder and lightening makes the mountains to melt like wax, and the Hindes to calve in the fields, I mean the ſtouteſt and obſtinateſt ſinner, to finde his ſoul thereby in a ſpiritual travel and agony longing to be delivered. A gracious heart loveth that Miniſtry which like the word of God is a two edged ſword in his heart, of which he can ſay as the woman, of Chriſt, *It hath told me all that ever I did.* That *ſhaking of heaven and earth* which the Prophet *Haggai* ſpeaketh of, is the Miniſtry of the Apoſtles, and in the Hebrew is the word, from whence *Bonarges* cometh. Then are ye like the Eagles young ones, ἀιλικρινεῖς, when ye can look upon the ſun-beams: when light is not offenſive to your ſore eyes. It was a ſpeech infallible betraying *Ahabs* rotten heart, when he ſaid of the Prophet *Micbaiah, I hate him becauſe he alwayes ſpeaks evil to me.* You have juſt cauſe to ſuſpect the ſoundneſs of your hearts, when you delight only in a lazy, formal, general, and dull miniſtry: When you would have Prophets that ſhould ſing only *Pleaſant ſongs, daub with untempered morter*, encourage you, notwithſtanding your ſins you are in. And if this be a ſymptome of an unſound heart, may we not ſay Hypocriſie hath fallen upon the hearts of moſt in *England*, who rejoyce not in thoſe Miniſters and Prophets that rouſe their conſciences, that trouble them for their ſins, that would reform them from their ſuperſtitions and prophaneneſs? do not the faithful Miniſters of God meet with the ſame hatred and oppoſition as the Prophets did by *Jeruſalem?* and why is all this? That of our Saviour will anſwer it, *The thief hates the light, becauſe his deeds are evil.* Therefore is thy heart afraid, and unwilling to have a Miniſtry that ſhall diſcover thy ſins, becauſe thy conſcience is full of Ulcers and ſores: Whereas now if thou didſt love to be reformed, how wouldſt thou rejoyce in the light of the Miniſtry. The more ſpiritual, powerful, operative, thou didſt find it in thy heart, thou wouldſt bleſs God the more: thou wouldſt cry out with thankfulneſs, O Lord, I bleſſe thee that light ſhineth in every dark corner of my heart: Oh let it ſtill be a miniſtry, as if to me only, to mind me of my ſins, to bring my iniquities to remembrance. O Lord, my heart doth not rage, nor riſe againſt this light; it doth not hate, or rebel againſt it, but I ſet open the Gates of my ſoul to receive more in.

3. *The work of conſcience within us, that alſo doth prove us.* God hath ſet up a light within us, and when this is enlightened by the word, then it makes a mans breſt full of light. Now a faithful godly man, he loveth this ſhould be tender, active, ſpeaking out of Gods word for every duty, and againſt every ſin. You ſee the quickneſs of it in *David*, when it's ſaid, *His heart ſmote him*: and 1. *John* 3. *If thy heart condemn thee God is greater than thy heart.* Alas, if thou within thy own ſelf judgeſt thy ſelf to ſin thus and thus, God doth much more. Try thy integrity: art thou willing to have a tender conſcience, and an informed conſcience? Doſt thou love to hear what that ſpeaks out of Gods word? whether peace or Duty, this is comfortable. But on the other ſide, if thou art a man that rebelleſt againſt the light of it; wouldſt fain put out the ſting of it, wouldſt be glad to feel no ſuch living thing in thy breaſt, then thou haſt cauſe to ſuſpect thy ſelf: Oh it is to be feared that there are many that give themſelves to luſts, and carnal pleaſures, that ſo they may put a foggy miſt between this ſin and them. Others digg into the world, labouring to become ſenceleſs, that ſo there may be an eclipſe of this light by the interpoſition of the earth. Others run to damnable Hereſies, denying Scriptures, God, Heaven, Hell; pleading for an univerſal ſalvation of all: What are theſe but refuges of guilty conſciences. It is true we muſt diſtinguiſh between our carnal concupiſence, and conſcience; between deluded imaginations and conſcience; between an erronious, and ſcrupulous conſcience, and a well grounded, and truly informed conſcience; and when we have done ſo, we muſt follow conſcience as far as that follows the word.

4. *God tryeth us by the illuminations of his Spirit, and ſtrong convictions thereby.*

Thus

Thus God proveth us, and makes us to know what we are, and wherein we fail, *John* 16. *The ſpirit of God convinceth of ſin, and of righteouſneſs*; and we are forbidden *to quench the ſpirit*: a metaphor (as ſome ſay) from the fire in the Temple that was not to be put out. And again it is the character of the ſtiff-necked *Jews* as fitted for deſtruction, that they always reſiſted the ſpirit of God. If therefore thou wouldſt have comfort from this ſign, conſider how the illuminations and motions of Gods Spirit are cheriſhed, and nouriſhed by thee. *As ſoon as the cock croweth, doſt thou go out and weep bitterly?* Is not the ſpirit of God grieved, & imbittered by thee? Oh, though they be dear, and pleaſant, or profitable ſins, yet the Spirit of God convinceth thee of them, makes thee forſake them: and doſt thou rejoyce under this work of Gods Spirit upon thee? Doſt not thou reſiſt and riſe up againſt it? Oh, (beloved) deeply weigh this. Though it may be there are ſome ſo ſwiniſh and beaſtly, that the ſpirit of God never moveth or worketh in them: Yet there are others who are not yet forſaken by God, but in the miniſtrie he ſtands at the dore, and knocks; he beckens unto thee to come unto him. Oh, now is God proving thee, examining thee. Now is he trying thee, if truth be in thee thou wilt be glad in this work of God upon thee, and deſire ſtill more and more burning, and ſhining light within thee.

5. *God tryeth, when by his Providence we are put upon many duties and commands, which it may be at other times did not concern us.* Thus God examined *Abraham* by a command to offer up his onely ſon *Iſaak*. Thus God tryed the young man, who had great confidence in himſelf, by that perſonal command, *to go and ſell all he had, and to follow him.* Now times of perſecution, are commonly ſuch times of tryal: Whether then we love *Father or mother, houſes or children, or lives themſelves, better than him?* Thus the ſecond kind of Ground, that had an hopeful ſprouting, was quickly diſcerned to have *no root when the ſun aroſe.*

The veſſels ſoundneſs is tryed in the fire: The Mariners skill in a ſtorm: The trees in windy tempeſt: In winnowing all the chaff flyeth away. There is a comfortable place to the Godly, *Zach.* 13. 9. *God promiſeth he will refine them as Gold by their afflictions*, they ſhall only loſe their droſs.

6. *And this is the ſixt way of Tryal*, viz. *When God brings us under his chaſtiſements.* This manifeſteth what metal we are of. 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. The tryal of the Godly by thoſe troubles, is ſaid to be *more excellent than that of the gold in the fire*, becauſe that is *periſhing*, and this *abideth for ever.* Hence afflictions are onely called *Temptations*, and not *Mercies*, though they many times diſcover what we are. Now indeed, we are not to pray to God that God would afflict us, that he would bring us into the fire; but when he doeth it, we are to make this advantage, *The Lord doeth it to humble us, and try us, to ſee what is in our hearts*; whether we will remain conſtant and faithful unto him: Therefore we do not deſpiſe the affliction, or murmur againſt God; but rejoyce that this purging of us, makes us to bring forth more fruit.

As God uſeth theſe ſeveral waies to prove us, and the ſoul of a Godly man is ready herein, ſo in theſe three caſes eſpecially doth a godly man give up himſelfe to be examined. A godly man gives up himſelf to be examined, proved, Eſpecially, 1.

Firſt, *In matter of Doctrine.* Although Hereſie may be meerly in matter of Conſcience and Opinion, yet for the moſt part, carnal principles and motives are interwoven therewith: now a godly man having a right underſtanding how obnoxious he is to Errors, and ſubject to blindneſs in every thing; & how deceitfull his heart alſo is, pretending for God, when indeed it is far nothing but ſelf, is therefore more ready to hearken to all light & reproof: As the ſpirit of God doth lead into Truth, ſo it doth alſo at the ſame time affect with much modeſty & humility. It is good to obſerve the excellent temperament of *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 7. in determining that caſe of conſcience about marriage to the *Corinthians*: His expreſſions are, *Yet not I, but the Lord; and I think I have the ſpirit of*

God. The ſame candor and ingenuity doth he work in his children: If therefore a Godly man doth err any dangerous error, it is with him as in other ſins; he doth not flatter himſelf; his heart is apt to ſmite him, *Errare poſſum, Hæreticus eſſe nolo*, he will not be obſtinate; he is earneſt to have all things ſearched and tryed; whereas it is the nature of Hypocriſie to maintain thoſe poſitions which are for profit, and ſelf-intreſt, againſt all light. Are not the Phariſees a ſad inſtance for this, who though they had no juſt ground to oppoſe our Saviour, yet becauſe Chriſts way was deſtructive to their applauſe and credit, when they could not fairly anſwer, they would foully blaſpheme: Whereupon our Saviour chargeth them with blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt.

2. *In matter of received worſhip, and traditional ſervice of God.* Although it be worſhip that can plead cuſtom from preſcription many years, commendation of the univerſality of learned men; yet an heart truly ſincere, deſireth to have all things examined, and proved out of Gods word: *Chriſt ſaid he was truth*, not cuſtome, as the Father obſerved well; and Chriſt dyed not only to deliver us from our ſinful waies, but the Tradition of our Fathers, *John* 4. You may obſerve the carnal diſpoſition of all men about an accuſtomed way in ſerving of God, in that woman of *Samaria*; ſhe preſſeth the argument that all ſilly and ignorant people do now for any Superſtition, *Our fathers worſhipped* &c. but our Saviour inſtructeth her of a *Worſhipping God in ſpirit and truth*, which ſhe before was wholly ignorant of. Therefore in this matter a man may diſcover much integrity of his heart, whereas if any be thus affected, I care not what Scriptures you bring, I hearken not to what Arguments are fetched out of Gods word, it is plain this man carnally adhereth to his own imagination, & is not willing to be ſearched: As that Papiſt, *Cornelius Maſſus* ſaid, *If a thouſand Auſtins and Chryſoſtomes ſaid thus and thus, he cared not, he would believe what the Pope ſaid.*

3. *This is eminently diſcovered in matter of practiſe.* Although a man hath been addicted to ſinful wayes of pleaſure, profit or any advantage whatſoever, yet all thoſe things that he accounted gain, afterwards he will judge loſs for Chriſts ſake. *Paul*, though much engaged in a way againſt Chriſtianitie, yet when once wrought upon, *He conſulteth not with fleſh and blood*, *Gal.* 1. He conſiders not any carnal reaſoning, but applieth immediately, & that without any limitation, to Gods commands, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* (ſaith he:) He giveth up his heart as a blank, let God write down what he pleaſeth. Thus *Elihu*, ſuppoſing upon a falſe ground *Job* to be an Hypocrite, doth give him excellent counſel, *Job* 34.31,32. *Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement, I will offend no more. That which I ſee not, teach thou mee, and if I have done iniquity, I will do ſo no more.* Therefore herein mayſt thou ſee the truth of thine heart: canſt thou heartily ſay, *that which I ſee not, teach thou me*, Neither profit, pleaſure, or any conſultation with fleſh and blood ſhall hinder me from my dutie. Whereas if you obſerve the half converſions of any to God, the Iſraelites, *Jehu*, many in the new Teſtament, you ſhall find they all flew back upon this ground, *They conſulted with fleſh and blood.*

In the next place let us conſider what are the effects of ſuch a gracious temper in the heart. And

1. Where this is, it doth not excuſe or mitigate ſin, but takes in with God againſt its own ſelf. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the *Corinthians* repentance, acknowledgeth their zeal, fear, and indignation, and revenge againſt themſelves. See 1 *Cor.* 11. *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged of the Lord.*

2. *Not reſting upon generals, but particularly applying matters of Duty.* The Prophet *Jeremiah* complaineth, no man ſaith, *What have I done?* The young man comforted himſelf well enough in the general, till our Saviour in particular tryed him, & then *he went away ſorrowful*: particular applications & diſcharge of duty, will try, as the jelouſie water did the ſuſpected woman. A man may ſpeak & preach for godlineſs in the general, but when it comes to particulars, he cannot abide

abide it. The Phariſees, they commended the Prophets that lived before them; but Chriſt, and thoſe that lived at that time, who reproved them for their ſins, they could not abide. Therefore it is a good rule of the Ancient, *When*, ſaith he, *you hear a man commending thoſe ancient doctors that went before*: ſee how he is affected to his preſent Teachers. That oppoſition which wicked men ſhew to thoſe preſent men alive that diſcover God to them, they would do to *Peter* and *Paul*; to *Auſtin* and *Chryſoſtom*, if they were alive, But when a thing is general, or afar off, it doth not move at all: particular preſent things, to diſcover what men are, and a ſincere heart loveth thoſe beſt.

3. *A ſincere heart loveth a godly reproof, and thoſe that give it.* See it in *David*; *Let the righteous ſmite me, and it ſhall be better than oyl*: Whereas a man of a falſe and Hypocritical heart, he rageth and flyeth in the face of thoſe that reprove him, though it be done with all prudence and compaſſion. Therefore try how thou canſt bear a reproof. Doth it work Humility, Love, Reformation in thee? this is good.

To all this which hath been delivered, this caution muſt be remembred, which holdeth alſo in other ſignes: We muſt not expect a punctual perfection herein, for even thoſe who are truly ſanctified, have yet diſcovered much falſhood and hypocriſie. Take *David* for an inſtance in that groſs guilfull way of the Murther of *Uriah*: could he then ſay, *Examine mee, prove me*? Was not there droſs enough to be found in him? Therefore though *David* deſired ſuch an inward ſearching of him, yet that he had no confidence in himſelf, appeareth by that univerſal principle he layeth down in another place: *If thou (O Lord) be ſtrict to marke what is done amiſs, no fleſh ſhall be juſtified in thy ſight.* Thus *Aſa*, though he was a godly man, yet when reproved by the Prophet for his ſin, how did corruption ſtirre within him, inſomuch that he threw the good Prophet into priſon for doing his duty!

Uſe of Examination: Here is a touchſtone and trial for your ſelves, Is there love of the Light, or fear of the Light: are you afraid of the word of God, a ſoul-ſearching Miniſtrie, cloſe and particular applications? then ſuſpect all is not ſound within thee. But if thou rejoyceſt in that thy ſoares are diſcovered, thou art glad when thy Hypocriſie is made known to thy ſelf, and thou crieſt out, More Light, Lord, more ſearching of my inward man, here is a good comfortable ſign. Hence *David*, *Pſal.* 19. when he had ſaid, *Who can underſtand his Errors?* he prayeth, *Cleanſe me from ſecret ſins.* Doſt thou ſo? Lord I fear much ſecret and unknown corruption in me; I know not how bad I am; a great deal of filthineſs lieth undiſcovered in me; Oh let me be tried and proved by thee.

SERM. XVI.

Growth in Grace a Sign of Grace.

JOHN 15.2.

And every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit.

A Fifth ſign of the ſtate of grace, ſhall be *growth & further progreſs in ſanctification*, out of theſe words, which are a part of that valedictory or farewell Parable our Saviour ſpake to his Diſciples, encouraging them in their duty and conſolation: For in the former Chapter our Saviour having informed them of two particulars, which might juſtly trouble their hearts, whereof one was his departure from them, and the other the ſad calamities which would fall upon them: By this Parable he giveth a twofold remedy to that twofold grief. For the firſt, *though he be corporally abſent, yet he is ſpiritually preſent*, and that with a very neer union, for he is the Vine and they the branches, ſo that ſpirituall efficacy ſhall alwaies be communicated to them. 2. For the latter, he exhorts them *to perſevere and abide in him, notwithſtanding all perſecutions* from arguments *ab effectu utili & pernicioſo*: This is the ſcope.

In the parable you have firſt the ſimilitude laid down generally, *I am the true Vine and my Father the Husbandman.* The true Vine ἡ ἄμπελος, ἡ ἀληθινή, becauſe the properties of a naturall Vine to its naturall branch, are nothing in reſpect of what Chriſt is to his ſpirituall branches.

In the ſecond verſe you have a diſtinction of two kinde of branches in Chriſt, which alſo doth inſinuate exhortation to look to our ſelves. The firſt kinde of branch, is, *that which is in him not bearing fruit.* He doth not by this mean an heathen or a flagitious wicked man, but an hypocrite that hath the viſibility of a branch, but not the reality: he doth not ſay, Every briar or nettle that bringeth not forth fruit, but every branch; But how is an hypocrite in Chriſt? not by any internall union, but outward profeſſion, by the Sacraments, & in the judgement of others, he is in Chriſt, as a *ſciens* newly grafted on a tree, which yet hath no coalition with it, or receiveth any juyce or nouriſhment from it, & ſee that terrible judgement that impendeth this unprofitable branch: A nettle in the garden, weeds among corn, ill branches in a vine, are in the greater danger, & ſo is a Chriſtian in the Church, not inwardly participating of efficacy from Chriſt. In the firſt place he doth αἴρει take him away, which is more particularly amplified *v. 6. he is caſt forth of the vineyard*, Chriſt bids them depart, then he withers, for though he had no fruit, yet he had leaves, and all this decaies; & laſtly he is *caſt into the fire* to be burnt. The other kinde of branch is that which being in Chriſt brings forth fruit, & concerning this obſerve the care and love of the vine-dreſſer. καθαίρει, *he purgeth it*, for that is neceſſary for vine-branches: Therefore the Hebrew word for a branch or vine is called זמורה *Zamorah a reſecando*, Numb. 3.24. Ezek. 15.2. becauſe it muſt be often pruned. Now although this purging be commonly underſtood of afflictions & perſecutions, which like dung, though noiſome in it ſelf, yet makes this ground fruitfull; yet we are to underſtand it more generally of all thoſe

thoſe means which God hath appointed for our progreſſe and encreaſe in grace, eſpecially the word of God, as appears *v.*3. Now ye are καθαροὶ (the ſame word in the originall with the former) *through the word I have ſpoken unto you.* In the next place our Saviour deſcribeth this purging from the end, that ye may bring forth more fruit: now that they may be partakers of this growth, he uſeth ſeveral arguments worthy obſervation, Verſe 4. *Abide in me, and I in you, becauſe the branch cannot bear fruit,* ſeparated from the Vine, *no more can ye* (ſaith Chriſt) χωρὶς ἐμοῦ without or rather ſeparated from me: he doth not ſay, ſaith *Auſtin, that ye can do no greater thing without me, but nothing,* and he doth not ſay ye cannot *perficere* perfect, but *facere,* ye cannot do; which our Saviour doth not apply unto that general aid of God that is needful in all natural and moral actions, but of the ſpecial aſſiſtance of grace, whereby as branches we bring forth ſpiritual fruit, and obſerve that there is our abiding in Chriſt, and Chriſts abiding in us, and not our dwelling in him; as the branch beareth fruit, not ſo much becauſe it is in the vine, as becauſe the vine is in it communicating juyce to it. Laſtly, *This growth and fruitfulneſſe is ſpoken of as an abſolute property,* in my Text: And *verſe* 8. *If ye bring forth fruit, ſo ſhall ye be my Diſciples;* that is, this is a neceſſary property to demonſtrate that ye are indeed my Diſciples, and then our Saviour ſpeaks of it as a ſign, *v.*11. *Theſe things have I ſpoken, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full;* now they could have no joy in theſe things, unleſſe they could know they did bring forth fruit, and therefore were Chriſts Diſciples.

That growth and increaſe in grace is a neceſſary property and an infallible ſign of our being in the ſtate of grace. Our Saviour ſaith not *Every branch in me,* that is green and flouriſheth with leaves and bloſſomes, *but that beareth fruit,* he makes it to bring forth more fruit. It is not every Chriſtian that hath the flouriſhing greenneſſe and leaves of common abilities, and parts in religion, that is regarded by God, but that man whoſe talent of grace, *as five, hath gained ten:* Therefore in that Parable our Saviour bid them all negotiate, play the merchants, and trade in the waies of grace, and one man hath his portion among hypocrites, though he had not idely ſpent his talent, becauſe he had not improved, *propter lucrum ceſſans,* though not *propter damnum emergens;* ſo that the opening of this mark will be of great uſe, becauſe increaſe of grace is ſo rare: and whereas all men endeavour to have their health, wealth and eſtates better, they are not careful to have better graces, to pray better, to hear better, to be more ſtrong in believing and heavenly-mindedneſſe. To affect you therefore herein, conſider firſt,

Obſerv.

Growth in grace a ſign of grace.

That as there is a neceſſity of being converted and tranſlated from ſin to a ſtate of grace, ſo there is alſo a neceſſity when we are put therein, to grow and increaſe to a further ſtature in holineſſe. Thus in the Text. *Every branch he purgeth to bring more fruit,* Eph 4.16. Col.2.19. In which places every godly man is ſaid to be knitted to Chriſt, and thereby partaketh of his ſpirit and nouriſhment, wherein he encreaſeth with the encreaſe of God, that is with a divine and ſpiritual encreaſe, in oppoſition to the natural growth of the body: ſo that whoſoever findeth himſelf ſetled upon his lees, continuing ſtill in the ſame formal, empty, barren way, he may juſtly ſuſpect whether he be of the body of Chriſt; but as the glaſſe eye and artificial leg receiveth no nouriſhment from the body, but have ſtill the ſame dimenſions, is no longer or broader, ſo is every unregenerate man deſtitute of the vivifical influence of Chriſts ſpirit, and therefore is the ſame without any change, he was many years ago. Yea, that the neceſſity of the growth of grace may appear, the Apoſtle *Eph.*4.12,13. makes it the great end of the Miniſtery, the end, why God hath given *Paſtors and Teachers to his Church,* not only for converſion, but *further edification, till we all come to the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſſe of Chriſt:* which is not to be underſtood in the life to come, but in this life, as appeareth by the verſe following, that *we be not henceforth like children carried with every winde of doctrine;* ſo that God hath appointed a Miniſtry not only for lay-

ing the foundation of godlineſs in the peoples hearts, but for ſuperſtruction; and oh that the Miniſters of God could ſee this glorious effect. What haſt thou been more inſtructed in? wherein haſt thou been more quickened up to godlineſs ſince thou haſt enjoyed the Miniſtry? Oh (beloved) if Chriſt ſhould come and look upon our perſons, families, may he not curſe us with the fig-trees curſe, *never fruit grow on you*? Know God is not only angry with thee in the ſtate of ſin and love thereof, but alſo with the coldneſs, lukewarmneſs, that thou haſt not thriven and encreaſed more in every grace. Hence are thoſe manifold exhortations to this duty, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. ſo that the bleſſing which God gave at firſt to the creatures, encreaſe and multiply, is eſpecially to be ſeen in the new creature.

2 As growth is thus neceſſary, ſo *it can only be, where there is an inward principle of life pre-exiſtent.* Nothing groweth but what hath either a vegetative, ſenſitive, or rational life in it. Roul a ſnow ball up and down, though you make it much bigger, yet it doth not grow, becauſe it is by *extra*-addition, not by *intra*-reception. An houſe made larger and bigger, yet doth not grow, becauſe here is no vital principle within. By this means a civil man, a formal man, a temporary believer, he cannot grow ſpiritually, becauſe he doth not live ſpiritually. There may be indeed a growth in knowledge, parts, inlargements, and duties, but this doth not prove a true growth. Theſe ſproutings are not from internal union with Chriſt, but are outwardly in a common way beſtowed by Chriſt upon them. As in a field of corne, the weeds have a better flouriſhing than in a barren wilderneſſe, yet the husbandman was not at all that coſt and charges to have weeds come up, but corn; ſo Chriſt died not, or ſet his Officers in the Church to furniſh the wicked with any abilities, but yet living in his Church, they partake of ſeveral priviledges by him, which yet were not the chief intent of his death: ſo then, there only is a ſupernatural growth, where there is a ſupernatural life, and as you ſee the picture of a childe, it will never come up to be a man, becauſe it is a picture only, there is no life; ſo in any man that hath only a form of godlineſs, not feeling the power of it; he is ſtill upon the ſame hinges where he was, he goeth on in the circle of duties, prayeth as he did, cometh to Church as he did; but if you enquire for encreaſe, Haſt thou more faith? more communion and fellowſhip with God? doſt thou partake of more vertue and efficacy from him? herein they are wholly ignorant. Oh that we who deſire better times, better trading, better ſetling, did alſo deſire, better believing, better mortification; but this cannot be unleſſe there be ſome great work of God within firſt. As he ſaid to his picture which he would fain have had ſtood, and it would not, ἔνδον τὶ δεῖ, there wants ſomething within, life within; ſo may we ſay, thou prayeſt, thou heareſt, thou profeſſeſt, but there wants ſomething within; till grace be infuſed, it cannot in thy converſation be diffuſed, It muſt be ſhed in thy heart before it can be ſhed abroad in thy life.

3. As growth is alwayes upon a ſuppoſed principle within, *ſo it is uniform and aptly proportionable*: as the Apoſtle implieth in that compariſon, every part hath its proportionable nouriſhment ſo that in true growth of grace, every particular grace hath its ſuitable encreaſe, and herein the people of God are very negligent; if they grow in believing, they do not the ſame time grow in repentance and humiliation, if they grow in joy, they do not encreaſe in fear and trembling. This is their weakneſs and corruption, for all true encreaſe of grace is uniform. As in natural bodies every part groweth, one as well as the other, the little finger as well as the great, whereas now if one part prove bigger than in proportion it ſhould to the other parts, we call it not growth but a diſeaſe: a tympany, a wen, are not growth in the body, but tumours, neither do they come from a naturall life, but from ſome accidental defect: ſo then, if thou groweſt in knowledge, in abilities, and not in a practical conformity to them, this is not properly growth, but ſwellings. And is not this the ſad calamity of this age, men growing out into ſuckers not into fruit, into opinions, parts, not holineſſe, how many monſters are there

there to be seen, whose heads are bigger than all their bodies? and so the hypocrite with his partial obedience, *Jehu* with his several acts of reformation, *Herod* with his many things he did, yet encreased not in grace, because here was not an uniform proportion in all.

3. In growth, though every part do grow as well as the other, yet *not equall to the other*; *æquè* but not *æqualiter*. This is that *uniformiter difformiter*, as the Philosophers speak of so much, and *Eph.* 4. The Apostle speaks of the particular measure of grace sutable to every part, so that the eye groweth with the nourishment peculiar to the eye; the hand with nourishment peculiar to the hand, and so one part needeth not so much nourishment as another, because it is not to grow so big as an other: and this is dilligently to be noted, for where there is true grace, there is a peculiar encrease of grace, according to the relation thou art in: If a Magistrate in the graces of a Magistrate, if a Minister in the graces of a Minister, If a husband, a childe, a servant, in the graces sutable to those relations: and again, this is also for comfort, because many of Gods servants are troubled, as if they had no grace, because they have not so much as others; They have not such an excellent temper as *Paul* and *David* had, they cannot finde themselves able to do such things as they did, and therefore they doubt of their grace, but this is as if the little finger should think it doth not grow, because it is not as big as the arm or leg. Every member in Christs body hath not the same occasions, is not under so many obligations, stands not in such particular relations as others do: and therefore the personal graces of the one do farre transcend the other, insomuch that some are dwarfs, and others gyants, some are babes, and others are strong men.

4. Whereas in natural growth there is a *terminus* prefixed both for the time, and dimensions, insomuch that when there is an arrival to such a stature and age, they grow no more; there is nutrition alwayes, but not augmentation; Nature hath her *maximum quod sic*, beyond which she moveth not: But now it is not so in the way of grace; *For there we cannot attain to any such degree of grace, but still there is a large room for more*; and it is our sin if we presse not forward to attain it, *Phil.* 3. Paul *did forget all that was behinde, and did* διώκειν, *and* ἐπτείνειν *earnestly pursue* and endeavour after that *before him.* It is true indeed God hath appointed to every man that measure of grace he shall receive in this life; yet not so, but that it is his duty to do more, even as much as the perfect Law of God requireth, so that here is no time to stand still. Thy faith ought to be greater and stronger, there is no grace in thee but it might be better: Thou canst never say of thy spiritual good things, as *Dives* of his temporal; *Soul, take thy ease, thou hast enough laid up in store for thee.*

5. In natural growth, the progresse is carried on by natural strength, with the general concourse of Gods providence. But in this spiritual progresse, the encrease is of God. At our first conversion we being wholly dead in sin, God puts into us supernatural principles of grace, wherein man is not cooperant, but meerly a subject recipient, but afterward the heart of man being enlivened and healed thus by grace, he doth cooperate with the grace of God, yet so as that a further degree of any grace is wrought by God: Hence he is said in those that are already converted *to work the will and the deed*, and that good man prayed to God *to encrease his grace*, and Gods promises are also frequent in the Scripture, *to compleat and perfect that grace already begun in us.* God doth not believe or repent in us, these flow immediatly and formally from a man regenerated, but Gods grace doth efficiently excite and stir up the will to do these good actions: hence it is that when the people of God have through negligence or any corruption grieved the spirit, that doth forsake him, and so his Sun goeth many degrees backward; for that assertion is no wayes justifiable, that a godly man cannot fall from any degree of his grace; for its plain *David* did, who therefore prayeth to have *a new heart*; *created in him*; *and the Church is blamed for falling from her first love*, and so is commanded

manded *to repent*, and to *do her first things*, *to strengthen the things that are ready to die*. The ordinary comparisons are, that a godly man may be like the tree in winter, that hath life in the root, but yet the branches and outside discover none, or as the fire that lyeth buried up in ashes.

6. As in natural growth, there are many pull-backs, sometimes a progress and then a regresse. Thus it is with corn, trees, and man himself before he comes to his term prefixed, and therefore we must not say, Such corn doth not grow because for such a season it may wither and go back: it is enough that in the end it cometh to its full growth and ripenesse: *so it is with a godly man, he is not to passe sentence of himself according to some seasons and temptations, for how often is he in a withered and barren condition? but he is to compare one season with another.* Yea, godly mens stumblings do many times make them go the faster: as sometimes after sicknes children grow the faster, so true is that of *Luther, that to the godly not only their* mala passiva, *but also* mala activa, *through the goodnesse of God further their growth in holiness.*

These principles are laid down to explain the nature of encrease in grace. In the next place consider how many wayes we may improve grace.

1. *We bring forth more fruit, when the habits of our graces are more intense and enlarged:* for in this supernatural habits agree with morall, that they are capable of intension, whereby faith may be made stronger, love more active, patience more refined. Their natures do not consist *in indivisibli*, neither do any attain to the utmost of any grace, Christ only had fulnesse, and *the spirit of God was given unto him without measure*; but in us it is otherwise: hence the Disciples fall in into some ambition, our Saviour tels them, *except ye be converted*, that is, further converted and carried on in sanctification, *ye cannot enter into the kingdome of heaven*; so it is said of the disciples upon some remarkable passage which Christ did, that they believed on him, which is not to be understood, as if they did not before believe on him, but they were confirmed more. Oh therefore look upon it as a necessary testimony of grace, to thrive more in godlinesse, to have many cubits added to thy stature, say with thy self, oh if the life of grace were in me, should I alwayes be at such a stay, would it be no more active and operative; do wicked men grow worse and worse, and shall not I better and better? We complain of our children if sent to school, and they are still the same, stand at a stay; and may not the Ministers of God complain of their people, if they be still the same? how severely & terribly doth *Paul* speak to the Hebrews, because they were babes still, when they might have been strong men? he threatens them with the sin against the holy Ghost, and totall apostasie, for not to go forward is to go backward, as it is with the boats in the river, if they cannot go on, they are driven backward: Now these habits of grace may be made more intense, partly by more fervency, when our graces arise to a greater heat, our faith and love more burning within us; partly by more easinesse, the waves of godlinesse are not so difficult, corruption is more subdued, for habits are like a second nature, which do facilitate and make all actions welcome, so that his Commandments are not grievous; partly by more delight and joy for this floweth from the former: hence when the people of Israel offered so willingly, they rejoyced in that they had such hearts. Now see if thou maist not in all thy graces be more fervent, more delighting, how often art thou languishing, dull, and unwilling? how often are good things even irksom and tedious to thee? Oh dost thou not need purging to bring forth more fruit.

2. Our graces may encrease *by a deeper rooting of them in our hearts*; The more they root downwards, the more they bear fruit upward. The Schoolmen dispute whether habits do encrease by addition of new degrees, or deeper radication in the subject: But I take it for granted, that in supernatural habits both these are different; If therefore thou wouldest take any comfort from thy grace, see whether holy things be now ingrafted in thee, do cleave closer to thy heart; for certainly true grace brings such sweetnesse with it, that it makes the soul have more

plenty

plenty and fullneſſe of it, 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. and would be transformed into it, *I no longer live*, ſaith *Paul*, *but Chriſt in me*. As therefore originall corruption is ſeated in thee and ſoaked into thy very bones, ſo do thou deſire grace may be incorporated in thee: you ſee meat while it is in the mouth, it may be taken away, but when it's once turned to nouriſhment, turned into our fleſh and bloud, then it's impoſſible to take it out of our body. The unhappy builder therefore ſuffered that loſſe, becauſe he did not dig deep enough.

3. *Graces grow by the actuall exerciſe of them*, by actuall loving and beleeving the habits of faith and love are more firm and ſtrong. Hence the commands of God are for the acts of grace. Thou ſhalt love, and this is his commandment to believe. The habits are commanded obliquely as the fountain, the acts as the ſtream. In morall Philoſophy acts make the habits more intenſe. In Chriſts Parable of the talents, he onely is ſaid to have, that doth exerciſe and actually improve his graces; and as our graces encreaſe by the exerciſe of them, ſo by the cooperation of them altogether: *Add to your faith temperance, to temperance brotherly kindneſſe*: which is not to be underſtood of the habits of grace, for they are all infuſed together; and a man may as well be happy with one particular act of glory, as regenerate with one habit of grace: but we are to interpret it of adding the acts to one another.

4. *The growth of grace is by meliorating or making better the means and inſtruments of grace.* The word and Ordinances are appointed by God as the means to grow, and to cleanſe us more and more. Now if thou wouldeſt have thy graces flouriſh, thou muſt be more diligent & carefull in the prepared uſe of them; hear better, pray better, make a better improvement of the Miniſtery. The Diſciples *were mending their nets* becauſe they were inſtruments to get their fiſh. The Artificer muſt ſharpen his tools, if he would live by his trade. Now theſe externall Ordinances are the ſpiritual tools and inſtruments by which the ſoul is promoted in the way of godlineſs, and if thou languiſheſt and art careleſs here, it will quickly appear in thy whole converſation.

5. *Where growth is, there is a ſpeciall care of all graces to look to that which helps to nouriſhment, and that is Faith.* Faith is the mouth to ſuck the milk of the promiſes, it is the bunch of hyſop that ſprinkles Chriſts blood upon us to purifie us, it is the feeding upon Chriſt: Now than if a man would be nouriſhed and encreaſe in grace, he muſt be ſure this grace hath no obſtructions. As a man is juſtified only by faith, ſo in ſome ſenſe, we may ſay a man is ſanctified, that is, encreaſeth in new obedience, by faith: By faith the branch is preſerved in the olive-tree, and partaketh of the fatneſſe thereof. Chriſt praied for Peter *that his faith might not fail*, as if that grace were kept up, then his courage, zeal ſelf-deniall, and all other graces would be kept up: *Non per opera venitur ad fidem, ſed per fidem ad opera.*

6. *There is a growth objectively, and that is, when the glorious fulneſſe of God is manifeſted to us more and more.* Though the Sun cannot in it ſelf encreaſe or be more glorious, yet it may to us more and more: therefore it hath its dawning, and its noon; ſo though God and Chriſt cannot be better or more lovely objects than they are, yet they may be ſo to thy affections and deſires, Chriſt a new Chriſt, grace new grace, becauſe there are further apprehenſions and applications of their ſweetneſſe and efficacy.

Now to prevent miſtakes, there is a twofold diſpoſition like growth, that is not,

1. *An encreaſe in knowledge, parts, and abilities.* This is not growth of grace: There is an encreaſe (as you heard) *quoad amplitudinem ſcientiæ* and *quoad efficaciam*, the latter is the crown and the perfection of the former.

2. *There is a growth in temporary faith, and love, and ſuch affections*, Which hypocrites may have, but temporary faith will never grow to be juſtifying; no more than the Ape would grow to be a man, or copper to be gold, for theſe differ ſpecifically.

3. *There is a growth in externals meerly, men are grown more civill and reformed in their lives.* We may behold a wonderful alteration and change in them, but yet becauſe there is no inward juice of grace, therefore it's not growth of godlineſſe; and ſuch *Peter* ſpeaks of, *Who had eſcaped the pollutions of the fleſh*, yet were dogs and ſwines in their inward diſpoſition.

4. *There is a growth in additionals of worſhip and ſervice.* When men judge not the preſcribed way by God enough, but inſtitute of their own. This is a monſtrous growth, as if a man ſhould have two heads or ſix fingers. Thus ſuperſtition is an exceſſe in worſhip; not in the quality of worſhip; for a man can never worſhip God too purely, too fervently; but in the quantity, by inſtituting new means. Hence growth of grace doth not lie in multiplication of duties more than God requireth, but the intention of qualities therein.

Uſe. Uſe of Exhortation, *Judge your ſelves by this touchſtone.* Let this Sermon be to you what *Eliſha*'s body was to the dead body that fell on it, make life to come into you. Do you increaſe in grace? Are you not at a ſtand? the ſame ye were many years ago? conſider God is provoked not only againſt groſſe ſins, but lazy decaying duties. Do you grow in light but not in heat; in enlargements, but not mortifications? Oh let thy ſoul be afraid and tremble under this truth! Intreat God, as he did about his withered hand, Oh Lord reſtore this withered hand, this withered ſoul of mine! I doubt me, in theſe times many have broke in their Religion, as well as in their ſtates, as *Paul* ſaid to *Timothy*, *Let your profiting appear to all.*

SERM. XVII.

Spiritual Performance of Duties a Sign of Grace.

1 JOHN 4.13.

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit.

THE Apoſtle *John* as he was the beloved Diſciple, ſo doth he frequently and vehemently preſſe the duty of love to the Church of God, for that being a ſpiritual body, love is as neceſſary to preſerve them, as nerves and ligaments are in a natural body.

The Arguments uſed in this Chapter for love are many: As

Firſt, That love is a ſtream iſſuing from no leſſe glorious fountain than God himſelf is.

Secondly that it is demonſtration of our ſpiritual Nativity, *That we are borne of God.*

Thirdly, From the Nature of *God*, He is love, *viz.* Originally and Cauſally, which he proveth by a clear and unparalell'd manifeſtation of it, He *gave us his only begotten Sonne*; which love he alſo amplifieth by the removal of any impulſive cauſe on our part, it was not *becauſe we loved him firſt*; and withall he giveth a reaſon, why a naturall man loveth not God, becauſe *he ſeeth him not.* The diſputes about the Viſion of the Eſſence of *God*; and that by corporal eyes, is wholly impertinent to this place, for the Greek word is θεωρίαν, & ſignifieth a con-

contemplation and constant beholding of the beauty and lustre of Gods Attributes, his Wisdom, Holinesse, but especially his Love to us in Christ, all which doth kindle love in us again. And from this beholding of God doth arise that neer union with God, which is Gods *dwelling in us, and we in him.* All which the Apostle makes manifest to us by the effect, *viz. by the Spirit, of which he hath given us.* It is needless to trouble you with the several acceptions of the word *Spirit*, It is enough to know, That by *Spirit* is not meant the essence of the Spirit, for that is imparcible; nor of any immediate testimony of the Spirit, as the phrase will imply, *He hath given us of his Spirit*, which denoteth some effects of the *Spirit*, and of effects, not the common effects, for they are not a sure argument of Gods dwelling in us, and we in him; it remaineth therefore that it be understood of the gracious works of Gods Spirit, whereby in all our duties we are lifted up by Gods Spirit to do them in an higher manner, than natural strength could inable us unto: so that the Observation is,

The spiritual performing of holy duties, is a sure sign and demonstration of our being in God, and God in us. Observ.

Thus the same Apostle 1 *Joh.* 3. 24. for as miracles did truly demonstrate those that did them, to be endued with the power of Gods Spirit from above, and they wrought miracles to confirm men in this belief, that we are sent of God; thus the spiritual doing of those things required of thee, are a kinde of miracles to confirm thy soul, that thou art of God. And as actual discourse and laughter do infallibly prove a rational life, because these actions transcend a sensitive life; so do spiritual praying, hearing, &c. evidence a spiritual life, because of their transcendency.

For the opening of this point, which is necessary (and the want of which *Paul* did so greatly bewail in the *Corinthians*, *I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as carnal*) take notice of these things by way of a foundation.

First, *As in natural things there is a sensitive soul above the vegetative, and a rational above the sensitive, so (with more disproportion) there is a spiritual life vouchsafed by the holy Ghost above a rational.* Insomuch that take the most rational man, that is endued with all intellectual abilities and moral perfections; so that he be *Ultimus conatus naturæ*, as one said of *Aristotle*, yet he is no more able to do any thing spiritually, or to apprehend what are those spiritual operations, than a worm can comprehend the reason of the most wise men. Thus *Paul* saith, *The natural man perceiveth not the things of God*, ψυχικὸς ἄνθρ, That is, one that doth *excolere animam* minde the polishing and dressing of his soul, such as *Plato* and *Seneca*. Now howsoever prophane men mock at the word *Spirit*, and the works thereof, yet that there is such an immediate participation of the holy Ghost in the operations thereof, the Scripture doth abundantly testifie, *John* 3. 6. *That which is borne of the flesh is flesh, and that which is borne of the spirit is spirit*, where our Saviour makes such a spiritual birth absolutely necessary to salvation, and sheweth two contrary kinds of men, one *carnal*, abiding in the condition they were borne in, the other *spiritual*, made so by God; and the Apostle in both places useth the *abstract* for the *concrete*, for more efficacy. This afterwards he calls *Being born of the spirit.* So that as a man born of a man, hath *Indolem humanam*, is and doth more than a beast: so he that is born of the Spirit, hath *indolem divinam*, and doth more than a man. Indeed our Saviour makes the original of this spiritual being unknown to us, which he expresseth by a comparison from the winde, or as *Maldonat* will have it, from the soul of a man, which we do not perceive infused into us, or how we come by it; so in this great work of Gods Spirit, *Motum sentimus, modum nescimus*; God breathed into *Adam* a *natural life*, and a soul, but this is a great mercy which God doth for his people. And because the spiritual being & working is of such important consequence, you may observe the Scripture in other places diligently inculcating of it. Therefore ob-

ſerve them diligently, whether you find ſuch things in you or no, for not withſtanding all parts and religious duties, if the Spirit of God dwell not and work in you, you are no more a true member of Chriſt, than an Ape is a man, *Rom.* 8. 1,5,6,9,13,14. where the Apoſtle ſpeaking of the glorious benefit of Juſtification. See to whom he appropriateth it, *To thoſe who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit*, whereupon he is induſtrious to make a difference between the one and the other; and he uſeth ſeveral deſcriptions, *οἱ κατὰ πνεῦμα, Who are after the Spirit*, which he explaineth by *being ſpiritually minded: φρόνημα* denoteth not only acts of the *underſtanding*, but chiefly of the *will* and *affections*; it ſeemeth to anſwer the Hebrew word *Jetzer, The imaginations or frame of the heart:* So that as the imagination and frame of a carnal heart is wholly upon things of the *fleſh:* Thus the affections, imaginations, deſigns and purpoſes of a ſpiritual man, are upon ſpiritual things. As the Apoſtle calls them *οἱ κατὰ πνεῦμα*, ſo *v* 9. *οἱ ἐν πνεύματι, Thoſe that are in the Spirit*, that is, *Poſſeſſed of the Spirit*, as if the holy Ghoſt were as wonderfull in gracious operations upon the heart of man, as in thoſe prophetical and extaticall *Aſſatuſſes*, for they were ſaid at thoſe times, *To be in the* Spirit and the, *Grecians* calls ſuch ἐνθεους; it is a ſimilitude, ſaith *Grotius*, taken from thoſe who are guarded on every ſide by keepers, and are wholy under their power ſo mighty and efficacious is Gods Spirit in believers; and (by the way obſerve) this is called promiſcuouſly, *The Spirit of God, The Spirit of Chriſt, The Spirit of the Father*, and that *dwelling in us* which doth *prove the holy Ghoſt to be a perſon*, not a meer vertue and force, or power from God, as ſome hereticks of old would have it; and a perſon that is one in the Trinity, not the cheifeſt of the created Angels, as one of late would blaſphemouſly maintain. In *Adam*, the holy Ghoſt wrought his holineſſe, as the third Perſon in the Godhead; but now he worketh grace in us by another œconomy or diſpenſation, as the Spirit of the Father, and of Chriſt. And that all this operation of Gods Spirit may not be rejected as a fancy, he ſaith, *He dwels in us as in his Temple*, which denoteth a fixed permanency, *and abiding in us*; It is true, the godly diſpute, Whether a godly man be made partaker of the graces of Gods Spirit only, or beſides theſe of the Spirit it ſelf? The learned differ herein, but certainly theſe expreſſions do inferre, That the godly do not only receive the graces of Gods Spirit, but the Spirit alſo it ſelf, only how to explain this, ſeemeth to me very difficult, if not impoſſible.

The godly led by the Spirit

Secondly, *As the Spirit of God doth thus dwell in his children, and thereby they have an habitual ſupernatural, ſpiritual being, ſo is the ſame Spirit acting, leading and moving of them unto thoſe things that are holy.* Hence the godly are ſaid *to be led by the Spirit*, Rom. 8. Gal. 5. which doth not denote the firſt enlivening of us; in which ſenſe the Poet ſaid, *Mens agitat molem*, but a powerfull continual inclination of our hearts unto thoſe things that are ſpiritual; and this denoteth that even in the progreſſe of Sanctification, we need a continu'll help and influence from Gods Spirit, according to that of *Auguſtine, Et agis & ageris, & tunc benè agis, ſi à bono agaris*, and when we obey theſe conducts of Gods Spirit, *We are ſaid to walk in the ſpirit.* Thus *Gal.* 5. 24. *Living in the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit*, are diſtinguiſhed as the cauſe and effect; we therefore *walk in the Spirit*, becauſe *we live in it*, and the Greek word στοιχεῖν doth import a carefull, orderly, methodical walking: A ſpirituall walking is a methodical walking; ſo then, as original ſinne by the Scripture is deſcribed to be in us, not as a ſluggiſh idle quality, but as alwaies working, as a fountain always ſtreaming, inſomuch that though it be not *peccatum actuale*, yet it is *actuoſum*; Thus the ſpirit of God doth powerfully ſend forth vertue and ſtrength unto thoſe in whom he dwelleth.

Two Corollaries.

To have the Spirit is more then to be an honeſt civil man.

Now from theſe two laid together, two Corollaries iſſue,

Firſt, *That to have the Spirit of God in the Scripture ſenſe, is more than to be a meral, honeſt, civil man.* This is no more a teſtimony that we are of God, than any baſer

baſer metal can plead it ſelf to be gold, becauſe of ſome common accidents therewith, and therefore their morality, intellectual perfections are altogether fleſhly; for ſo it's good to know that as Spirit differs from Spirit, one ſpiritual man from another, as one Starre differs from another in glory, inſomuch that one would wonder how the ſame heaven ſhould at laſt receive men ſo different: ſo one carnal man differeth from another carnal man, as much as a garden from a dunghill, and one would wonder that the ſame hell ſhould be at laſt the ſame receptacle of ſo different converſations. Corruption is not only in groſſe actions, but in the minde and underſtanding of a man, yea the more glorious it appeareth to be many times, it is the more carnal; As you ſee the Devils are called *unclean ſpirits*, who yet are not guilty of groſſe bodily ſins. Oh therefore that you would conſider; there is an higher and more glorious way of living than that which moſt attain unto: Chriſtianity ſtaupt upon a meer civill man, deſtitute of Gods Spirit, is but like the Kings Picture upon a braſſe ſhilling, as long as the materials are counterfeit, the ſuperſcription will not advantage. *Baptiſm, Chriſtianity*, and all other glorious ſuperſcriptions put upon the abiding in a moral eſtate, is no advantage for heaven; there muſt be power from Gods Spirit in thee.

A ſecond Corollary is, *That the gracious and ſanctifying works of Gods Spirit, are only a teſtimony of being in God, not thoſe common gifts of his Spirit, ſuch as parts, abilities, aſſiſtance and enlargements in duties, no nor Propheſies and Revelations if ſuch were to be had.* These indeed men moſt covet after, as accompanied with more applauſe and admiration; but it's better to ſpeak one word with the grace of Gods Spirit, than ten thouſand with the meer gift of his Spirit. One would wonder indeed, why God ſhould diſtribute ſuch glorious gifts to thoſe, whom he doth not love to eternal life; but his wayes are alwayes juſt, though ſometimes unknown to us; yea, there are other workings of Gods Spirit that come nearer to ſanctification, and yet are not it. Such are, ſome ſorrow about ſin, ſome illumination in judgement, ſome joy and delight in the Ordinances, yet theſe argue only Gods Spirit working in us, not dwelling in us. And theſe operations are only *tranſient* not *permanent*; and it is a good rule of *Bonaventures*, *Illa naturæ dicuntur eſſe in animâ, quæ ſunt in eâ per modum quietis, cætera ſunt magis ad animâ, quam in animâ.* Thoſe things are properly in the ſoul which are in it by way of reſt, and centre in it. Yea, hence it is (which is much to be obſerved) that all thoſe operations of Gods Spirit in an unregenerate man, whether of the former or latter ſort, they are *provocative* or *excitative* of the fleſh only in a man. Thus *Judas* by all thoſe gifts of Gods Spirit to him was made more fleſhly. A temporary believer by all his faith and joy is made more fleſhly; for hereby he groweth more confident in himſelf, leſſe poor in his Spirit, and ſo leſſe perceiving the need of Chriſt, and his grace, by which he is more ſetled in a carnal way. Therefore obſerve, whether all thy aſſiſtance, enlargements, tranſient motions of Gods Spirit, have not this event in thee, to mak thee carnal and corrupt in a refined manner.

2. Gracious and ſanctifying works of the Spirit only are a ſign of our being godly not common gifts.

In the next place, Let us conſider in what way this ſpirituality is manifeſted. And

Wherein ſpirituality in duty is manifeſted, and how it is a ſign.

1.

Firſt, *The nature of them is different from all meer humane actions.* The acts of faith, love, and other graces, are above the whole ſphear and power of nature; *Jannes* and *Jambres* were able to do ſome wonderful things, as well as *Moſes*, but there were others again, in which they had no power at all. Thus there are many humane actions of prudence and juſtice, that make men very lovely and admirable in the eyes of others; but then there are other actions, ſuch as the operations of habitual graces, and to this they can no more reach, than a dwarf can touch the heavens. Hence the Scripture ſometimes addeth the word Spirit, when it would difference grace from humane actions, 2 *Cor.* 4. 13. *Having the ſame Spirit of faith*, Epheſ. 6. 18. *Supplication in the Spirit*, Phil. 3. 3. *Which worſhip God in*

the Spirit. Col. 1. 18. *Your love in the Spirit.* Now this addition [in the Spirit] implieth that there are many actions that are done by us, but unleſſe they be performed in the Spirit, they come ſhort of that divine and excellent nature, which God looketh at. *Gratia non tollit, ſed attollit naturam*, Grace doth not deſtroy the natural faculties and actions of the ſoul, but it elevateth or ſublimateth them to a more noble conſideration; and this is the reaſon why a natural man can do nothing that is truly and theologically good, becauſe of the tranſcendent excellency of it's nature, but this is hardly diſcerned; and if there be many, yea, moſt things in nature, whoſe eſſence we perceive not, it is no wonder if we be ſo dull in ſupernatural.

2. Secondly, *Spiritual actions are diſcovered by the fountain from whence they flow, A ſpiritual principle*, which the Scripture calls *a divine nature*, yea, the *life of God.* As *Iſaac* is called *A childe of the promiſe*, becauſe he was born by the meer word and power of God, *Sarahs womb* being a *dead womb*; Thus alſo all godly actions, are actions of the promiſe, having their exiſtence meerly by that, mans natural power being altogether a *dead womb.* And this alſo can little help as a ſign, becauſe the root of our actions, like thoſe of trees, lieth under ground, and is ſo undiſcerned.

3. Therefore thirdly, *In ſpiritual actions, thoſe motives and ends that are attractive are ſpiritual.* Every action is ſpecified by the formality of the object, and ſo religious actions they are ſpiritual, when the reaſon or motive of doing them is ſpiritual. Hence they are called *Virgins, and they follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth.* This is that *godly ſimplicity* Paul ſpeaks of in himſelf, whereby, as *of God, and to God he did all things. For want of this*, God by the Prophet rejects the humiliations and faſtings the Jews did, which yet were ſpecious enough, becauſe they did it not to him, even to him; and this is a ſign that may by the help of Gods Spirit be diſcerned in us. For as the voluptuous man is carried out to ſinful pleaſures, becauſe of the ſweetneſſe in them; or as a rational man is deſirous to finde out truth, becauſe truth is a pleaſing connatural object to his underſtanding, ſo is a ſpiritual man enclining to all ſpiritual objects, becauſe of thoſe ſpiritual conſiderations that are therein. *Delicata anima quaſi abominatur, per modum commodi vel præmii diligere Deum.* Now in all religious duties there are many ſpiritual attractives, ſuch as the command of God, enjoying of, and communion with him, the light of Gods countenance and encreaſe of grace. Go therefore and examine thy own ſelf, What is the loadſtone in all holy Duties? What is the mark thou aimeſt at? It is the intention, that is the pulſe to feel how thy heart is.

4. Fourthly, *Spirituality is diſcerned by the manner.* Where the Spirit of God is there is zeal, fervency, activity. So that a formal, cuſtomary, ſuperficial performing of holy duties is extreamly oppoſite to a ſpiritual deportment in them. *Neſcit tarda molimina Spiritus ſancti.* Hence it was that it appeared *in fire*, and in a *mighty ruſhing winde.* Thus *Stephen* and others are ſaid *to be full of the holy Ghoſt*, when there was ſtrong and powerful workings of grace in them. *Elias* was a man of fire and zeal for God, and God gave him a ſuitable reward, *He was carried to heaven in a fiery chariot*, as a conquerour triumphing over all enemies. This the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of, when *Rom* 7. 6 he ſpeaks of the oldneſſe of the letter and the newneſſe of Spirit. It is an excellent expreſſion, and an happy frame of heart, though ſome of late have abuſed that phraſe to dangerous errours. Hence the Scripture in an Hebraiſm calls the excellency and efficacy of a thing, *The Spirit of it*; *As the Spirit of wiſdom, the Spirit of underſtanding, the Spirit of meekneſs.* As the body without the ſoul is dead, ſo is a mans ſpirit without Gods Spirit in any duty. Oh think of this you who ſpend your dayes in an empty formal way of Religion; call as God by the Prophet doth, *Come, O winde, and cauſe theſe dry bones to gather together and live.* Cry as the Church doth, *Ariſe, O North, and blow, O South, upon our Gardens, that our ſpices may ſmell*; How few ſpiritual Chriſtians? How few ſpiritual Duties, publick or private are there? The ſhip of

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thy ſoul brings home no rich traffick, becauſe it wants this winde. Not that a man who finds himſelf dead and cold, without the effectual power of Gods Spirit, ſhould neglect Prayer and other Duties, till the Spirit breath on him, as ſome have perniciouſly taught. For our Saviour, *Mat.*7. ſuppoſeth that we are *to pray for the Spirit*; and *David*, how often doth he pray, *That God would quicken him*? But truly ſuch is the coldneſſe, emptineſſe, that now all Religion is fallen into, that if ever one might deſire a Sermon to be cloathed with as much dread and terrour as the promulgation of the Law was, it might be deſired in this point. Till therefore thou eject thoſe ſpirits that are ſo contrary to Gods Spirit, as the ſpirit of the world eſpecially, never look to take any comfort by thy Religion.

Fifthly, Leaſt this Spirit ſhould be a deluſion, therefore in the next place, *The workings of Gods ſpirit are orderly, not inordinate, but exactly to the Rule.* I build this particular on the Greek word, *Gal.*5.25. *If we live in the Spirit, let us walke by the Spirit*, that is as the word implieth, *orderly, methodically*, as when it's ſaid, *As many as ſhall walk by this canon or rule, Peace be on them.* The Spirit of God putteth a man upon nothing that is againſt the principles of nature & ſound reaſon, nor againſt the Word of God; but *verbum eſt vehiculum ſpiritus*, the Word is that *fiery chariot* in which the Spirit of God cometh. When the Apoſtle in the Chapter before *verſ.* ult. had given us this as a ſign of our being in God that we have of his Spirit, preſently he addeth, *Believe not every Spirit.* Whoſoever pretends operations, inſtincts and revelations from the Spirit for duties not juſtifiable by the Word, ſets up a falſe and unholy ſpirit, for the pure and holy Spirit of God: But of this more largely in the falſe ſigns. All the motions and operations of Gods Spirit are ſoft, quiet, ordered and conſonant to Gods word. 5.

Sixthly, *Where ſpiritual operations are, there is a free and ſpontaneous inclination unto the duties God requireth.* As there is in an hungry man to eat, and a thirſty man to drink, *Gal.*5.18. *If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the Law.* The Apoſtle meaneth not the Antinomian ſenſe, as if they needed not the Law to direct, guide and excite them, for he preſſeth with commands in the ſame Chapter to mortifie ſin; and they may as well deny the uſe of the whole Scripture, as the Law in that ſenſe, for all the word of God is a rule and a guide; but he ſpeaks of the terrifying, threatening and extorting power of the Law, whereby a man doth that which is good with the ſame Spirit, as the *Iſraelites* made brick under *Pharoahs* oppreſſion; of this the Apoſtle ſpeaks, and that ſo farre as they are regenerate, for the unregenerate part finds the Law a *Pharoah* to it, commanding brick and giving no ſtraw, enjoyning work and giving no ſtrength. Therefore where the Spirit of God is, there they are *a willing people*, yea *willingneſſes*, as *Pſal.*110. in the plural number, and abſtract it ſelf. And ſo again, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty.* 6.

Laſtly, *Where the Spirit of God thus worketh, there are ſtrong oppoſitions and conflicts by the fleſh and unregenerate part.* Gal.5. And this oppoſition is not of the inferiour appetite to the underſtanding, but of every ſanctified part to the unſanctified part in the ſame faculty, an holy regenerate will againſt the unholy unregenerate will; Therefore it's a great falſhood of the *Hemiſnites*, that ſay, *It is impoſſible for the ſame will to be at the ſame time good and bad in part*, therefore they ſay, *It is ſucceſſively good or bad*, and ſo by this conſequence a man ſhall have a regenerate and unregenerate will ſucceſſively a thouſand times in a day. But of this combate we have ſpoken already. 7.

Uſe of Exhortation, Not to reſt in any Naturals, Morals or Intellectuals, but to breath after Spirituals. As the body of a man is firſt Natural, and then by the reſurrection it will be made glorious; ſo it is with the ſoul. If therefore you take all your ingenuous and lovely perfections, which you have by educati- *Uſe.*

on;

on or reſtraining grace for true ſaving grace, you take *John Baptiſt* (as it were) *for Chriſt*. Be therefore in the number of ſpiritual ones, Moral Philoſophy, the Lectures of *Socrates* and other Heathens, have put a man upon an external Reformation, but Gods word only is the inſtrument to convey his Spirit into our hearts

SERM. XVIII.

Love to the Godly is a Sign of Grace.

1 JOHN 3.14.

We know that we have paſſed from death to life, becauſe we love the Brethren.

THE Apoſtle *John* in this Epiſtle doth much preſſe the Grace and Duty of Love, as the fire that ought to be on the Altar of our hearts, for every Sacrifice towards God or man; not only the *Holy of Holies*, and the moſt *inward parts* of the Temple were *covered with gold*, but the *Pavements* and *Outworks* alſo. Thus all our actions whether towards God or man ought to be done in love.

At the 11. verſe of this Chapter, he commends this duty from the Antiquity of it, it's the Commandment they heard from the beginning; which is illuſtrated from a contrary example of *Cain*, deſcribed from his original, *He was of that wicked one*; and from his actuals, *He ſlew his brother*; and this is amplified from the impulſive cauſe or motive of this his horrid wickedneſſe, *He ſlew him*, becauſe *his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous*. *Semper aliena virtus formidoloſa eſt*, ſaid *Tacitus*. In *Gen.* 4. we have the occaſion of *Cains* envy, *God had reſpect to Abel and not to Cain*, which as moſt judge, was by ſome extraordinary teſtimony that God gave to *Abels* Sacrifice, as the Apoſtle emphatically expreſſeth it with an Article, *Heb.* 11.4. μαρτυρουντος επι τοις δωροις αυτου Θεου, it's generally judged by fire ſuddenly falling from heaven (as God did at other times) therefore the word *to have reſpect* is tranſlated by *Theodotion*, ενεπυρισεν, *Inflammavit Deus ſuper Abel*; but why *Abels* Sacrifice was better than *Cains* is alſo queſtioned; Paul Heb. 11. ſaith, *Abel offered by faith*, πλειονα θυσιαν, *a better Sacrifice*, which ſome refer to the Quantity, as if *Cain* took the refuſe, and *Abel* offered the beſt. Some to the quality, *He offered in faith*, and the other not. A learned man *Clo. de Sacrific.* thinks that *Cain* offered only an *Euchariſtical Sacrifice*, of fruit of the ground, and ſo did not beg for pardon of ſin; but *Abel* offered an *Hilaſtical Sacrifice* by way of expiation, whereby through Chriſt he prayed for pardon, and therefore was accepted, ſo that he reſembleth *Cain* to the Phariſee, that only gave thanks to God, and *Abel* to the Publican, who humbled himſelf, ſupplicating for pardon, *And ſo went away juſtified rather than the other*.

Hereupon becauſe every *Abel* will have a *Cain* (as the Fathers proverbial ſpeech is) *verſ.* 13. he comforts the godly againſt their afflicted condition. It is no wonder if the world hate that which is of heaven; and *ver.* 14. he returneth to another argument for this gracious Love, and that is from the profitable effect; it is a ſign we have paſſed from death to life.

It

In the words you have two Propoſitions;

Firſt, that the godly even in this life are already *paſſed from death to life.* Some render the Greek word *tranſlated*, and thereupon *Eſtius* obſerves, becauſe we are paſſive in this priviledge, that it is not to be atributed to our merits, but to the grace of God: Now the Apoſtle uſeth the preterperfect tenſe, and not the Preſent, becauſe of the certainty of it, and his right to it; *Qui jus ad rem habet, rem ipſam habere videtur*, ſaith the Lawyer; you have the like expreſſion *John* 5. 24. *By this life* ſome underſtand the *life of grace*, and by *death*, *the death of ſinne*, as if the *the love of the* Brethren were a ſign of our being in the *ſtate of grace*, and then there is good reaſon for uſing the Preterperfect tenſe. But although this may be part, yet it doth not comprehend all, for *eternal life*, and *glory* is alſo included herein.

The ſecond Propoſition is, That *Love of the Brethren* is that ſign and mark whereby we know aſſuredly, that we are in this happy eſtate; ſo that our love is no merit or cauſe, but a ſign only; hence it is good to obſerve, that this very ſelf-ſame priviledge of *paſſing from death to life*, is attributed to *faith*, Joh. 5. 24. but in a different ſenſe to faith, as that inſtrumental cauſe, which puts us into ſuch a condition, to love as an effect or ſign only; for though love uniteth us to Chriſt as well as faith, yet faith doth it *Intus recipiendo*, by inward receiving of Chriſt to us, love *extra agendo*, by going out in our works for him; Hence the union by love is *poſterior* to that of faith; Hence alſo it is that if love ſhould juſtifie, the dignity of it would ariſe from the act of love, becauſe it's union conſiſts in doing ſomething out of us, but in faiths union, the dignity is wholly from the *Object*, *viz.* Chriſt imbraced, becauſe this union is by inward reception and aplication.

That love of the brethren is a ſign of true grace. *Obſerv.*

As the Apoſtle makes it here a ſign to our ſelves, ſo in other places to others, *Hereby ſhall all men know ye are my Diſciples, if ſ ye love one another*; he doth not ſay, If ye work miracles, if ye caſt out devils, but if ye love. Hence the Apoſtle Peter, 2 Pet. 1. 7. bids them adde to *Godlineſſe*, *brotherly kindneſſe*. As if we could not have any true comfort from all our religious duties towards God, unleſſe this alſo be added to it, or with it, for ſo ἐν is uſed for *cum*, as the Hebrew ב is ſometimes.

To open this duty of love to the Brethren three things are conſiderable, which we ſhall ſpeak to, 1. The Act it ſelf, *Love*. 2. The Object, *Our Brethren*. And 3. The Effects.

Firſt therefore, This love we ſpeak of is not a flower growing in Natures garden, we naturally love our parents, our children, but not ſo the godly, hence love is made the fruit of the Spirit; *To love a man becauſe of the image of God in him*, becauſe he is holy, is wrought only by Gods Spirit. Naturally we hate God, becauſe he is an holy God, his Law, becauſe it is an holy Law, and his children, becauſe they are an holy people. Hence the Schoolmen ſay, That love to God & to our neighbour, becauſe of God, are not two acts of Love, no more than the will of the end by means, is a two-fold act of the will; & this appeareth by the command *Matth.* 19, 37. where we are commanded *to love God with all our might*, all we have and can do, and yet our neighbour alſo, which could not be if our love to another in ſubordination to God be not conſidered, as the ſame with the act of loving God; & this is much more true in loving of a godly man whom we do love, not only becauſe of Gods command, and for God (as we ought to do all men) but becauſe of God in him, his image there, in which ſenſe *Hierom* ſaid, he did *Diligere Chriſtum habitantem in Auguſtino*. There is a rule out of *Ariſtotle*, *Idem eſt motus animæ in imaginem & rem*. It is the ſame motion whereby the ſoul is carried to the image or *ſpecies* of a thing, & the thing it ſelf, as we ſee it in the acts of the underſtanding and of the ſenſes, which rule *Aquinas*, and other Papiſts wretchedly abuſe, to prove the ſame religious wor-

I. Of love.

1. To love a godly man becauſe of the Image of God in him.

ſhip both in kinde and degree, to be given unto the image of God, and God himſelf: but in our inſtance it is true, when we love God himſelf, and a godly man, becauſe of Gods image in him, this is the ſame act or motion of the ſoul, and ariſeth from the ſame habit of grace, and therefore doth this Apoſtle argue neceſſarily from the poſition of the one to the poſition of the other, and the negation of one to the negation of the other, he that doth not love his brother, loveth not God, according to the rule of the *Hebrews*, *Qui amat ſupra amat infra.* We are not then ſpeaking of a love which cometh by the power of free-will, but of a grace infuſed into us by Gods Spirit, which as it's ſupernatural in it's original, ſo alſoin it's operations and motives; The effects are ſupernatural, buſying and emptying themſelves in induſtry about their ſouls; and their ends alſo, becauſe they ſee Gods likeneſſe in them.

2. It is not verbal but an inward deep affectionate grace.

Secondly, *This love is not verbal or complemental*, ſuch as that of the world, which hath great veins, but little bloud in them, but it is *a moſt inward deep affectionate grace*, moving all the bowels within Thus Rom 12. Be *kindely affectioned to one another in love*, φιλοστοργοὶ εἰς φιλαδελφίᾳ στοργῇ, doth imploy an inward rooted inclination, ſuch as is in mothers to their tender infants. There are thoſe who ſeem to love godly men, but it is when the times favour them, if there be any *benign conſtellations* for ſuch, then they reſpect them, otherwiſe in their heart and inclinations, they can no wayes endure thoſe that are godly. When therefore we ſpeak of loving godly men, we mean not a fair loving carriage, a kinde behaviour towards them, which makes thee farre from all railing or oppoſing of them, but ſuch an affection as is rooted in thy heart.

II. The object of our love the Brethren.

Secondly, *In reſpect of the object*, Brethren, this is included,

1. Becauſe they are Brethren

1. *That this love be to them, becauſe they are brethren.* We may love godly men for other reſpects than their godlineſs, becauſe they may be wiſe men, learned men, potent men in the Kingdom, or men that have loved us, and ſhewed us much kindneſſe, but this is nothing of grace, here is only nature all the while. Hence the Apoſtle Peter ſaith, *Love the brotherhood* in the Abſtract, becauſe it is the *brotherhood*. The *Waſps* flie about the tradeſmans ſhop, not out of love to him, but the hony and fruit that is there. The *Crows* and *Vultures* ſit by the dying beaſt, not becauſe they love it, but for themſelves. Thus godly men may be loved for carnal ends & advantages, & no wonder at this, ſeeing ſuch a mercenary & hypocritical love may be profered to God himſelfe, as we ſee in the hypocrites of *Iſrael.*

2. The more godly the more we love them.

2. *As to the brethren, becauſe godly, ſo the more godly the more we love them*; For as the covetous man, the more wealth increaſeth the more he loveth it; And the voluptuous man, the more ſweetneſſe and delight in luſts, the more greedy is he of them; thus it is here, he loveth all the godly, but thoſe that moſt excell in the purity, power and practice of it, he loveth them moſt, *Sicut ſe habet ſimpliciter, ad ſimpliciter, ita magis ad magis*, if godlineſſe be the reaſon why we love, then the more godlineſs, the more love. And this is much to be obſerv'd, becaus it diſcovers much hypocriſie in many men, who fancy to themſelves that they love godlineſs in the *Idea*; in the *notion*, but when it commeth to be practiſed by wife, children or neighbours, then they cannot endure it. As alſo thoſe; who love godly men in low principles, not walking ſo exactly and accurately as they ought, better then the godly with high principles, that are alwaies putting on to more godlineſs.

3. We muſt love all godly men.

3. *It implieth we love all godly men*, for ſo that phraſe in the Abſtract, *Love the Brotherhood*, ſuppoſeth, that is, Take every godly man, rich as well as poor, deſpiſed as well as honoured, low and baſe as well as high and eſteemed, thou doſt love all of them. It may be thy love is reſtrained to love godly men onely, that are of thy conſtitution, condition or opinion; but then there are others upon whom thou caſteſt no favourable aſpect at all. The Apoſtle *James* doth much condemn that practice of differencing the poor godly from the rich, *Jam.* 2, 1, 2 where the Apoſtle doth not abſolutely prohibit a civil differencing of men in place

place from others, but when it is done with an humane respect, immoderatly regarding wealth more than godliness, & when it's done to the contempt and disgrace, or discouragement of the godly poor; hence he bids them consider, that though they be poor, yet God hath chosen them rich in faith: Now this carnal respect of persons the Apostle makes a great sinne, both because hereby he saith, They become judges of evil thoughts, that is, these thoughts of theirs in judging thus are wicked and sinfull, and partly because hereby the name of God is blasphemed; hence *verse.* 1. he calls Christ, *The Lord of glory*, implying, that those things which are godly and gracious should be glorious to us. So then as hatred of sin is *totius speciei*, we hate every kinde of sinne; so is love of the Brethren, of all Brethren, making no difference in this respect. Indeed there is a love of familiarity which we may shew more to one godly man than another; thus Christ loved *John* more than the other Disciples; but we speak of a gracious love; and in this we ought not to attend to humane respects but evangelical meerly; Therefore the Apostle calls it προσωποληψία, that is, when we in judging look to something else than the merit of the person, or the cause. This we are all apt and very prone unto; See we therefore that in Gospel-love we attend only to Gospel considerations.

III. The Effects of this love.

In the next place, *Consider the effects by which the love to the godly discovers it self.*

1. Not to be ashamed to own them as Brethren in persecution.

And 1. By *not being ashamed to own them as* Brethren, *and joyne with them in the times of persecution.* The Church of God hath had many Swallow-friends that will stay with her no longer than Summer; our Saviour foreseeing this proneness to Apostasie, antidoteth against it, *he that is ashamed of me in the midst of a crooked generation, of him my Father also will be ashamed before the Angels.* The world that is full of scorns and reproaches, *The holy* Brethren, *The holy Sisters*, now men are through their pride and corruption ashamed of such waies. This argueth thou hast no love to them. It was observed by the Heathens how the Primitive Christians loved one another; *Ecce quam se mutuò diligunt & fratres se vocant!* Now then as it is noted of God, *Heb* 11. That he was not ashamed to be the God of believers; thus also may we observe of thee, thou art not ashamed to be called one of the believers; Thy speech, conversation, whole deportment shall betray thee to be one that followeth Christ. It's observed by some, That there were but few hypocrites comparatively in the first Plantation of the Churches by Christ and his Apostles, because there was such certain & present danger to all those that imbrace their way, and no advantage at all to carnal considerations, yet for all that some hypocrites there were. It was a weakness in *Nicodemus who came to Jesus by night*, he dared not publickly own him, because of the Jews. Examine therefore thy self, if thou lovest the godly, then this will appear when godliness it the only scorned, reproached and persecuted way that is. It is strange to observe how godliness in the power of it doth diminish respect in the world, *Bonus vir Caius & prudens, nisi quod Christianus*, A learned man, a wise man, a good man, but only *too precise, too puritanical*, enclining too much to strictness. If it were an Heathen that derides all Christianity that saith thus, it would be no wonder; but for a Christian, who by his profession is ingaged to all this practice of holiness, it is unsufferable; if we may have too much godliness, then too much of heaven and happiness.

2. By rejoycing in other mens godliness, though thou art despited.

Secondly, *By rejoycing and delighting in other mens godlinesse and abilities whereby the Kingdom of God is advanced, though it be an umbrage and overshadowing of all our glory, though we be laid aside and accounted as no body.* As in the sweetest fruit sometimes worms do grow; so in the choisest Christians there will be envies, emulations and repinings at one anothers excellencies. Thus the Disciples of Christ did twice strive about greatness, *Johns* Disciples muttered, because all runne after Christ; but how graciously doth *John* deal with them, *I must decrease and he encrease.* So that this love of the brethren is a more spiritual and difficult work than we are aware off. Thou lovest a godly man that liveth remote from

thee, but how art thou to one that is thy neighbour of the ſame profeſſion and calling? now it may be the eminency of his graces & worth carrieth away the eſteeem and repute from thee, Canſt thou for all this rejoyce in his graces and abilities, praiſe God for them, and ſo that his glory be advanced, thou careſt not though God lay thee aſide, as a broken veſſel? This is a good ſymptome of grace. Oh (Beloved) if we conſider the jealouſies, heart-burnings, contentions, envyings, ſtrifes that are among the godly, Doth not this demonſtrate that they are in a great meaſure carnal? Are not moſt of theſe contentions from the fleſh, who ſhall have moſt power, whoſe way ſhall have moſt followers and admirers? Whereas true love to godlineſs manifeſteth it ſelf in this, that it rejoyceth in the graces of others, praiſeth God for them. It is an high ſinne to make godlineſſe a faction, a party, as that whereby I will have carnal advantage. The Apoſtle contracteth this, when he ſaith *We know no man, no not Chriſt himſelf after the fleſh.* By reaſon of this ſelf-pleaſing it is that at laſt we incloſe godlineſs, and monopolize it to our own ſelves, that none ſhall be godly but thoſe in our way. Thus the the *Donatiſts* would call no men Chriſtians but themſelves. Thus *Tertullian*, when he turned *Montaniſt*, pretending to Revelations of the Spirit wrote a book againſt the Orthodox, which he called *Adverſus Pſychicos*, as if they all were but carnal and natural men. Thus many rigid *Lutherans* diſpute the Queſtion, Whether *Calviniſts* may be reckoned as Bretheren, and they determine negatively. Take we heed therefore, how we envy the graces of others that over-top us. *Auguſtine* thought this *to be the ſinne againſt the holy Ghoſt, or very near*; But it cannnot be ſo, becauſe we have inſtances even of ſome godly men who have been tainted this way. It is an hard thing not to look upon godlineſs and the truths of God, as ours, more than as Gods, which doth breed carnal and humane diſpoſitions in us. Know therefore that ſo farre as thou envieſt and grudgeſt at the excellency of anothers godlineſs over-topping thee ſo far, thou haſt no love to the Brethren.

3. This love to the godly is manifeſted by a zeal againſt ſinners.

Thirdly, *This love to the* Brethren *is manifeſted by the contrary*, viz. *A zeal againſt ſinners, an impatiency and holy grief at the wickedneſſe of others.* That as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Cain* hated *Abel*, becauſe *his own works were evil, and Abels good*; ſo a godly *Abel* is grieved at the converſation of the wicked, becauſe *his own are good, and the other, evil.* Thus a godly man is deſcribed by this Character, *Pſal.* 15.4. *In whoſe eyes a vile perſon is contemned, but he honoureth thoſe that fear the Lord.* You have a notable inſtance of this in *Lot*, 2 Pet. 2.8. where righteous *Lot* is ſaid *to vex his ſoul by hearing and ſeeing the wicked Sodomites.* the Greek word ſignifieth to torment his ſoul, and it is uſed of the damned in hell. There is alſo an emphaſis in the phraſe, *his ſoul*, he doth not ſay himſelf, but his ſoul, as if a ſword had pierced. Thus God ſaith, *His ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in the backeſlider*, when he would expreſſe his great abhorring of ſuch an one. Further this torment is amplified in the inſtruments by which, both *in ſeeing and hearing*. *Lot* was among the *Sodomites* as the Dove among Hawks, a Sheep among Wolves, a roſe among thorns, a bright Starre in a dark night; and this did ſo much afflict him, that *Auguſt. in præf. Pſal.* 69. calls this a perſecution, and ſaith, *The evil deeds of the Sodomites were a perſecution of Lot.* Hereupon the ſame Father proves, *That the perſecutions of godly mens ſouls by wicked ſcandals, is worſe than that of Tyrants killing the bodies.* And Bernard ſpeaks excellently to this purpoſe of the Churches bitterneſſe, *Amara prius fuit in nece Martyrum, amarior poſtea in conflictu hæreticorum, ſed amariſſima in moribus domeſticorum.* Try thy love to the godly, by thy griefand trouble that cometh to thee, through the wickedneſs of others; for ſeeing by their evil deeds, God is ſo much diſhonoured, how can it be but that with *David: Rivers of water ſhould runne down thy eyes, becauſe men keep not Gods Law?* and *David* ſaid, *He hated thoſe who hated God with a perfect hatred*, that is, a full, abſolute, irreconcilable hatred, which is to be underſtood of their will not their perſons.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, *This emptieth it self in doing and procuring all spiritual good to them.* To love is to will good to another, that is, their proper, convenient good. Thus to love the Brethren is to pray much for them, to be diligent in the exhorting and provoking one another to good; for of such a love and hatred which regards spiritual things, the Apostle speaketh, as by his instance in *Cains* hatred appeareth, which was from a spiritual consideration, *Prov.* 27. 17. *As iron sharpeneth iron,* &c. *So a man sharpneth the countenance of his friend,* that is, as the instrument which is rusty, or edge dulled, is made serviceable by the file; so is one godly man quickened up by another. The Church is compared to a flock of sheep, whereof every one brought twins, that is, their fruitfulnesse, and *verse* 9. in the same Chapter, Christian love is compared to Ointment and Perfume, which hath much sweetnesse and strengthning in it; yea, reproof is sometimes necessary as *David* witnesseth, when he said, *Let the righteous smite me, and it shall be better than oil*: yea, this love is so farre commanded, that sometimes it's our duty to lay down our lives for the Brethren. 4. In doing and procuring all spiritual good to them.

Lastly, *This is seen in bearing their burthens, and forbearing their infirmities*; Bearing their burthens; hence as members of the same body they are *to weep with those that weep, and rejoyce with those that rejoyce.* They are to be like the strings of an instrument, touch one, and they all sound: *And forbearing infirmities,* Gal. 6. 1. *Ye that are spiritual restore such an one*; The word signifieth, *Set him in joynt again,* as if a godly man overtaken by sin should cause as much grief to the whole body, as a dis-joynted member useth to do; So that to love the brethren (if all things be considered) is a choice and difficult sign of grace; it is not every one that is thus affected. Now here is a proper Question, Whether if Brethren be fallen into heresies and wicked errours, it be not against the love of brethren, to set against them, to endeavour the suppression of them? And certainly the matter may be so carried, as thou mayest discover not only an hatred of their errours, but their godlinesse also; again it may be so, that thou mayest most of all discover thy love to their godlinesse, only hatred to their false doctrines: But this is a large field, and many things are to be said to it, else we cannot give full satisfaction to the Point. 5. In bearing their burdens and forbearing their infirmities.

Now to all this there is an Objection made, *Love of the Brethren,* say they, *cannot be a sign of grace, because if it be true love, it must have all those properties described,* 1 Cor. 13. *Charity suffereth long, envieth not,* &c. *Now who doth not finde some envyings, some impatiencies.* *Object.*

The Answer is easie. *We are not seeking for perfect signs, but true signs*; and if we finde true signs we may gather much comfort, though several defects cleave to us. Wilt thou think there is no honey or milk in *Canaan*, because *Jebusites* and wilde beasts are left there? *Answ.*

But again they object, *Every sect thinketh their sect the true Brethren. Hence the Papist loves a Papist, thinking him a true Brother, and so men may comfort themselves with false signs.*

The Answer is, *True signs are indeed so, though men blinded and deceived are seduced by counterfeit.* A true Pearl is judged to be true by a skilfull Artificer, and he knoweth he is not deceived; though the unskilful takes much counterfeit pearl for true; so a man awake is sure he is awake, although men in a dream think themselves also awake, but are indeed deceived.

Lastly, They say, *The Apostle speaks this love as it is a sign to others, not to our selves.* Thus the *Antinomian*, and *Estius* to this purpose, *The Apostle speaketh* (saith he) *of the whole Church as it is a Society, not of every particular person.* But as the Apostle intends that every particular man should love the Brethren, so he also maketh this as an Argument, because hereby every man in particular may be assured he is *translated from death to life.*

If love to the Brethren demonstrate our spiritual life, then hatred opposition, scoffs and reproaches of such, demonstrate the actors therein to be of the devil. *Use.*

Oh how many *Cains* are there, that there ore hate and ſtomack others, becauſe their courſes are contrary to their ſins! There cannot be a ſurer ſymptom of thy rotten, yea deviliſh heart, than to ſay, I could love ſuch an one, honour ſuch an one, but I cannot abide his ſtrictneſſe. Like delights in like. *Davids delight is in the Saints of the earth*, if thine be in Swine and Dogs who wallow in their vomit and mire, tremble at thy diſpoſition; Canſt thou ſay thou loveſt God and hateſt his Image? that which reſembleth him here upon the earth? The ſaying is, *Noſcitur ex ſocio*, &c. You may know a man by thoſe he delighteth and rejoyceth in, and converſeth with.

Uſe 2. Uſe 2. To bewail the neglect of this even among the godly, How doth this manifeſt that we have the faith of Chriſt in reſpect of perſons? Do not abuſe godlineſſe to make it an occaſion of thy carnal pride, envy, or earthly advantage? The Apoſtle therefore makes hereſies and ſchiſms the fruit of the fleſh, becauſe theſe ariſe from carnal motives one way or other. Yet this is not ſo to be urged, as if a prudent and godly Zeal were not to be urged againſt the falſe doctrines of godly men; it is one thing to ſet againſt a man becauſe of his godlineſſe, that is deviliſh; and another thing becauſe of his corruption, whether in practiſe or opinion. But love like *Elijah* hath left the Church, and is carried up to heaven in a fiery Chariot.

SECT.

SECT. III.

A Diſcovery of many falſe or unſufficient Signs of grace, which carnall men ſupport themſelves with.

SERM. XIX.

Church-priviledges no Sign of Grace.

ROM. 2. 28, 29.

For he is not a Jew that is one outwardly, &c.

THe Apoſtle his ſcope is in this latter part of the Chapter to convince the Jews that they are equally in a ſinful and wretched condition with the Gentiles, and therefore need Chriſt and juſtification by his grace, as well as they. And that he may the better awaken them herein, who were apt to dote upon empty and vain priviledges, he takes this method to cure them.

Firſt, By way of conceſſion, he reckons up the priviledges which they enjoyed, which are divers.

1. *Thou art called a Jew*; Whereas the people of *Iſrael* formerly were called Iſraelites, after the captivity into *Babylon* they were called Jews, and in this they gloried, as among us ſome do in the name *Chriſtian*.

2. He is ſaid to reſt in the Law, *viz.* as given by God to that Nation, which he had not done unto any other people, and he uſeth an emphaticall word; They made the Law that to them which Chriſt ſhould have been, a reſt to their wearied ſouls.

3. *Thou makeſt thy boaſt in God:* The Prophet ſpeaks of glorying in God as a duty: But here it is a ſin, for they boaſted of him in a carnal, factious way, as their God: Even as the Heathen boaſted of their gods, or as the Turks of Mahomet, or as the Apoſtle of ſome Corinthians, who when others were for *Paul*, others for *Apollos*, theſe were for *Chriſt*, that is, they ſet up Chriſt in a way of party and faction againſt others.

4. The Jew did know Gods will, for to him it was revealed.

5. He diſcerned the things that were excellent, or profitable, or different, or convenient,

convenient, for all this the word will bear, if he was instructed out of the Law, as it were chatechized.

6. He was confident of being a guide to the blinde, a light, an instructer, a teacher, and that he had a form of the truth and knowledge of the Law. The Apostle doth not take μόρφωσιν in an ill sense, as in *Timothy*; for the Jew was not confident that he had but a form only, but μόρφωσις is here as much as ὑποτύπωσις in another place, a method and way to inform others about the truth. Thus farre is the concession of their priviledges.

In the second place is the aggravation of their sinne from these very prerogatives, partly because they sinne against knowledge and conviction, partly because their circumcision and the like visible signs of Gods favour did not at all profit without holinesse, yea, an Heathen and a Jew without this became both alike.

Hence in the third place he amplifieth this assertion by a distinction of a Jew, and of circumcision, for it was the hardest Paradox and most offensive to a Jewish ear, that could be, to say circumcision did not profit: For they so gloried in it, that they were wont to say, it was equal to all the Commandements, and that heaven and earth could not stand if there were not circumcision. The Apostles distinction is like an Axe laid to the root of the tree, it takes away the foundation of all their glory. There is (saith he) *a Jew outwardly*, that hath only *circumcision of the flesh*, and this is not really and properly a Jew, he is not a Jew, nor is this circumcision saith the Apostle. 2. There is *a Jew inwardly*, *a circumcision in the heart*, in the spirit, and this is a Jew, this is a circumcision, and *his praise is of God, not of man*; God regards such only. Now this is also very applicable to the times of the Gospel, he is not a Christian, that is one outwardly, nor is that Baptism which is of the flesh, but that which is inwardly and of the spirit. No visible signs or duties in Christianity profit, if a man walk not according to Gods Word.

Doct. *Although men are very prone to rest in Church priviledges, and visible signs or duties therein, yet they are no testimonies or signs of the truth of grace.*

Church priviledges no sign of grace. It's a sin to trust in them as signs.

This point deserveth a lively discovery, because it's the only prop and evidence of most Christians for heaven; And whereas in other things they would judge a *title* without reality to be a miserable comfort, to be titularly rich, and really poor. To have the name of health, and to be indeed diseased and pained, herein they would judge it mockery; yet in religion they are strongly contented to have the name and repute of Christian, baptized persons, professors of Christs doctrine, and yet know not the power of these things, being like dead corpse with sweet flowers strowed upon them. Therefore to explicate this necessary point consider some things by way of foundation.

The Jews generally guilty of this sin.

As first, *We finde it such a sin that generally the people of Israel were guilty of.* Insomuch that the great contestation between the Prophets of the Old Testament and the Israelites living then, between Christ and his Apostles and the Jews living then, to have been upon this very particular. No Minister, no Sermon could take them off from this, that because they had the external priviledges, therefore they did belong to God, and were the children of *Abraham*, *Jer.* 9. 25. 26. See how the Prophet reckons the Jews because uncircumcised in heart, among the Moabites and Ægyptians uncircumcised in flesh, and God would punish them both alike: Now compare this with *Jer.* 7. 4. See how Paradoxal this was to the Jews, they cried, The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord are these. They thought such *visible symbols* of Gods presence would preserve them, though their lives were unreformed. Thus *Isa.* 1. The Prophets whole scope is to let them know, that all their sacrifices and religious worship were but so much detestable abomination unto God. Thus it was also in the New Testament, how excellently doth our Saviour discover this point twice. *Mat.* 3. 9. *Joh.* 8. 33. Where the Pharisees whole support was in their carnal priviledge, and our Saviour sheweth notwithstanding all this, *they were of their Father the devil.* Thus *Gal.* 5. *Circumcision and uncircumcision,*

ciſion, that is, the Jewiſh *diſpenſation*, and the Goſpel *diſpenſation of Ordinances* is made nothing, but a new creature; and certainly if Chriſt himſelf be no more to be born after the fleſh, much leſſe may any viſible Ordinances, which are not equal to Chriſt. Thus you ſee it was the Jews ſin.

But ſecondly, *If you look over all Chriſtianity, you ſhall finde this the Catholick and univerſall ſin:* whereby Chriſt & regeneration with powerfull godlineſſe is wholly neglected, & a fleſhly carnall confidence in the titles and Ordinances of Chriſtianity eſtabliſhed; ſo that all thoſe expoſtulations which the Prophets & Apoſtles had in thoſe daies may be juſtly revived again, ſeeing thoſe ſins are revived: What circumciſion, & ſacrifices, & the Temple were to the Jews; the ſame are baptiſm, the Lords Supper, and frequenting our religious Aſſemblies. And as the Jews in the midſt of all their duties, had wholy laid aſide Chriſt & ſanctificatio; ſo have generally Chriſtians now. Thus as the Apoſtle argueth ſeverely, you that reſt in *circumciſion*, that reſt in the Law, you are fallen *from Chriſt*, you are ignorant of *the ſpirit*, the ſame may be ſaid to formall proteſtants, you have turned all Goſpel-diſpenſations into externals meerly; & ſo are Chriſtians of the fleſh and not of the ſpirit: Ye are of *Agar* and not of *Sarah*, ye are not *children of the Promiſe*; Your being is not by the meer word and power of God, all power in nature, being in this reſpect but a dead womb, but only by carnall and external badges, *Rom.* 9 6,7. ſee how admirably the Apoſtle diſcourſeth of this in the Jews caſe, and applies it to Chriſtians. Oh therefore take heed of this epidemicall diſeaſe, be not damned or troden down in this crowd. This is the Catholick ſin.

3. *To demonſtrate the connaturality of this ſinne, obſerve how ingenious the fleſhly mindes of men have been by arguments and opinions to encourage a carnall confidence in theſe externals*: for what other practicall uſe can be made of thoſe Popiſh doctrines that the Sacraments do conferre grace *ex opere operato*, from the very work done and application of them to the ſoul; & this made *Melanction* wiſh the very Word Sacrament were removed out of the Church, becauſe as people then were informed, they thought in the elements of a Sacrament, ſome inward ſupernatural force lay couched to ſave them, and therefore they took theſe Sacraments as men would medicinall potions, that by an inward phyſicall power produce their effects: by this means all viſible Ordinances were turned into meer *idols*. They attributed that to baptiſm which belonged only to Chriſts bloud, they would give that glory to a Sacrament which belonged only to Chriſt, and made as much of the linen wherein Chriſts body lay, as the body it ſelf. How this ſin hath been encouraged by Arguments and erroneous opinions.

In the next place, while we give this explication, you muſt by way of caution take heed of two other extreams, And that is, A caution to take heed of two other extreams.

1. *To cry down the very being and uſe of theſe externall Ordinances*, as being but forms and the ſpirituall frame of the heart is made all in all. Thus there are blaſphemous Hereticks that cry down the Sacraments, the Miniſtry, yea, the Scripture it ſelf, yea Chriſt himſelf, as being but formes, and we ought to have communion with God immediatly. But it is elſewhere to be ſhewed, that Chriſt hath appointed an externall form of communion in his Church, which conſiſteth in *reading*, and *preaching* of the *Word*, *Adminiſtration* and *receiving of Sacraments*, *Prayer*, and *Church-governments*, and *Cenſures*, with a *Miniſtry from him*, all which are of a perpetuall inſtitution for the ſubſtantials of them, and to cry down theſe forms, which God hath appointed as means to beget and encreaſe grace, which are in the gracious uſe of them a ſolemn acknowledging and owning of God, is a *Beelzebub* errour, as I may ſo ſay, and a *falſe doctrine in the firſt magnitude*: we are therefore to ſail between theſe extreams, neither reſting upon Externals in religion, as enough without Chriſt, and regeneration, or on the contrary aboliſhing and neglecting the uſe of them. The crying down of Ordinances as being but forms.

2. *We are alſo deficient, when although we do not cry down formes wholly, yet we give too litle to theſe inſtitutions of Chriſt.* As we may give too much to baptiſm and the Lords Supper, ſo alſo we may give too little; in former times of ſuperſti- 2. In giving too little to Chriſts Inſtitutions.

tion the first sin was common: In these latter times, I fear the latter doth overflow. The Remonstrants, they say, that the doctrine which the Protestants deliver about the Sacraments is *valdè suspecta* greatly suspected by them of falshood. And the Socinians they make them only commemorative of some former mercy: they deny any reall exhibition or encrease in grace thereby. Hence it is their expression, As, say they, when the Israelites in eating of the Paschall lamb, made thereby a commemoration of their deliverance out of Ægypt, God did then bestow no new mercy on them, only there was a remembrance of the old; so in the Lords Supper there is no new conveyance of any grace, but a remembrance of an old former mercy, but this cometh too short: for those Scripture-expressions 1 Cor. 10. *The bread that we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ &c.* and in the very words of the institution, *Take eat, this is my body*, do evidently prove more than a meer commemoration. The Scripture when men are apt to rest upon Sacraments, speaks contemptibly of them; *Your Fathers ate Manna and died, Circumcision profiteth nothing, He that eateth unworthily eateth damnation to himselfe:* but when it regards the institution and proper use of them, and not the subject receiving them, then it speaks gloriously. These things are premised by way of explication and caution.

Why people are so apt to rest upon Church-priviledes.

In the third place let us consider why people are so apt to rest upon these as comfortable testimonies, and there are severall reasons.

1. They give ease to a natural conscience.

1. *Because they being duties commanded, when performed, that gives some ease and comfort to a naturall conscience.* To be circumcised was Gods command, To be baptized, to hear his Word, to receive Sacraments are duties injoyned by God, so that the very neglect of them is threatned with condemnation; now then when we are diligent to discharge all these, a mans conscience hath not so much to accuse him, and condemn him, and we are apt to take any partial ease and comfort of conscience for a generall acquittance.

2. Because they are easie to be done.

2 *We are apt to rest in these things, because they are easie to be done:* Whereas the way of mortification is troublesome and tedious to flesh and blood. Hence it is called *crucifying the flesh and cutting off the right hand*, and pulling out the right ey. The Jews would bring multitude of sacrifices, They would kill many bullocks and rams rather than any lusts. They would not sacrifice themselves or their lusts, yea, they proffered their *first-born*, when yet they would not leave their sins. Oh beloved, the duty of mortification and powerfull godlinesse is an hell to flesh and bloud: *Christianus est perpetua naturæ violentia*, and therefore few set on that; whereas to come to Church, to hear, to pray, these are done without much trouble. Every natural man had rather perform a thousand religious duties, than crucifie one pleasant or profitable sin: Oh then see upon what sandy foundations you build all your hope, whose lives are not sanctified, who are strangers to the power of godlinesse, yet stay your souls with external religious duties.

3. Because ignorant of the work of regeneration.

3. *Therefore men rest upon these, because they are ignorant of the work and necessity of regeneration:* You see *Nicodemus* an old man, much versed in the religious worship of God, yet though a master in *Israel*, knew not this thing. Oh its to be feared there are many great Scholars, there are many ancient, noble, rich Christians, that yet are strangers to the whole inward work of Gods Spirit by way of change upon them. The Apostle cals *circumcision of the heart*, *circumcision made without hands*; and so baptism and the Sacraments *in the heart*, which are not visible in the eies of the world, make us esteemed before God. Be not then idol Christians that have *eys and see not*, hearts and understand not the inward vertue and spiritual efficacy of Christ in his ordinances. It was *Chrysostoms* complaint in his daies, Βαβαὶ πῶς σεμνὰ ἐκκλησίας &c. Alas, how are all the grave and holy Ordinances in the Church of God turned into meer outsides and formalities! Thus in Popery when real holiness began to be persecuted, then they set up a deal of superstitious holinesse, holy Images, holy Altars, holy Temples, holy vestments;

ments, and in the mean while, true, real holineſſe was ſcorned: And here is too much of this Pope in the belly of many formal Proteſtants.

4. *They put confidence in them, becauſe they are ignorant of the righteouſneſſe by faith in Chriſt.* There is no man but the godly that looks for any juſtification, but by the works he doth, and ſo they turn the Goſpel into the Law, and make the duties and adminiſtrations under the Goſpel, what the Jews did the legal adminiſtrations in the Law: You cannot have a clearer inſtance of this than in *Paul, Phil* 3. He giveth a catalogue of many priviledges, and he ſaith, he thought them *great gain* to him once, but after he came to the knowledge of the righteouſneſſe by faith in Chriſt, he counted them *dung and droſſe, and deſired to be found in Chriſt* only. The Apoſtle uſeth an excellent expreſſion, *Heb.* 4. 18. ſpeaking of the godly and their conſolation in the Covenant of grace, he ſaith, *they have fled for refuge to lay hold on this hope* Every godly man is in as much fear of his ſin, whoſe guilt by vertue of the Law purſueth him, as among the Jews the man was that had ſlain another: Now with what haſt, trembling and deſire he hath fled to the City of refuge, the ſame doth a godly man uſe in laying hold on Chriſts righteouſneſſe: Alas, his duties, his religious worſhip, it is not a City of refuge: If therefore thou kneweſt the neceſſity of Chriſt, and what righteouſneſſe by faith means, thou couldſt not reſt in theſe external duties. 4. And of the righteouſneſs by faith.

5. *Therefore men reſt on them, becauſe they look on theſe duties as ſatisfactory and compenſatory to God.* We think by theſe ordinances we have made amends to God. It is *Bellarmines* doctrine, that prayer as it is *laboriosa* and *pœnalis*, undergone as a laborious penance, is *compenſatory to God*. Now though the doctrine of Popery be renounced, yet, unregenerate perſons abound in the practice of it. 5. Becauſe they look at duties as ſatisfactory

Laſtly, *Therefore do carnal people rely on theſe, becauſe they miſtake the nature of them.* Thy look upon them as thoſe things which will of themſelves make them acceptable to God, notwithſtanding any preparation or ſpiritual managing of them: Whereas ſetting aſide the Word of God that works the firſt grace in us, all other duties they are but as cloaths and garments to the body, which cannot warm or heat a dead body, but if there be life in the body to heat them firſt then they will encreaſe the heat. And thus it is here, if there be ſpiritual life in thee, and thou put it forth in theſe duties, then theſe duties will corroborate and ſtrengthen it more. 6. Becauſe they miſtake the nature of them.

We come to the ſecond general part of the Doctrine, to ſhew, *That the having and enjoying ſuch ſeals is not ſign ſure enough for our being in the ſtate of grace.* That they are no ſigns of grace.

And firſt, That they are not, may appear, in that *the Scripture makes it not only poſſible for ſuch to be damned, but doth foretell even actual damnation; and that to the greater part of ſuch perſons.* Thus *Mat.* 7. ſome condemned at that great day are brought in thus pleading, *Have we not eat in thy preſence?* The Jews will ſay ſo in reſpect of their Sacrifices, the Chriſtians in regard of the Lords Supper, ſo that it is a wonder to them that they are caſt out of Gods preſence; and howſoever in the parable of the great Feaſt, the Maſter of the Feaſt ſpieth but one that came in without a Wedding garment, for which he is apprehended and caſt into utter darkneſſe, yet that doth not imply few only will be without a Wedding garment, though at the Feaſt; for in that one is repreſented an univerſal or multitude; Therefore our Saviour makes this inference, *for many are called but few are choſen*, which would be a concluſion wholly repugnant to the premiſes, had not a generality been intended in that one; ſo our Saviour in another place, *The children of the Kingdom ſhall be caſt out*; who are thoſe children of the Kingdom, but ſuch that were partakers of all the Ordinances of the Church called the kingdom of heaven? Oh then it is in vain to plead that which many damned in hell have bin partakers of: & whereas if true grace be in any man, though in the leaſt degree, he can never be excluded; none can ſay, Lord did we not truly fear thy name reform our lives, walk ſpiritually? and yet God bid them Depart, he knoweth *Arg.* 1. The Scripture foretels damnation to the greateſt part of ſuch perſons.

them not. And that this ſad portion will be to the greateſt part of thoſe that have enjoyed thoſe priviledges, appears by that fore-mentioned, *Many are called, but few are choſen*, which are not ſo much words, as *thunder* and *lightning*. Oh then think not theſe an Ark ſure enough to keep thee in the deluge of many waters.

2. And reckons thoſe that have them and that want them in the ſame condition without holineſſe.

2. *The Scripture reckons the condition of a man with theſe priviledges, and one without them in the ſame condition if there be not holineſs.* Thus as you heard the Prophet *Jeremiah* makes the *uncircumciſed in heart*, though *circumciſed in fleſh*, all one with the worſt of the Heathens, the *Moabites* and the *Ammonites*. And to this purpoſe alſo the Apoſtle in the verſes before, *Shall not thy circumciſion be accounted uncircumciſion, if thou keep not the Law.* So that as long as wickedneſſe is in thy life, thy *Baptiſm* doth no more advantage thee than the Heathens *no-Baptiſm*. It ſhall not availe thee, thou haſt called upon Chriſt, thou haſt ſo many times received the Sacrament. Hence it is, that the Prophet calls the wicked Princes & Governours, though of *Iſrael*, yet *Princes of Sodom and Gomorrah*, and ſo may the Miniſters of the Goſpel call prophane and wicked men, ye men of *Scythia* or *America*, for this badge and mark of Chriſtianity is not regarded by God, if not accompanied with true godlineſſe; ſo the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 11. *This is not to eat the Lords Supper*, it was as if they had not received at all.

3. And that God abominates them.

3. The Scripture goeth higher, and doth not onely make them equal with *Pagans*, but *God profeſſeth his abomination of all their religious ſervice*, and thy wickedneſs is more noiſom than all thy Religion is well-pleaſing; See *Iſa.* 1. how God expreſſeth himſelf concerning the Sacrifices and new Moons of the ſinfull *Iſraelites*, *He hated them, they were an abomination to him*, it was like *cutting off a dogs head*; Oh how contrary are Gods thoughts, and thy thoughts about the ſame religious duties! The Prophet *Haggai* alſo *Hag.* 2. doth by an excellent inſtance ſhew, That if a man be uncleane and ſinful, his holy ſervices do not take off from his uncleanneſs, but his uncleanneſs defiles them. Oh therefore conſider, that thou haſt many dead flies fallen into this box of ointment, & therefore cannot be ſavoury unto God! Thy ſwearing tongue doth more offend God than thy praying tongue doth pleaſe him; Thy ſins will cry louder than thy prayers, yea God will anſwer thee according unto the abomination of thy Idols, he will anſwer thee not according to the duties thou art doing, but thy ſins thou haſt committed; he doth not look upon thee as one praying or hearing now, but as one unclean, dumb or vicious in ſome week-day. Oh why do your conſciences lie in ſuch a deep ſleep in your boſoms! Why doth not that Serpent in thy breaſt begin to hiſſe & ſting thee at the hearing of theſe things?

4. They will be aggravations of thy torment if thou have not grace.

Laſtly, *Theſe are ſo farre from being ſigns without grace, that they will be aggravations of thy condemnation.* As in ſome Countreys when their malefactors were to be burnt at the fire, they poured oil and pitch to encreaſe their torment the more, ſo will every Sacrament, every prayer, every Church-priviledge, make hell the hotter for thee. *Woe be to thee Corazin and Bethſaida, Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah.* Heatheniſh perſons, and that in the higheſt way of wickedneſs ſhall have leſſer torment than they; and ſo Mark the Apoſtle here ſpeaking of the Jew, he ſaith, that by the letter and circumciſion he did tranſgreſſe the Law, How was that? Even by thoſe priviledges and Ordinances he was made the greater tranſgreſſor.

Reaſon. VVhy not ſigns

Now the Reaſon why theſe are not ſure ſigns, is, Becauſe no promiſe of Juſtification or ſalvation is made meerly to the uſe of them. Our Saviour ſaith not, *He that is baptized ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth and is baptized.* Thus as God commanded the Jews to *circumciſe their foreskin*; So God promiſeth as the mercy of all mercies, he *would circumciſe their hearts to love him.* Look then over the Scripture, thou canſt not finde any one promiſe of pardon, or eternal glory to thee, becauſe baptized only, becauſe a Chriſtian only, becauſe receiving a Sacrament only, unleſs there be alſo renovation in thy life and converſation. I gran that

becauſe

becauſe of the very external profeſſion of Chriſt, and his wayes, though there be no internal change, many Church-priviledges belong to them, and Miniſters are bound to diſpenſe them to them, if they be without ſcandal: I grant alſo, as may be fully proved out of this Text, that there is an external and internal Covenant, a man may have a Church-holineſſe, a viſible ſanctity, whereby he and his children are entituled to Ordinances, although all this while there be no true grace in that man. But now we are ſpeaking of the promiſes of Juſtification and Salvation, and theſe are made to none but to the truly godly. Therefore till this be, thou art only in the outward Temple, not in the Holy of Holies. Oh therefore that theſe things were more conſidered by you: Suppoſe you hear God ſpeaking from Heaven to you; Why are you Weeds in my garden? Why are you Tares in my Wheat? Why are ye chaffe in my Floor? Yea, think thou ſeeſt a hand writing on every wall of thy Houſe, and poſt of thy doors, like that of *Belſhazzars*: Thou art numbred and weighed, and found too light: All thy religious profeſſion, Ordinances are found too light.

Uſe of Exhortation, Let this truth be to you what the Jealouſie-water was to the ſuſpected perſon, let it not be ſaid to you as to that Church, Thou haſt a name that thou art alive but art dead, or as to another Church of ſome that ſaid they were Jews but were not. Thou ſayeſt thou art a Chriſtian, thou art baptized, thou haſt Ordinances, but whoſe works are thoſe which thou doeſt? who is the Father of that wickedneſſe, barrenneſſe, neglect and contempt of true holineſſe? Can the ſame Fountain ſend forth bitter ſtreams and ſweet? Shall that tongue that hath here prayed to God afterwards blaſpheme? and conſider the Apoſtles argument in this Chapter; The Jews wicked carriage cauſed the name of God to be blaſphemed among the Gentiles; Pagans, Papiſts, Hereticks blaſpheme the truth, becauſe of your evill deeds. How neceſſary is it that where we are orthodox we ſhould ἐυδοξάζειν alſo? *Salvian* a zealous Father againſt the wickedneſſe of Chriſtians, attributing all the grievous Judgements of God then upon the Church to their impious manners, he brings in the Heathen alſo blaſpheming Chriſt, and laying all the fault here, that Chriſtians were no better: *Si Chriſtus ſancta docuiſſet, Chriſtiani ſanctè vixiſſent*; If Chriſt (ſay they) had taught holy and godly things, then certainly the Chriſtians would have lived holy lives. Take heed, for the condition of all Heathens and Pagans will be more tolerable at the day of judgement than yours. *Uſe.*

SERMON XX

Gifts and Parts in matters of Religion, no sign of Grace.

MAT. 7. 22.

Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, &c.

OUr Saviour in this verse, and that going before, removeth two foundations that believers are apt to build their hopes upon,

The First is a bare name, and profession of Christianity, without the real power of it, whose insufficiencie we have already discovered. *Nomen sine actu & officio, nihil est,* said *Salvian*, speaking to this purpose, Christianity in a prophane life, is *ornamentum in luto*, a jewel in a dunghil.

The Second weak and rotten foundation is in my Text, and that is, *Gifts, and eminent abilities bestowed upon Christians:* and these seeme to be a very strong Pillar, and Prop. But our Saviours assertion about the unsoundnes of it, is very terrible, and yet very necessary to these times: wherein men are like trees that spread out into many branches, but have little or no root.

1. In the words you have the description of their confidence, in that phrase, *Lord, Lord:* which argueth not only *vehemency*, but *boldness*, and as if accustomed familiarly to call on God as their God.

2. There is the ground of their confidence, *Have not we Propheſied in thy name, and in thy name cast out Devils, and in thy name done many wonderfull works?* Those Expositors that think they lyed in saying thus, as if no wicked men were made partakers of such wonderful gifts of the Holy Ghost as here are specified, attend not to other places of Scripture: neither is that dispute necessary, whether they were true miracles that they wrought? or did indeed cast out Divels? For seeing these *Gifts* were given for the good of the Church, and not of those that enjoyed them, there is no ground to deny the truth of their miracles. Only observe how they lay much upon this, That all they did was in *Gods name*, which they thrice repeat: That is at the command of God, having authority from him and by his power administred unto them.

3. This is aggravated by the number of those who shall be in this frustrated condition: *Many*, not *One* or *two*, but *Many shall say*. Lastly, here is the time when the weakness of these foundations will be discovered, *In that day*, viz. *at the great day of judgement, when all hidden things shall be discovered:* Implying, that they lived and died with great confidence that God was theirs, but never were convinced of their deceit therein till it was too late. In the next place you have Gods answer to them beyond all their expectations, illustrated by the free and open declaration of it.

First, *Then will I profess unto them*: The word hath several significations: here it denoteth a publick and solemn declaration.

Secondly, The matter declared, *I never knew you.* That is, approved of you, and

and loved you: No, not all that while I gave you those abilities, and spiritual Gifts.

Thirdly, There is the effect of this declaration: *Depart from me*, with the cause, *Ye workers of iniquity*: because they wrought iniquity in the Divels name, as well as miracles in Christs name; therefore they must depart.

Doct. *Although Christians are very apt to rest upon Parts, Gifts, and great Abilities in Religion, as a sign of their interest in Heaven, yet without a godly life they will prove broken reeds.* Doct. Gifts and parts in matters of Religion, no sign of grace.

At the day of judgement when the *fiery trial* shall be, all this painting will melt away. For the opening of this point, let some things be considered by way of *Explication*.

First, *There are parts and abilities of two sorts*: The one *Humane* and *Natural*, the other *Divine* and *Spiritual*, Natural parts are all those excellent abilities acquired by industry, and through the discipline of others, though even those Natural gifts come from God also. In this kinde the Heathens have wonderfully excelled, and many of the Fathers converted to Christianity, were before their conversion, admirable in humane learning. *Qui dedit Petrum Piscatorem, dedit & Cyprianum Rhetorem*, He that called *Peter* an illiterate *Fisherman*, called *Cyprian* also a great *Rhetorician*. Thus *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Austin*, *Hierom*, and others, came into *Canaan, the Church of God*, loaded with *Egyptian gold*, I mean filled with humane learning: So that, that foolish assertion by some in these dayes, that God never sanctifieth humane learning, expungeth at once all those glorious Lights out of the heavenly firmament. It is true indeed, take these natural endowments in the heart, while carnal, they work a sinful pride, and tumour against the simplicity of Gods wayes. Hence *Austin* spake of himself, *Dedignabar esse PARVULUS*, I scorned to become like a little Child, and to admire the Scriptures. Thus also *Bradwardine*, called *the profound Doctor*, *usque ad stuporem*, even to amazement, professeth of himself, *That when he heard* Pauls *Epistles read, he was much displeased, because* Paul *had not* Metaphysicum ingenium *a Metaphysical wit*. And certainly when Natural parts come like *Hagar*, to quarrel with *Sarah*, Gods Truth, then throw her out of doores; otherwise if subordinated, they are great helps. But secondly, There are spiritual Gifts, such as the Spirit of God doth more immediatly work in his Church, of which the Apostle speaketh largely, 1 *Cor.* 12. Now the Spirit of God is the Author of two kind of gifts; the one *Sanctificantia*, Sanctifying and saving, such as Faith, Hope, Love, Repentance: The other *Ministrantia*, or Gifts of *Ministration*, because they are wholy for the service of the Church: The former are called χάρις, the latter χάρισμα, though the Scripture doth not alwayes fully distinguish these two words: The School-men by division call the former Graces, *Gratos nos facientes*, making us acceptable to God; and the other Graces, *Gratis datæ*, freely given. But this distinction is first absurd, because coincident; for those graces which (they say) make us acceptable to God, are also freely given: And secondly it's false; for true Grace is called Grace, not because it maketh us gracious and acceptable to God, but because it floweth from the grace of God. Now these gifts of service in the Apostles time, were more immediatly vouchsafed by the Spirit, and more universally, insomuch that it's made a promise *Mark* 16.16,17. *Even to every believer, that great signs and wonders should follow him*: Thus the Church of *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 14. by reason of her eminent and various Gifts, *seemeth to be like the Queens daughter, all in gold and curious needle-work*. In these latter dayes God also doth bestow upon men, not immediatly, but mediatly, in the way of study and use of means, many spiritual Gifts, such as the gift of prayer, the gift of Preaching, great assistance in the exercise of these, with enlargement of affections therein: and these are much admired as arguments of their holiness and piety: But the Apostle told the *Corinthians*, he had a more excellent way to shew them than that of Gifts, which was the way of Grace. Explicatory considerations. 1.

Secondly, *The end of all these spiritual abilities, is to profit the Church with them.* 2.

They

They are not for vain ostentation, disputes and applause in the world, but meerly to edifie others. 1 *Cor.* 12.7. *The gift is given to every one,* πρὸς τὸ σύμφερον, *to profit with.* So then these gifts must not be put under a bushel; these Talents must not be *hid in the earth*, or *wrapt up in a napkin*, as if it were a dead thing. It is ingeniously observed by *Theophylact*, *That when men were dead, they covered their faces with a napkin, and laid them in the grave:* Thus they did to Christ, and to *Lazarus*: and thus the unprofitable servant did to his Talent, as if it were a dead thing and buried, and he would make no improvement of it at all. And well did *Austin* call idleness, *the burial of a man while alive*: *Paul* even then when he foretels his death shortly, *That he must be a Sacrifice for the truth*, he yet sends for his Parchments, imploying that little time he hath in study. Now when I say gifts must be improved, I mean the gifts of private men in a private way out of charity; of publick men, by office in a publick way out of Authority: for that gifts are not enough to entitle to a publick office, appeareth by the examples and commands in the Epistles, and in the Acts of the Apostles, where all that publickly imployed their gifts, besides their own qualification, had also authority, and office given them by Superiours, whereby they were sent to do their work: And as they are not to be negligent, so neither to use them for applause, or to get esteem, or make parties. It is a sad corruption in us that we affect gifts more than graces, as you see the *Corinthians* did, for which *Paul* reproves them, because by their gifts they were more admired and applauded: hereupon they also had many followers, & truly this City of *London* is become much like *Corinth*: as she gloried in light and knowledge, as she abounded in schisms, and parties, one for one, and another for another: as her publick meetings were come to great confusions, and disorders, and as they minded disputes, but neglected the true power of Grace, thus it is with *London* at this day.

In the next place let us consider, Why Believers are so ready to lean upon these? To take Gifts for Graces, Enlargements and Assistances for Sanctification.

VVhy Christians are apt to rest upon parts 1.

First, *Because these do exceed the common way, and ordinary course of Christians.* Men so qualified and furnished, seem to be as much above ordinary Christians, as the tall Cedars above the low shrubs: The Pharisees, how scornfully did they speak, *This people which know not the Law, are cursed.* How apt is a man, because he can pray excellently, discourse upon many controversies in religion, to undervalue those that cannot: Seeing therefore that these are in an higher form of Christs school, and to the name and Title in knowledge of Christianity, they have superadded many other Talents, is it any wonder they are confident of their good estate? We may read that in *Austins* time, it was a general received opinion, *That every Christian, though he lived wickedly, should at last be saved.* This Doctrine was so universal, that *Austin* was forced to oppose it with a great deal of fear and modesty. They did not hold with *Origen*, *That the very Devils themselves should be restored*, nor with others mollifying *Origens* opinion, *That all men whether Christians or Infidels*; nor as a third, *That all Christians, how damnably soever erring in matters of Faith, shall be saved*; but thought it most reasonable, *That all right believing Christians should finde mercy, whatsoever their wickedness was.* Austin, *Enchir. ad Sanc.* saith, those that hold so, *Humanâ quadam benevolentiâ sibi falli videri.* And if the name and profession of Christianity may sway so much, what then may these more excellent and unusual workings of Gods Spirit upon men? wonder not therefore if you see a man that hath better gifts than another, more knowledge than another, have also more confidence in God than another. Not that indeed he hath grounds, for its better to speak one word with Grace, than five hundred with meer Parts and abilities; but onely self-love doth blind our Eyes, and deceive our Hearts, so that we do not judge Scripture-judgement.

Secondly, *A second reason of carnal confidence herein, is, because it is very difficult*

cult to know when our duties are performed by assistance meerly, and when by Sanctification also. In prayer it is hard to discern when its the Gift of prayer onely, and when its the Grace of prayer also; for these things are judged by the Spiritual man onely; he is said *to judge all things.* But now an unregenerate man, though abounding in these gifts of Gods Spirit, yet because he is altogether carnal, he cannot make any spiritual discerning of these things: but as sensual, brutish men, they argue God loveth them, and that they are in the favour of God, because he blesseth them with wealth, and outward prosperity. Thus men of parts and abilities in religious things argue; if God did not love them, if he intended to damn them, he would never give them such knowledge, he would never give such assistance, but this is a meer delusion. Oh there is as vast a difference between thy Duties performed through assistance meerly, and through Sanctification, as is between sweet Grapes and wilde Grapes.

Thirdly, *Therefore we do take these for sure signs, because hereby is demonstrated Gods power in us, and we are ready to take his presence by power, for his presence of Grace.* 3. When we perceive in our selves a greater strength than our own, we argue that God is with us, not onely providentially, but graciously, whereas these two are separable one from another: God was with *Saul* by way of assistance and power, when he gave him another spirit, but not by way of gracious inhabitation. There is no question but Christs power was with *Judas* in his miracles, aswel as with the other Apostles; but with *Judas* was onely a presence of power, with the other Apostles a pretence of power and gracious Sanctification: so then, God may be much seen by his assistance in thy Duties, in thy Prayers, in thy Preaching: but his presence in mortification of sin, and vivification to righteousness is far more admirable. It is true, the times of the Gospel, and of its Truth is in Scripture, proved by this argument, because *many wonders and signs were done amongst them*; for so it was promised, *That Miracles should abound in the times of the Messiah:* but these are no sure demonstrations of the Spirit dwelling graciously among us. So then diligenly consider thus, Thou findest God much with thee: thou feelest thou couldst not do such things as thou dost; but here is no solid ground of comfort, unless thou discoverest a further powerful work of his Spirit, which is in giving thee an holy, humble, believing and self-denying spirit. Oh it is far more comfortable to find Gods power melting thy heart for sin, quickening thee up to holiness, than to finde ten thousand enlargements in holy performances: It is better to see and feel God in thy conversation in the wayes of mortification, than in any solemn Religious duty.

Fourthly, *Therefore we rest on these, because we distinguish not between that which is Spiritual in the object, or matter we do, and that which is Spiritual in the manner how we do it.* 4. As for Example, The Pharisees, many things they did were Spiritual for the object matter: Thus their prayers, their reading and expounding the Scriptures, were spiritual imployments, but take them for the manner how they did it, which was *to be seen of men*, to advantage worldly interests; and no Publicans, or Harlots were more carnal than they, so that the proper stream and channel, wherein all their spiritual defilement did empty it self, was in their religious duties, so that they were most carnal, when they seemed most Spiritual. *Jehu* also is a clear instance, if you respect the outward matter; his reformation from Idolatry, his establishing the worship of God, all this was wonderful Spiritual; but withal consider, that his aims were meer State-Policy in all he did, and so he was very carnal: consider therefore of this more than thou hast done: it may be thou wast never more sinful; corruption did never more discover it self than in thy Spiritual abilities and imployments. *Paul* saith of some, *That they preached Christ out of envy*, and others may do it out of worldly ends: now because the Duties are Spiritual, shall we say these men are Spiritual men: No, they are sensual, corrupt and worldly: and this is certain, when the Devil cannot perswade men to corruptions in vicious and prophane courses, then he becomes like an Angel

of light, and seduceth them to carnal distempers in spiritual duties.

Fifthly, *Therefore are we prone to rely on these, because they breed esteem in the hearts of others.* Many times Disciples that are followers, they set up a Doctor or Teacher, as if he were an Angel: they place him among the *Cherubims* and *Seraphims*: they say by his gifts and abilities their souls have got a world of good: they have cause to bless God that ever they saw him, or heard him: Now these solemn acclamations from others, do work great confidence in such a mans heart, I make no question but a man of abilities may do good by them, although he himself be naught; otherwise the Apostle would not have rejoyced *that some preached Christ out of envy*: neither would Christ have remitted his Disciples to the Scribes and Pharisees Ministry as he did, when he bid them *hear them as long as they sate in Moses his chair, deliver true Doctrine from the Scriptures* Now this being so, it is hard to perswade our selves that when we have been a means to bring in some Elect ones, we our selves should be as Reprobates: hence it is that the Apostle, *Gal.* 4. presseth men so to walk, *That they may have approbation from God and their own consciences, rather than from others*, when it is said, *That those who convert others to righteousnesse shall shine like the stars in heaven*, that is to be understood taking in other places in Scripture, *viz. If they be Godly, and walk in all the waies of God themselves, as well as teach others so to do.*

Thus you see the reasons why people are apt to take all their evidences for Heaven from these uncertain grounds; now let us demonstrate the insufficiency of these to give any solid support: and this will appear severall waies.

1. *In that all these glorious abilities are, and may be consistent in the same subject at the same time, with prophane and ungodly waies of iniquity.* Now can you call that light which agreeth with darkness? Can that be righteousness which may consist with unrighteousness? You heard, *He that is born of God sinneth not, because of that seed in him.* Then certainly this is not that Spiritual seed, if we have, or may have at the same time an habitual inclination to evil. Its true indeed, sanctifying grace is in the same subject with the relicks of corruption; and a Godly man hath darkness in him aswell as light: and we know in Philosophy, that *Contraria possunt simul esse in gradu remisso, ac dum sunt in pugna*, contraries may be together in a remiss degree, and while they are in conflict: But in these spiritual abilities and gifts, sin may be in its dominion and prevalency with full quietnes and ease. Hence our Saviour calls these Prophets, these wonder-workers, *Workers of iniquity.* They were so at that very time while they did all these: alas, it was no advantage to cast the Devil out of other mens bodies, while he had full possession in their own hearts. Know then if these abilities were Grace, they would expel at least in some degree, all those lusts and exorbitances that are in thy life. Experience telleth us, that it is no new thing for men to pray zealously, to perform duties admirably, and yet to go from these duties to the committing of sin against the light of nature, aswell as of the Scriptures. Did not *Judas* practice secret thievery and injustice, notwithstanding his publick ministry? It is true, many times God in a just judgement, when men live prophanely, doth at last take away their Talents: they cannot pray, they cannot preach as they have done; but they become very sots: even as in the black Coal-mine there sometimes arise such damp vapours that put out all the light, yea, and the breath of those men that are in it; but for a great while they may keep their Talent, and it not be taken away.

2. *These cannot be a sure testimony for our comfort, because they are not proper and immediate effects of election, which is the first round in that ladder, of all spiritual mercies.* If I have justifying faith, I may have sure confidence, because this is a fruit of our ordination & appointment to eternal life. But we cannot say thus of these parts and abilities; for the Text saith, *Many shall say, have not we prophesied in thy name*, yet Christ shall reply, *I never knew you*: but there shall not one godly man say

say at the day of judgement, *Lord, was not I elected? was not I converted? Did not I repent, believe, mortifie sin, &c?* And Christ say again, *Depart, I know you not.* If therefore our calling and election might be made sure by these gifts and abilities, there might be some hope, but that cannot be; therefore how fully doth our Saviour speak to this purpose, when the Disciples came rejoycing to Christ, telling him, *That the Devils were subject to them, and they could work all kind of wonders,* he replies; *Rejoyce not in this, but that your names are written in heaven:* where you see how prone we are to rejoyce in that which affords no good ground of comfort, and withall, That if we had the parts and abilities of men and Angels, yet if we had not *our names written in heaven,* we were in a miserable condition. Oh then say, This is but the fruit of the common Love of God: the sons of the Concubine may have this, as well as the sons of the true wife: *Abraham* gave *Ishmael* some gifts, but they were not such as *Isaac* had; therefore pray that God would give thee tokens of such a love which is vouchsafed unto his own people in a peculiar manner.

Thirdly, *These cannot demonstrate certainly the faith of the Elect*; *Paul* calls it, *our good estate,* because God in the bestowing of these gifts, doth not at all look to the good of him that hath them, but to the good of the Church. There's this difference between saving Gifts, and Gifts of service: saving Gifts, such as Faith, Repentance, *&c.* are intentionally given to the good of him that hath them, and although a man by these may edifie others, yet that is not looked at primarily; but now in these gifts of service, ability to pray, preach and confer or dispute, these are given not primarily for the good of him that hath them, but of the Church in general. As a nurse to a great mans child lives upon dainty fare, not for her own sake, but the childs sake: Now then thou shouldst thus argue, Is God much in assisting of thee in prayer, in any duties with others? say, *Surely the Lord did thus assist me, not out of any respect to me, but he had some child of his there to be refreshed, to be enflamed, or quickened by me:* Hence for want of a godly life, many that have helpt others to heaven, they themselves are thrown into hell; they are Torches, which while they give light to others, they themselves are consumed.

Fourthly, *That cannot be the true and proper good which may be turned into evil. Bonum est, quo nemo male uti potest,* Grace and godliness cannot be used to an evil end, because its part of godliness, to rectifie the end, the shew of godliness indeed may. But now all these abilities are so indifferent in their nature, that they may be used well or ill: As *Austin* said of riches, *That God doth sometimes bestow them upon wicked men, to shew they are not good in their own nature: again sometimes on good men, to declare they are not bad in their nature.* Thus it is of all parts and abilities, they sometimes are bestowed upon good men, sometimes upon bad men, to teach us, That as the subjects are in whom these be, so may they be imployed: But we cannot say so of Grace: no wicked man hath any true saving Grace in him: Why then do you encourage your selves with that which a *Judas* may have? one roaring in hell may have? And certainly these abilities and Gifts are in more persons made a snare to evil, than an occasion to good. Satan is more busie to tempt such: when the Devil first assaulted *Eve,* it was by the Serpent, as an instrument that was more subtile than all the beasts of the field: Thus afterwards he worked, when Satan seduced others by *Tertullian,* and *Origen,* he was a Devil in the Serpent. When thy Liquor boyleth, then look to take off the Scumme: And so when thy Abilities and Enlargements are efficacious and fervent, then take heed of froth and vanity. *Ornari abs te Diabolus quærit,* said *Austin* to a great scholler yet unconverted to Christ. The Apostle in 1 *Cor.* 13. and 14. speaks of other carnall effects of spirituall abilities, as to puffe up and inflate, to make divisions and several parties in Gods Church, to bring all into confusion and disorder, therefore these cannot be grace.

Lastly, The Apostle makes a man that hath all these abilities, yet if without

grace, to be no more than a tinckling Cymball, that may make a pleaſant noiſe for the while to the ear, but preſently paſſeth away, 1 *Cor.* 13. 1. And thus are all men of parts and gifts, they may be like a pleaſant ſong to others, but they themſelves have no benefit: Men may preach well, expound Scriptures, write excellent comments, yet for all this be but like Harps or Viols, that give a melodious ſound to others, but perceive none of it themſelves: Whereas true grace is profitable to him that hath it, it watereth his heart in whom it is, and makes it fruitful: It beginneth an heaven in this life, yea, ſtrangers and others, are not able to enter into his joy.

Uſe of Exhortation, Not any longer to look upon theſe gifts and abilities, as the moſt excellent things, but be perſwaded there is a better way, and deſire that. This aſſiſtance is like the rain that God vouchſafeth to the bad, as well as to the good: Only thy condemnation will be the more terrible, by how much thou wert the more ſure of heaven, and yet didſt miſſe it: Thoſe men urged they had propheſied and wrought miracles in Chriſts name: But alas, the prophane and ungodly man, what will he ſay? We have been drunk in thy Name, unclean in thy Name: How abſurd and blaſpheming would this be? Therefore minde the things of mortification more than of parts and aſſiſtance; ſay now, I know God will and doth love me indeed, when he makes me fruitful in all holineſſe.

SERM. XXI.

Fully clearing that there may be affections and ſweet motions of Heart in holy things, which yet evidence not grace, nor accompany ſalvation.

HEB. 6. 9.

But (beloved) we hope better things of you, and things that accompany Salvation

THe Text hath an adverſative reſpect to the verſes precedent, as the firſt word (*But*) plainly denoteth: For it is put in by way of mollifying and ſoftening, after thoſe ſevere and terrible expreſſions the Apoſtle had uſed before At the 4. verſe there is an Hypothetical Propoſition, containing *Beneficium Dei, The goodneſſe and mercy of God*: And *maleficium hominis, The ingratitude of man*, with the ſentence or judgement upon him. I ſhall not now ſpeak to that controverſal matter, which is uſually debated by the learned upon theſe words: You may briefly obſerve the mercies of God beſtowed upon this ſuppoſed Apoſtate reduced to two heads.

Firſt, That which concerneth his intellectuals, in that expreſſion, *Enlightened*.

Secondly, Thoſe that relate to his affectionate part: And herein are moſt particulars, *viz.* taſting of the heavenly Gift, partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, taſting of th

the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. These things (God willing) shall be more distinctly handled when we shall discourse of the grace of conversion, and the counterfeit of it, (and then we shall vindicate the Orthodox interpretation from all corrupt oppositions.) In the Second place, you have the *Ingratitude*, or *wickednesse of the man* abusing these mercies, and that is, παραπεσόντας, which may be proved of an universal Apostacy, not a fall in some particular gross sin, *Toti, in totum, de toto*, as *Junius*: Which mistake made the *Novatians* deny any Church reconciliation to lapsed sinners, and which made the *Roman* Church delay the receiving of this Epistle into the number of Canonical. In the Third place, there is the heavie doom of such, *It is impossible to renew them again*, ἀνακαινίζειν, the word is in the Active sense, and signifieth there are no Teachers, no Doctors, no Ministry, no Sermons can ever instrumentally reduce them to godlinesse: and the Apostle saith, *it is impossible*, not absolutely to God, nor in that sense, as it is impossible for every man by nature of himself to recover out of his sins, seeing that it is common to every natural man: But here he speaketh of a special impossibility. Therefore its impossible from a special decree of God, whereby he doth threaten to such abusers, and contemners of his Grace and mercy a total substraction of all his favours and goodnes from them, even as a branch once grafted in, and afterwards disjointed is hardly capable of a second coalition. Now this the Apostle

1. Aggravateth from the cause, because they crucifie the Sonne of God afresh, *viz.* as much as lyeth in them: If they be restored, there must be a new Christ, or a new oblation of Christ, Those that fall in *Adam* Christ repaireth, but if a man fall off from Christ, and reject him, there is no further remedy appointed by God, but such are in as hopelesse a condition as the Apostate Angels.

2. He illustrateth by the earth, drinking in rain, yet bringing forth thistles, which is near to cursing. Now having thus wounded them, and powred salt in their wounds, at last he powreth oyl to supple them, telling them that he doth not think they are these Apostates, partly because his judgement is they have better things than these, partly because God is just and faithful, and will therefore perfect the good work begun in them: My Text is the first mollifying expression wherein you have,

1. The Apostle his charitable judgment expressed by πεπείσμεθα, which according to the subject matter is sometimes to be understood of such a divine faith and hope that cannot be deceived, sometimes of such a certainty as we have by charitable construction and moral prudence, and in this sense it is taken here.

2. There is the object of this charitable judgement, better things; that is, better things than those fore-mentioned benefits (though seemingly very glorious) which hypocrites may have, and at last fall away; better than to be meerly enlightned, better than to have a taste only, and some sweet affections in holy things, & for better explication sake, he addeth, *& things that accompany salvation*, ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας, *haerentia salutí*, saith *Austin*. that cleave to salvation, that cannot be disjoyned from it: Such things as whosoever hath, cannot be saved; implying that those benefits, though they were good things and gifts of Gods Spirit, yet were not necessarily accompanying salvation.

Doct. Sweet motions of heart in holy things not infallible evidences of grace.

That although affections and sweet motions of heart in holy things are much relyed upon as evidences of grace and salvation, yet they are not indeed any true signs or infallible testimonies.

This point needeth a powerfull and a wary discovery: Therefore for explication sake, let us consider what religious affections and motions the Scripture declareth to be in some, who yet are not truly regenerated. The known and famous instance is, *Mat.* 13. 20. where the third kinde of hearers, is said to receive the word with joy. This is tasting the good word of God, finding som sweetnes and

1. What motions in Scripture declareth to be consistent with unregeneratenesse.

and power in the Ordinances, yet that this hearer was not hereby regenerate is plain, partly because he is said to have no root, partly because he is opposed to the good ground, *i. e.* the good and honest heart (what is said by Arminians to these things, hereafter shall be discussed) so *Joh.* 5. 35. you have a plain instance of some that had light & heat in them, yet not godly. Ye did for a season rejoyce in *Johns* light and Ministry, so that men who shall at last be thrown into utter darkness, may yet for a while rejoyce in the light of Gods word: Thus *Herod* puts it also out of all question, *Mar.* 6 20. for he heard *John* gladly, and the motive was religion, for its said, he feared or reverenced him, because he was a just man. I look upon this point as fundamental in practice; & which if true, may strike like an arrow into our hearts, & therefore have brought undeniable places of Scripture to assert this truth; affections in holy administrations with delight and joy, may be in those who yet have no true grace: I will instance only in another affection, and that is sorrow and grief about sin, even this may be in a man unseasoned with grace, *Mat.* 27. 3. it is expresly said of *Judas*, he repented himself and confest I have sinned in betraying the innocent bloud, μεταμεληθεὶς, the word is properly used of that sorrow, grief & care, which is in the affectionate part of a man: *Ahabs* humiliation, 1 *King* 21. is so great, that God taketh notice of it; *Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself?* The Israelites how often were they in their humiliations & mournings for sin? though these land-flouds were dried up again, insomuch that *Gregory* did wel compare them to the grashoppers which make sudden leaps from the earth, as if they would fly to heaven, but presently fall down upon the ground again. Take one place for many *Psal* 38. 34. They sought him and they returned, and they enquired early after God: Great expressions! Do you not think God like that Father in the Parable will presently kiss them, put robes upon them, prepare a fatted calf for them? No, v. 36 marres all. Nevertheless their hearts were not stedfast within him. Now its remarkable, as the scripture cals these actions, repentance, humiliation, returning and seeking after God, giving the name of grace to them, because they have the outward lineaments of grace, so also the scripture attributes pardon of sin and forgiveness unto them, v. 38. he being full of compassion forgave their iniquities, *Num* 14. 20. God upon *Moses's* prayer, saith, he had pardoned their iniquity: now this cannot be a true and proper pardon of sin, for *Heb.* 3. its plain, *All these perished because of their unbelief.* Therefore when the Scripture saith, that upon such humiliation & repentance God doth pardon sin, especially speaking of an whole body of people, its to be understood in a particular sence thus, for not punishing them at that time, but either quite taking away, or at least deferring the temporal affliction, but is still abiding them, for no unconverted man, truly and properly hath any sin pardoned him, so that as to a godly man repenting, God taketh away eternal punishment, but lets a temporal chastisement sometime abide, so to the unconverted repenting, God doth sometimes take away the temporal, but causes the eternal punishment to continue. By all this you see the Scripture speaking of some, as rejoycing in that which is good, & mourning for that which is evil, whereupon their sins are said to be forgiven, that yet all this while are men whose hearts are not right within them: and this is no wonder, seeing they are said to believe, *Mat.* 12. they believe for a season, yea, *Joh* 3 23. unconverted men are said πιστευειν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, to believe in the name (which some make the highest expression of believing) now according to the collustration of their understandings by faith, sutable are the motions of their affections of their heart. As they believe, so they rejoyce, mourn, desire, and delight in things believed.

2. Such motions may be called temporary affections.

2. *These affections we may for distinction sake, call temporary affections in holy things.* As our Saviour cals it a temporary faith, so may we a temporary joy, a temporary mourning, a temporary delight in good things; not as it were of the essence of these affections to apostatize at last. Its true, faith is called temporary, because

because when hot persecution ariseth presently withereth, but had no such storms or tempests come, an house that is built upon the sand only, will not fall. It is the opinion of a learned man, *Conradus Bergius praxis Cambol. pag.* 205 that it is not likely that any one dyeth a meer temporary believer; but that at least when he commeth to die, seeing he must part with worldly comforts, which he always loved more than God, he then seeketh and murmureth against God, and so extinguisheth that temporary faith and affections to God, or else resigning himself up unto God, and of a temporary faith there is suddenly by the grace of God a saving faith; let the Author say more for the making of this good. We call it not temporary, as if it were necessary there should be apostacy from these. Certainly the foolish Virgins were such christians as did live & die with temporary faith and affections to God, that had a lamp and shining, and so some oil, else there lamp could not shine, but not such store as would hold out; so then, these affections and motions of thy heart, may be all the pillar thou leanest upon, when yet many damned in hell have gone as far.

3. *Christians with these temporary affections do not constitute a third kinde of believers between converted and unconverted, but are in the state of unregenerate persons.* And the work upon the godly and those temporaries differ not only gradually or in duration, but essentially and specifically. They are then foolish Virgins; They are those that build upon the sand; They are the thorny ground: notwithstanding these great promising hopes: So we say, that we can neither call them regenerate nor unregenerate, nor yet make them a third kinde, but that they are like the Embrio, proving abortive, which we cannot call either a man or a beast, nor yet make it a third kinde, for it's only an inchoate, imperfect being; but by the Scripture we may surely enough place them in the rank of those who are not members of Christ, and not being united to him cannot be said to partake of the divine nature, and therefore must be in a carnall, sinfull temper, and are not like a tree rooted that sproueth and flourisheth; but like some branch of a tree put into the ground, that may sprout for a season.

3. Temporary believers are unregenerate persons.

4. *The affections and motions that such may have in holy duties, may be upon severall grounds;*

4. There are severall grounds of temporary holy motions.

As in the first place, *The novelty and the strangeness of the doctrine may much affect and delight:* And this may be the reason why they rejoyce in *John Baptists* Ministery: What went ye out for to see (saith our Saviour) θεάσασθαι some strange new sight; and thus while the doctrine of the Gospel is new, it hath many admirers. Commonly in the work of the Ministry, a new Minister is much delighted in, while his parts, his abilities are new, men hear with joy: but though custome their affections do abate: and such kinde of hearers I fear *London* hath many: We may say unto many, What go ye out to see rather than to hear. Therefore by the way take notice of what a frail ground many go upon; who say, since they left our Congregations, our Ministers have gone into new wayes of doctrine, they say, they have found more comfort, more sweet affections than ever; What argument is this? All novell things will affect thus, and after use and custome in those waies they are in, and they go further into more new waies, upon new changes, they will finde new affections.

1. Novelty of doctrine.

2. *Men may be affected with the doctrine and truths of Christ, as it is comfortable or sad matter;* without any respect to a spirituall operation. The Gospel is called εὐαγγέλιον, glad tidings, or good news, now a man may be affected in hearing this gracious counsell of God to save sinners discovered, as he would be about any State or Common wealth good news wherein he is much concerned, and all this is but knowing Christ after the flesh; or else the sadnesse of the matter, the very history of Christ recorded by the Evangelists, may abundantly make a man mourn to see how the innocent and righteous one was put to death, meerly to satisfie the lusts of proud and carnall men; and thus as *Austin* saith of himself, when he read the story of *Dido*, he could weep over her dead, when he could not weep

2. Comfortableness or sadness of the matter.

weep for himself dead in sin; so thou maist be affected about Christs death, as it was a sad passion, and never be affected with those Scripture-Arguments that are propounded. In this sense, Christ forbad those women, weep not for me, ye daughters of *Jerusalem*, but weep for your selves.

3. Ministers abilities.

3. *The hearers affections may be much moved, or stirred at the Ministers abilities,* because of his parts, eloquence, elocution, affectionate utterance. These things may much delight you, and you think this is a sign of grace. The Prophet *Ezekiel* was like a pleasant and sweet tuned instrument unto his hearers, whereupon God saith, they come in Troops, and sate as his people, but yet were not reformed. *Austin* while a *Manichee* was wonderfully affected with *Ambrose* his preaching, because of his eloquence: and certainly Rhetorical elocution, especially that which is about the *ethos* the affections of men, may much prevail: Insomuch that one Country made *Hercules*, who was so famous for strength, the god of eloquence, implying thereby how strong that is to turn and change man; Therefore examine your hearts in the ground of your affections; The learning of the man may please your intellectuals; The powerful utterance may satisfie your affections, but all this while you are no more wrought upon in a spiritual way, than the Roman auditors were, when they heard *Tullies* Orations, *veritas Christianorum pulchrior est Helena Græcorum.* The truth of Christianity is fairer than the Grecians *Helena*: we may love a choise truth, as a man may be enamoured with a fair face; fine head-notions may produce some affectionate heart-motions: but what symptome of grace is in all this?

4. Mens corrupt lusts.

4. *Even corrupt lusts in men, such as pride, ambition, self-seeking,* may produce great affections in holy duties, especially in publick administrations, where others may admire and applaud; Thus the Pharisees in their publick Expositions of the Law, and teachings in the Synagogue, as also in their prayers, might be much affected from those carnal motives provoking of them; many times the more excellent a Sermon is, the more carnal the heart of a Preacher may be: Thus a private Christian in prayers with others, the stronger his invention may be, the weaker his graces may be, and those expressions which seem excellent to others come from a root very bitter to God; Even as in a Meadow full of grasse and pleasant flowers, if you digge to the bottom of them, there is nothing but noysome earth; so if you go to the Fountain from whence all these expressions, vehement expostulations, that are used in prayer, do flow, you may see it's a poisoned Fountain. As on the other side, a heart contrite, and full of grace before God may not be so admirable in expressions: As they say, the ground full of mines of gold is very barren for grass. Do not then go away rejoycing from a duty, because of thy affections meerly in an holy duty Let not this comfort thee, that thy soul was heated within, but consider whether the ground upon which all these are built, be solid and enduring.

5. Sometimes even from the excellency of spiritual things.

Lastly, A mans affections may be inflamed, not only from such base and unworthy considerations, but even *from the goodness and excellency of spiritual things*; yet because not radicated, not throughly changed in the bottom of the soul, all these affections be insufficient: And this was the cause of that joy and delight in those we instanced in, viz. The sweetnesse and excellency of holy things; They tasted the good Word of God, not the good worldly aims and respects by the Word of God, yet all this is in a vanishing unsetled way. They are affected with the world as well as with God, and thereby it is they miscarry: So that all affections in holy things, and that because of their excellency, is not presently a certain note of one who shall inherit glory, unlesse deeply rooted.

Grounds of aptnesse to rely on these.

The ground why Christians are apt to rely upon these are,

1. A seeming attainment of the end of all knowledge hereby.

First, *Because hereby we seem to have attained the end of all knowledge and abilities in religion.* For seeing all supernatural revelation of heavenly truths is for practise and operation: If we find some love and joy and affection both to the revealer who is God, and the matter revealed, we are prone to think we are now arrived

arrived as farre as we ought to be. Indeed it will be easily granted, for a man to hear, pray, or believe the Word of God without some inward affections thereupon, that he may be judged *a cloud without water, a tree without fruit*: But when this oyl runneth from the head to the inferiour parts, then may we not say All is Well. But *Balaams* consideration of the good estate of the righteous, wrought in him affections to have such an end as they have.

2. We are prone to make these all in all, because *affections are sensible and we feel them moving of us*: Now we are affected and confirmed most by things of sense. The reason why a godly man findeth it so hard to live by faith, is because we have so much of sense in us, and it is no mean work not to judge according to what we feel. Therefore that man who is in a false way, whether of doctrine, worship, or life, and yet findes comfort and consolation therein, is in a very sad and dangerous condition. The devil transforming himself into an Angel of light, of joy and comfort, doth the most incurably destroy. It is no good Argument, I have comfort in this way, therefore it is of God, but let it be first discovered to be of God, and this will breed sound comfort. 2. Because of the sensible motion of Affections.

Lastly, Therefore are we apt to rely on this most, *because this doth look most like grace*; Of all false signs these do come nearest. Temporaries are affected almost with the same feeling as the truly godly are, insomuch that some have thought (though falsly) the difference is only in degrees: So that it is easier to convince men of the unsoundnesse and weaknesse of all signs, rather than of this, although men have therefore the greater cause to fear herein, rather than any where else.

Therefore in the next place consider, *Why these affections are not to be looked upon as such an Ark that will save, when the deluge shall overflow.*

And first, *These motions argue only Gods Spirit working in thee, not dwelling in thee.* Now the godly they are *the Temples of the holy Ghost*, and being members of Christ they are animated with the Spirit of Christ not only *assisting* but *informing*. The Spirit of God in a temporary is like an Angel appearing in some outward shape or body; there was an eating, a drinking, but the Angel was only a form assisting, not informing that body: Therefore the bodies they assumed did not live, neither were they nourished, or could grow by all the food they took, but the Spirit of God is in a godly man like the soul in the body. I do not speak of a *personal union*, as if they made up one, as the soul and body do one man, but of a *moral union*, or a *union mistical* by faith, with a constant inhabitation. A woman may have many expressions of love from a man, but yet not presently such, as give a conjugal affection. Therefore thou canst draw comfort from those things only which argue the Spirits inhabitation, not the Spirits motion or operation.

Secondly, A second ground is in the Text, *There are better things in the way of Heaven than these.* Now we can take comfort in nothing but that which is the best work for its kinde, of Christ in us. There are better things than praying, hearing, with some affections; and that is a renovation of the heart, a deep radication of grace in thy soul: Whereas now if we speak of the saving graces in the godly, it would be absurd to say *we hope better things*, than truly to believe in Christ, really to mortifie sin. It is true, there may be a *gradual* bettering of them, but not a *specifical*.

Lastly, (Because more of this in another place) *They are not things that accompany salvation*: If a man had the highest degree of temporary faith, temporary joy, yet no promise of justification or salvation is made to such a person: There are great promises made to the believer, to him that rejoyceth in the Word of God, but they are not to be understood of a temporary faith, or a temporary joy: He that goeth no further than these, hath no promise in all the Scripture to comfort himself by: Whereas the least degee of true faith and sincere joy, may with all boldnesse apply the promise.

Use 1. of Instruction, *How remote they are from all hopes of salvation, who go on in a rode, or round of the duties of religion, without the least savoury affection in them!* You whose hearts never thought of sinne, and were troubled, of whom God cannot say at any time as he did of *Ahab*, *Seest thou how this man humbles himself?* You, who pray, hear, and finde no more relish in these things than in the white of an Egge, as *Job* speaks, Oh what a gulf is there between mercy and you, that neither mercy can come to you, or you to mercy! We have removed our Idols, out of our glasse windowes, but there are still too many Christian Idols in our Pews and Congregations, who have eyes and see not, hearts and understand not, nor rejoyce in any thing that is good. Oh how unexcusable is it, that thy soul hath found a sweetnesse, a savourinesse in the world, in lusts, and none in God! what is it, because God *is a wildernesse*, and the creature a pleasant fountain?

Use of Exhortation, *To take more diligent heed to thy self than ever*: It may be thou hast no better evidences for heaven, than what the third kinde of hearers, than what the foolish Virgins have had: Oh how terrible will it be, when God shall say to you, I lookt for better things, than that joy, that sorrow, that faith. I know not how alate we are all become frozen and very barren; many inchoate and imperfect workings there are upon mens hearts, but few have a solid, and thorow change wrought upon them. It's the opinion of *Bergius* before-cited, that the greater part of Christians are but temporaries, and it is to be feared that this opinion is too true: for if you do regard what little rooting grace hath in mens hearts, how weak their pulse beats that way, how strong their affections are to the world, and the things thereof; we Ministers may fear that the greatest part of our seed is sown upon thorny ground. Oh therefore that this Sermon might be blessed by God to make some *Embryo* to become a perfect man, some that are almost true beleevers, true rejoycers in good things, even altogether such: Oh this sluggishnesse and lazinesse, whereby people rest contented with some flashes of joy and sorrow, in the matters of God, will devour like a roaring Lion.

SERMON

SERM. XXII.

Shewing that from Judgements, Opinions and Disputes, arguments of the truth of Grace cannot be drawn.

ROM. 14.17.

For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the holy Ghost.

THe Apostle is a Casuist in this Chapter, and handleth the case of Conscience, which did much trouble the Church at that time with much prudence and moderation. The dispute was about the observation of some legal rites, Whether this was abrogated by evangelical liberty; some were for the affirmative, some for the negative, and the contest grows so high, that they make the sum and substance of Religion to lie in these things. Now the Apostle his scope is to rectifie them by several excellent rules, some whereof are to use our liberty alwaies with respect to our weak brother. To judge charitably of one another in these differences, not unseasonably to trouble the Church with our particular opinions, but to keep our faith to our selves; in which respect *Cyprian* said, God would have us *confiteri fidem*, rather than *profiteri*. He *confesseth it*, that is demanded and called thereunto, he *professeth* that doth it ultroneously, without any invitation at all. And in my Text the Apostle giveth an excellent rule. The marrow and essence of godliness lies not in these things, though ye are apt to make these the pillars and foundations of Religion, yet they be not.

So that in the words you have a *Proposition expressed*; first *Negatively*, and then *Positively*.

In the *Proposition* you have,

First, The *Subject*, *The Kingdom of God*. This is in other places called *The Kingdom of Heaven*, not *respectu loci*, in respect of the place where it is, for it is exercised on the earth, but *respectu modi*, because its administred after an heavenly manner. It doth in the general signifie that Regiment and Government which God exerciseth, either of glory in the Heavens, or of Grace in the hearts of his people; and by a *Metonymy of the Adjunct for the Subject*, it signifieth the *Church*, Mat. 13.41. and by a *Metonymy* of the *Effect* for the *efficient cause instrumental*, it signifieth the *preaching of the Gospel*, Mat. 13.33. and by a *Synecdoche* of the *genus* for the more *excellent species*, it signifieth that peculiar time of renovation and restauration which was made in the Church by Christ and the Apostles, *Matth* 3.2. *Mark* 1.14. *The Kingdom of heaven is at hand*. Hence the Kingdome of Heaven is never used in the Old Testament, but in the *times of the Messias onely*.

Secondly, There is the *attribute*, 1. *Exclusively*, *It is not meat or drink*, that is, it consists not in the doctrinal opinions, in the different practice about these things. 2. *Affirmatively* and *Positively*, but this Kingdom of grace is in *righteousnesse*,

teousneſſe, an univerſal conformity to Gods will, *in peace*, *viz.* with others, and *in joy in the holy Ghoſt*, *viz.* a godly joy in the exerciſe of all grace, accompanied with the ſenſe of Gods favour and love in the Goſpell, which is wrought in us by the Holy Ghoſt, for *Joy* is reckoned among others *the fruit of the Spirit*.

Obſerv. *That doctrinal diſputations and difference of judgements in matters of Religion cannot be relied upon as ſymptoms and evidences of Grace.*

Even the ſtrong Chriſtian who had the truth of his ſide, could not prove his godlineſs from his opinion or practice in this controverſie, becauſe the Kingdom of God conſiſted not in theſe things. The Apoſtle ſpeaks the like in another diſputation, that did much exerciſe the godly, 1 *Cor.* 8. 8. about *eating things offered to Idols*. But meat *commendeth us not to God*, *for neither if we eat are we better*, *neither if we eat not*, *are we the worſe*. The Greek words are emphatical, περισσεύω, we do not *abound*, we have done no ſuch great matter, neither ὑστερῶμεθα do we *fall ſhort of others*, as if we were not ſo excellent. Thus alſo the Apoſtle *Heb.* 13. 9. *It is good* (that is, better) *to have the heart eſtabliſhed with grace*, *rather than meats*, rather than Doctrines and Diſputations about them; where you ſee Diſputations and Opinions do not eſtabliſh, are not the ſtaff of a mans heart; Grace onely is ſo. Yea, the Apoſtle in that grand controverſie which did ſo much exerciſe the Church at firſt, *viz.* the Diſputation about Circumciſion, and the obſervation of it, ſpeaks manifeſtly, *Gal.* 6. 15. *In Jeſus Chriſt neither Circumciſion or uncircumciſion availeth any thing*, *but a new creature*. Let not therefore men for a particular opinion which they conceive truer than others, boaſt themſelves, appropriate godlineſs onely unto that way. Although we are very prone to do ſo, yet the Scripture diſcovers ſuch arguments to be onely broken reeds.

Explicatory conſiderations.

For the *Explication* of this, conſider theſe things;

1. Sound Doctrine is the foundation of godlineſſe.

Firſt, *That true and ſound doctrine is the foundation of godlineſſe*. There cannot be a godly life where there is not a true faith; hence the Scripture makes *Regeneration* to conſiſt in *Illumination* in the firſt place, *Epheſ.* 4. 23, 24. There muſt be knowing before there can be doing; you muſt not therefore extend this to all Doctrines even fundamental in Religion, as if the believing of Jeſus Chriſt to be God, believing the Scriptures to be the word of God, were nothing, no, *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*. Therefore to ſuppoſe a man godly, and to be ſaved in any Religion or Opinion, is to deny that there are *damnable hereſies*, which yet the Apoſtle aſſerts. Some have coyned a threefold piety, *Judaica* Jewiſh, *Pagana* Heatheniſh, *Chriſtiana* Chriſtian; but as the gold within the Temple was only holy, ſo is godlineſs only within the true church. This therefore is to be obſerved eſpecially in theſe times, where men are thought to have godly regenerated hearts, although they pertinaciouſly hold fundamental errors; whereas the Apoſtle *Gal.* 5. reckoning up *hereſies*, as the *manifeſt works of the fleſh*, with other groſſe ſins, concludes, *He that doth theſe ſhall never inherit the Kingdom of Heaven*. Although therefore orthodoxy be not preſently a ſign of the ſtate of grace, yet wilfull perſeverance in hereſie, even as in adultery and drunkenneſſe, may make us conclude theſe are the fruits of the fleſh. Be therefore informed, that although ſound Doctrine be not neceſſarily godlines, yet it is a neceſſary foundation to it. *Ubi male creditur*, *nec bene vivitur*, *A good Faith*, *and a good Conſcience*, the Apoſtle couples together. And as the Spirit of God is called an *holy Spirit*, becauſe it worketh holineſſe in his children, ſo it is alſo the *Spirit of truth*, becauſe it *guideth them into truth*; and firſt the Spirit of truth to them before the Spirit of holineſs to them, hence the Scripture doth ſo often commend a *ſound minde* unto the godly.

2. Diſputations in matters of Religion lawfull, and ſometimes needfull.

Secondly, *There is a lawful diſputation in matters of Religion*, *yea*, *it is a duty ſometimes*, *when the Church is unſatisfied to have points of Religion throughly diſcuſſed*. Thus our Saviour did uſe many arguments to prove he was the *Meſſias*, yea, *tentativè* did once argue againſt the truth, that the *Meſſias* was not the *Sonne of David*,

David, because he *called him Lord*, which was onely to draw out his adversaries the more. In like manner *Act.* 15. there was a famous councel gathered together, when doubts of Religion troubled the Church, and in this Councel there was πολλὴ συζήτησις *much disputing*; so at another time we read of *Paul*, that he was συμβιβάζων, proving out of the Scripture some truth; the word signifieth by a strict comparing and knitting of one place to another. And for this reason it is that God doth suffer heresies and false doctrines to be vented, that the truth may be more resplendent, by having all rust filed off; As in times of persecutions God doth exercise *patientiam Ecclesiæ*, the patience of the Church; so in time of heresies he doth exercise *sapientiam*, the wisdome and skill of the Church.

But now when we say, Disputations in Religion are necessary, and sometimes a duty, you must *bound* this several wayes. As, Limitations.

I. As to the matter.

First, *In the Object matter*, if it be *in matters useful and profitable*. The Apostle condemneth disputations meerly upon this, *because they profit not*, though they do not so visibly hurt and destroy, yet that is enough, if they do not profit. *Disputare* is as much as to cut off superfluous branches; Now if the disputation it self be a luxuriant branch, that must be cut off. The Scripture speaks of the *acknowledgement of truth after godliness*. All light in the understanding ought to produce heat and warmth in the affections. It ought to be usefull.

Revealed in the word of God.

2. *It must be in matters revealed in Gods word.* We must not pry beyond those things that are written. The Apostle condemneth some that did ἐμβατεύειν *Go a tip-toe*, like a man acting in a Tragedy, and arrogantly intruding into those things he hath not seen. The Papists make a *wicked Allegory* of the *beast that might not touch the mountain*, when the Law was delivered, if it did, *it was to die*. This they apply to a Lay-mans reading of Scripture; but we may better refer it to their Schoolmen, who though they were never wrapt up into the third Heavens, yet write of Angels, as if they had been there.

II. As to the manner. Wholly in reference to practice.

Secondly, *For the Manner, Disputations ought to be wholly in reference to practice, not in parties*, to raise new sects, to get victory, but wholly to encrease in the power of godliness, otherwise disputations are but like much fretting, that eat away the flesh of godliness, and bring it into consumption; and truly it is much to be lamented, to see how godliness is decayed, mortification languisheth, since so much quarrelling and wrangling in matters of Doctrine. It is reported of *Bellarmine* by *Fuligattus* in his life, *Quod a studiis Scholasticæ Theologiæ averteretur fere nauseabundus, quoniam succo carebant liquidæ pietatis.* He did with loathing turn from the study of School-Divinity, because it wanted the juice of sweet piety. All Religion is practicall, it is food not to be looked upon, but eaten and digested.

III. As to the subject. One that understands the state of the Doctrine.

Thirdly, *The Subject ought also to be qualified, one who is able and wise, understanding what the true state of the Doctrine is, not a* David *in* Sauls *Armour.* Its a miserable thing to see how many dispute about Universal Redemption, Free-Grace, Justification, Predestination, *&c.* who yet are no more able to weild those Doctrines, than a Pigmy could *Goliah*'s Armour; we must not attempt things above our strength. With these and many the like Qualifications, Disputations in matters of Religion are lawful; so that in all these we do not manifest a *sceptical doubtful heart*; as if nothing were certain (which I am afraid is the temper of too many in these daies) as if faith were not ὑπόστασις, ἔλεγχος, πεποίθησις and πληροφορία, a substance, evidence, perswasion and full assurance and confidence.

3. There will alwaies be different judgements in the Church.

Thirdly, *It will alwaies fall out, that even in the Church of God, there will be different judgements and opinions, because we know but in part, and are spiritual in affections, but in part.* So that howsoever God hath promised *to lead his children into all truth*, yet they are no more freed from all errour, than from all sinne; and as the Spirit of God sanctifying is more powerfull in some than in others; So also the Spirit of God enlightning and directing into truth, is more effectual in

ſome than in others; ſome are *Babes*, others are *Men*; ſome are *ſtrong*, others are *weak*. And as *we know in part*, ſo being alſo ſanctified but in part; hence by different opinions we make ſeveral factions, *One is of Paul, another of Cephas*. And we are apt to monopolize piety, to incloſe it in ſuch a way. None godly, but thoſe that are of ſuch a judgement; and indeed if we ſpeak of fundamental Doctrines, this were lawfull, but in other matters that are ſuperſtructions onely, it is unlawfull. Thus the Papiſt, he makes it, *De neceſſitate ſalutis, ſubeſſe Romano Pontifici*. The very refuſing his ſuperiority, is made a ſign ſure enough of damnation.

4. There is great difference between Fundamental Doctrines and others.

Fourthly, *There is a difference between Doctrines that are fundamental, and others that are not ſo*. In that they are called fundamental, its evident there can be no ſalvation, if they be denied. The Scripture calls ſuch truths θεμέλια and στοιχεῖα foundations and elements; In which ſenſe becauſe the Jews accounted the legal obſervations στοιχεῖα *foundations*, neceſſary to ſalvation, the Apoſtle calls them *beggarly*, and *elements of the world*, becauſe of their pride and ambition in maintaining of them; now there are Doctrines that are fundamental to faith, ſuch is the Trinity, Incarnation of Chriſt: Others that are fundamental to holineſſe, and others that are fundamental to the worſhip; and it is a damnable thing obſtinately to deny any of theſe. Of ſuch opinions as theſe the Apoſtle doth not ſpeak in this 14. Chapter, as *Chryſoſtome* well obſerveth; no, of ſuch the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *If an Angel from Heaven bring any other Doctrine, let him be an Anathema*. But there are opinions that are *acceſſaries not principles*, that are not *articuli* or main parts of the body, and of ſuch properly we may ſay, *The Kingdom of God doth not conſiſt*.

5. It is a great mercy to be kept orthodox.

Fifthly, *Although it be not a neceſſary demonſtration of godlineſſe, yet it is a great mercy of God to be orthodox, and to be kept in the right faith*. Hence all error and ignorance is deſcribed by the name *darkneſſe*, as truth is by *light*, to ſhew how dreadful the one is, and comfortable the other is; The truth of God is ſo great that we ought to loſe our lives for it, Yea, Chriſts death, though as it did reſpect Gods juſtice, it was ἱλαστήριον a *propitiatory*, yet as it did reſpect men, and the good confeſſion of faith he made, it was μαρτύριον a *Martyrdom*. Hence are thoſe expreſſions, *To contend earneſtly for the faith*, Jud. 3. *Not ſo much as to bid God ſpeed, to him that bringeth falſe Doctrines*, 2 John 10. Hence alſo as a glorious gift, is the Spirit of God *promiſed to teach us the truth*, John 16. 13. Yea, its made the comfortable priviledge of the Elect, that though falſe Prophets ſhall prevail much, yet they ſhall *not deceive the Elect*, that is, totally and finally; and when the Apoſtle ſpake of the Apoſtaſie of *Hymenæus* and *Philetus*, he addeth by way of comfort to the godly, *Nevertheleſſe the foundation of the Lord ſtandeth ſure, knowing who is his*. Bleſſed therefore is that man whoſe heart is kept in a continual fear and trembling at errors and falſe waies, as well as at iniquities and ungodly practices.

6. The leaſt truth ought not to be contemned or denied.

Sixthly, Take this Caution in the laſt place, *That although the life of Religion and godlineſs lies not in every truth, yet we ought not to deſpiſe or contemn the leaſt truth or deny it*. *Paul withſtood Peter to the face*, in an error that did not ſeem great; in *Paul* you have an example of zeal, and of *Peter* of patience to bear it; for *Genus quoddam non ignobile eſt Martyrii, reprehenſionem patienter ferre*, Its a kinde of glorious Martyrdom to receive a reproof patiently. Even the leaſt truth is ſo precious, that Chriſt ſaith, *Heaven and earth ſhall ſooner paſſe away, than one iota or tittle of his word*. Though truth for the matter of it may ſeem little, yet becauſe its the truth of the great God, therefore it ought not to be neglected; ſome have called every truth ſo far forth as it comes to be made known fundamental, as if a man would be neceſſarily damned if he did not receive it. But certainly truth is called fundamental, not from the manner of revelation, or means of knowledge, but from the nature and uſe of it.

VVhy doctrins though never ſo true &c.

In the next place, *Conſider why Doctrines, though never ſo excellent and true, are*

not

not an infallable sign of grace, And, first, *Because enlightning the minde to receive truth, is but an introduction or antecedent, and that not a necessary one to godlinesse, it is not a constitutive part of it.* Hence it is that a man may be very orthodox and knowing of the truth, yea, zealous for it, yet hating the power of godlinesse in others, and refusing to reform in his own life. The Scripture makes a difference between those that know Gods will, and those that do it. Boast not then of this that thou art among the orthodox, thou hast not forsaken the truth, running after those new errors; Thou holdest the truth in Justification, about the Law of God, thou art no Arminian, Socinian, or Antinomian, all this is well. But this is not plea enough for salvation, and the judgement of discussion at that great day, will not be, How much good knowledge thou hast had? What a good faith only, but what a good life also? Therefore if thou art gone no further than to the doctrinal part of Religion, thou hast no sure arguments of comfort within thy self.

1. Because enlightning the minde is no constitutive part of Godlinesse.

Secondly, *Seeing that corruption is in every part, not only blindeneſſe in the minde, but contumacy and rebellion in will and affections, thou hast no full cure upon thee, unlesse grace hath healed thy affectionate part as well as thy intellectual.* If thy spiritual eyes be open, yet hast no legs to walk in Gods Commandements, thou canst never attain to the end of the way which is eternal happinesse; so then think with thy self, if I would ever have any true comfort about my spiritual estate, I must have a plaister as broad as my sore, now not only my understanding was darkned with ignorance, errours, foolishnesse, &c. but my heart also with sinfull and corrupt affections. Therefore if the grace of God do not give me a good heart, as well as a good head, I am still undone. Hence the promise of regeneration is not only expressed in words relating to the understanding, *They shall all know God,* and *be taught of God,* but in phrases concerning the affectionate part, *I will take away the heart of stone and give an heart of flesh, and I will write my law in their inward parts.* Examine then thy self, whether the *grace* of God *converting,* is as *universal and extensive* as *sinne infecting*? For as an hand of a man, or an head of a man, is not a man; so neither is any particular revelation or illumination of the minde with faith, the whole image of God.

2. The cure is not perfect, by removing blindnes from the intellectual without change of the affectionate part.

Thirdly, *Know that orthodoxy or a right judgement is easier obtained than the renovation of the other faculties of the soul.* We are easier perswaded to believe the truth than to love the truth; How many times were the Pharisees convinced of the truth, & of the light, yet they could not love it, or delight in it? And as moral Philosophy tels us, *The understanding draweth the object to it,* but in the will & affections the object draweth them to it; so that if a man loveth the earth, he is earthy; if he loves the lusts of the flesh, he is fleshly: but if a man understand or know that which is spiritual, he is not presently spiritual; & this is the reason why God & Angels do *Scire malum,* know evil, but they cannot *velle malum,* will that which is evil, because the understanding abstracts from all the imperfections of the object, as it is in its self, but the object of the will draweth down the faculty to it, as it is in its self. There is also another reason, why it is easier to know the truth than to love it, *Because the understanding is a meer passive faculty, & cannot refuse the object of truth, when laid before it.* But the will & affections are active and rebellious, not necessarily carried out to their objects. & this is the reason why many a man believeth many a truth, which yet he hateth, and wisheth it were false, because the object works on the understanding irresistably. And therefore till grace come & work so insuperably & irresistably upon the will also, it never bowes or yields to God. Oh therefore say, that besides that general knowledge of the truth, & the zealous maintaining of it, there is necessary a further, more peculiar, particular, & operative way of grace upon thy heart. What is the reason that you may have many an orthodox man write many learned books against errors, yet know not the meaning of those truths upon his heart? But only because true Doctrin is not enough without a gracious alteration of the

3. A right judgement is more easily obtained than a thorow renovation.

the whole man. A man may learnedly dispute for the grace of *Conversion* against *Arminians* and others, yet not feel the power of conversion upon his own soul. He may learnedly maintaine the true Doctrine of *Justification*, and yet not at all be acquainted with the sweet benefit of it in himself, and so be no better than those spouts and water-pots that refresh the garden, and cause sweet flowers to grow, but they have no sweetnesse themselves.

4 Disputations Good judgement, &c. may breed pride, vain-glory, &c

Fourthly, *That cannot be rested upon as grace, which may breed pride, ambition, vain-glory, and such wretched worms in thee, but so many times do doctrinal disputation and great abilities in learning.* The Apostle speaks of some busie disputants, 1 *Tim.* 4. 6. *That they turn aside to vain-jangling.* Now the Apostle giveth a contrary end and use of the Gospel. *The end of the Commandement is charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned;* So 1 *Tim.* 6. 3. *If a man consent not to the doctrine which is according to godlinesse, he is proud, or puffed up.* As sick corruption bodies swell with humours. Therefore said the Apostle, *From such withdraw thy self.*

Fifthly, *The Devils that are damned in hell have admirable knowledge.* They know and believe the things of Religion. *James* saith, *The devils believe and tremble*, not with any faith infused by Gods Spirit into them, but from the evident conviction upon their consciences; yet the Devil for all this knowledge is an unclean spirit. Though the devil tempt men to errors, and heresies, and atheism, yet he is neither Atheist or Heretick. The light implanted in him, and acquired by observation of things, prevents such darknesse and clouds upon him. Now what a goodly signe will this be to boast of, wherein the Devils doe exceed thee? The Devil hath his very name Δαίμων from knowledge, yet that is no advantage, we may say the Devil is an orthodox Devil in some sense.

Use 1. Use 1. Of *Instruction*, *That although we are to blesse God for orthodox Churches, yet that is not enough unlesse we be holy and godly Churches.* Neither mayest thou confide in thy self, because thou art no heretick, thou art no erroneous person, thou lovest the honest old orthodox truths, Alas the Kingdom of God, of grace, reacheth further than to the understanding only. Now if so be the orthodox indeed may not thus be self-confident, how intollerable is it, when men for their heresies and false doctrines, though esteemed truths by them, judge themselves the nearer salvation! What a miserable delusion is this, to be thought the more accepted to God and endeared to him by the false wayes they walk in? Stirre up thy heart therefore, that as thou canst not abide heresies nor false doctrines, so neither canst thou endure impiety or prophanenesse. It is a shame to be able to confute hereticks by book, and not ungodlinesse by our lives, yet what *Lamentations* may the godly *Jeremiahs* of this age make, to see how possessed men are with their Tenents and Doctrines, when it may be false, as if none were godly, but such as are sound among them, as if the *Kingdom of God did only consider in their opinions*, and in the mean while, the known and powerfull way of Godlines is laid aside.

Use 2. Use 2. Of *Exhortation*, *To turn all knowledge and truth into practice.* Take not the points of Religion, as little children do books only to look upon the gay pictures & not to read the matter therein contained. If thou canst tell what it is to be converted, what it is to believe, what it is to be justified against all false teachers, labor experimentally to finde all these in thy own self. Would a painted fire content you in a cold winter? Would painted food satisfie your hungry appetite? No more should the meer doctrinal part of Religion, without the practical part. Alas it is a poor priviledge to say, We have the true Church, the true Ministry, the true Administration of Ordinances, if we have not also the true way of believing, heavenly-mindednesse, and mortification. The *Socinians* they make sport in their books with the *Protestant Authors*, because they call themselves the Orthodox, and say, We use it as a spell, thinking thereby to charm all dissentiats.

But

But could the godliness of our lives, be as convincing as the purity and truth of our Doctrines, Christ would say to us, *Thou art altogether fair and lovely, the chiefest of ten thousands*; then would he *come and sup with us*: In our Congregations he would manifest a more glorious and efficacious power.

Let therefore all truth be incarnated into practice, be a living definition, a walking definition of repentance: that we may learn from your lives what Grace is, as well as from books.

SERM. XXIII.

Declaring what deceipts men lye open to in judging those things to be works of the Spirit, which indeed are not.

1 JOHN 4. 1.

Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they be of God.

THe Apostle having asserted immediately before, in the verse precedent of the former chapter, a true and sure sign of our state of grace, *viz.* The saving and sanctifying operations of Gods Spirit, by which the Spirit discovers it self, as the sun doth it self by its beams & heat, or as the rational soul manifests it self by rational operations: He doth in this verse regulate us in our proceedings about this sign, advertising us not to be too credulous, or overhasty in believing every thing that may seem to be of the Spirit. Where by the way you may see its no good argument against the use and truth of signs, That men may be deluded, and think they have them, when they have them not: For the Apostle at the same time saith, *We know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us*, and yet addeth, *believe not every spirit*, taking Spirit in both places *Metonymically*, the effects of the Spirit either real or pretended, for the efficient cause, the Spirit it self: so that in the words you have *a cautionary admonition*, set down

First, *Negatively*, *Believe not every spirit*: That is, every Doctrine or Doctor, pretending Revelations from the Spirit, and by consequence not thy own heart, either in Doctrine, or Consolation that may seem to be of the spirit; for although the words following argue spirit, to be meant of Doctrinal positions, yet the words going before in the former chapter, are to be understood of the operations and consolations of Gods Spirit; and therefore we may understand it universally of all the works of Gods Spirit, whether relating to Doctrinals or Practicals.

In the next place the duty is set down *Positively*, *Try the Spirits*, which is to be meant thus, by the word of God: for all tryal supposes some rule by which the thing tryed is to be examined: and this duty is imposed upon all believers, who though they have not a judgement of *Derision*, yet have of *Discretion* for their own selves.

In the third place you have the reason of this *Examination*, B*ecause many false Prophets are gone out into the world*; M*any* who shall boast of the Spirit, and say, *It lodgeth with them*: And that we may be the better guided in this Examination, he lays down one rule as it concerns Doctrine, vers. 2. *Hereby we know the spirit of God, if it confesseth that Jesus Christ is come into the flesh*: which may be understood either largely, as acknowledging all matters that pertain either to the person and office of Christ; so that although we may acknowledge Christs incarnation; yet if we deny his offices, we offend against this rule, and so have the Spirit of Antichristianism, as in Popery; or else more strictly for that determinate particular point of Christs incarnation; for though a man be heretical in other points, and so have the spirit of *Antichrist*, yet so far as it acknowledgeth this truth, it is of God. And thus *Austin* said, *Hereticks and Schismaticks are of the Church, so far as they hold any thing that is true and good: but wherein they are divided from truth, they are divided from the Church, and wherein they are united in truth, they are united to the Church.*

Observ. There is much of self deceit in judging those things to come from the spirit which do not.

Obs. *That a man may much delude, and deceive his own soul, about his spiritual estate, by judging those things to come from the spirit of God, which indeed are not.*

We may think indeed we have revelations, raptures, spiritual consolations from the holy Ghost, when we are all the while in great delusions: this point deserveth many things introductory for Explication.

Introductory Explications.

1. There are such comforts, &c. of the spirit in which a Believer cannot be deceived.

First, *The spirit of God doth in and by the word, comfort, assure, or instruct the soul so certainly, that the true believer is not, or cannot be deceived.* Therefore the Scripture calls it, *The testimony of the spirit*, and *the sealing of the spirit*: and it would be horrid blasphemy to make the spirit of Truth, the spirit of Falshood: Hence Faith, which is the work of Gods spirit, is called ὑπόστασις, and πληροφορία, words that signifie a sure and certain establishment: we must not therefore with the Papist, who commends doubting for humility, prophanely make such scoffing interrogations as these: one man thinks he hath the spirit, another thinks he hath the spirit, and yet anathematize one anothers spirit: therefore there is no certainty about our knowledg of having the spirit in us: For howsoever hypocrites may be deluded, and hereticks deceived about the spirit, yet those that indeed partake of the Holy Ghost, they are not deceived. It is true, this evidence and perswasion cannot be made clear to another: and no wonder, for God gives not this perswasion to assure others, but that heart in whom it is. Take we heed therefore, that because there hath been miserable and sad instances of horrible delusions by men boasting of Revelations, and spiritual raptures, that we fall not into Atheistical, or Sceptical thoughts about the true works of Gods spirit.

2. To call works of Spirit Diabolical delusions is a great sin.

Secondly, *Therefore to make you afraid herein, it is an high sin to attribute those works which are done by the spirit of God, to impostures & diabolical delusions.* Although we are to *Examine the spirits, whether they be of God*, whether in our selves, or others: yet to make that coming from the Devil, which is indeed of God, is a sin of the greatest magnitude. Therefore take heed lest that which thou sayest is hypocrisie, and dissimulation in the godly, be not indeed true godliness in them, *and so thou do despight to the spirit of Grace.* It is a great dispute, *What is the sin against the holy Ghost?* *Austin* said, *Forte in omnibus Sanctis Scripturis nulla major quæstio, nulla difficilior inveniatur*, it may be there is no more difficult question in all the Scripture: Yet *Matth.* 12. 32. It seems to lie much in this, when a man doth wilfully and maliciously attribute those works that are done by Gods spirit, to the Devil, as they said, *Christ casts out Devils, by the Prince of Devils.* Hence *Mark.* 3. 30. giveth the reason why Christ spake of this sin to the *Pharisees*, because they said, *He hath an unclean spirit.* It would be like boldness, said *Athanasius*, *If we would attribute the Creation of the world to* Beelzebub. And howsoever

ever *Cajetan* and *Jansenius* take the words *Holy Ghost* essentially, as if it were to be understood of blasphemy against God, and so any of the Persons, because its spoken oppositely, and by way of distinction unto a sin against the Son of man, yet it is more ordinarily understood of the third Person, yet not as the third Person, but as it is his proper work to enlighten or sanctifie. Therefore as we must take heed we do not imbrace Diabolical delusions, for the spirits Operations, so also take heed of calling the spirits Operations, Diabolical Suggestions and this especially concerneth some of Gods own children, who will not take notice of the grace of Gods spirit in themselves, but reject all as hypocrisy and falshood: know that in this thou calleſt good evil, and light darkneſſe: hence the Schoolmen make despair one part of the sin against the Holy Ghost, because unbelief doth immediately oppose the spirit of God comforting and sanctifying of thee. Be therefore afraid how thou denieſt Gods work in thy soul, this is a greater sin than thou thinkeſt of in so doing.

Thirdly, *The Divel is Gods Ape, and imitates him in all those wayes or worship that God hath appointed.* Hence there hath been no true way of God at any time, but there hath also been a counterfeit way of Satan at that time. How wonderfully was Jesus Christ demonstrated to be the son of God by signs and miracles, yet our Saviour himself said, *There should be many false Christs*: so there are false Prophets and false Apostles, all which did boast of the spirit, and that they had received doctrines from Christ. Some learned men say, *The History of* Apollonius Thyaneus *with his strange wonders, was writ on purpose to observe Christs wonderfull signs*, Salm. *Tract.* 2. *de virtute signorum Christi*. 2 *Thes.* 2. 2. The Apostle exhorteth the believers, *Not to be shaken in mind about the day of Christs comming*, neither saith he, *By letter or word, as from us, nor by the spirit*. Some there were that told the Church they had Revelations, and secret illuminations of Gods spirit about this: 2 *Cor.* 11. 13. *There are false Apostles transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ, and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of light*. Thus wheresoever that Christ or the Spirit is in the Church of God, Satan hath his juglings and consening: and therefore as God is said to have his βαθη, deep things, so have they the depths of Satan also. 3 The divel affects to imitate God in all his appointments.

Fourthly, *These delusions of Satan may be, and are as large as the works of Gods spirit*. The spirit of God, is the spirit of Truth, and leadeth into all Truth: Now Satan hath his delusions about Doctrines: hence come all those Heresies in the Church of God: As Christ hath his Apostles, and Pastors in his Church, *To build up in the most holy Faith*; so the Divel hath his false Apostles, and his *Instruments of darkness*. Again the spirit of God is *our comforter*, and joy is a proper fruit of the Holy Ghost: Now the Divel by delusions and and suggestions, can fill the heart with much consolation: hence he is called *an Angel of light*. Now light in the Scripture, signifieth not onely Truth but joy and gladness: whence have those joys and consolations flown, which have been in those that have been manifestly in Satans wayes, but from Satan? Again the spirit of God doth perswade, and imbolden the heart by believing against all discouragements whatsoever. Thus the Divel also doth imbolden, and harden a man in a false way, that he hath no fear at all. Hence the Divel is said *To fill Ananias his heart*: that is, as learned De Dieu sheweth by a parallel place out of *Ecclesiastes*, *obstirmed and made his heart audacious*: so that as in the Godly there is, πληροφορια πιστεως, so in deluded men there is πληροφορια της καρδιας, Their Spirits and hearts are raised, and fitted for boldness to any false way. 4 Delusions of Satan are as large as the works of the Spirit.

Lastly, *The spirit of God doth foretell things that are to come*: And this is properly to Prophesie: and this the Prophets did; *Agabus* and others in the new Testament: Now the Divel also may use his instruments to foretel something to come: not that of his own nature he can foretel things to come, for so it's Gods property; but by Revelation from God, God justly permitting this for to punish those that shall be seduced: thus the Divel told *Saul* what should befall him. And in the story

of the Anabaptists in *Munster*, when a Law was made, *That all the Citizens should bring their goods into the common stock*, there were maids that could tell certainly how much every man had hidden at home of his goods: Now this is like that of *Ananias* and *Saphira:* and this Revelation (very probably was by the just judgement of God made to the divel, for seeing the Divel is an Instrument to execute Gods justice and wrath, what should hinder him from knowing that which God on purpose imployeth him about for the judgement of others *Emulantur divinitatem dum furantur divinationem* This is clearly confirmed, *Deut.* 13, 1, 2. Where a false Prophet is said, *To give a sign or wonder, and the sign or wonder is supposed to come to passe:* So that false Prophets may by Gods permission and revelation foretel some things to come: but mark the reason why God permits this, *The Lord your God doth this to prove you.* Oh therefore with what holiness, humility, and circumspection ought the children of God to walk in the midst of such Delusions: In so much that it is called, *ἐνεργεια πλάνης* The efficacie of deceiving.

5. The divel accommodates his designs to the corruptions, & also Reformations of a Church.

Fifthly, *As the Divel in a Church corrupted, and defiled with Idolatry and Superstition, doth there prevail by humane Tradition, and Forms of will-worship*, whereby all spiritual worshipping of God is wholly neglected: so in times of reformation, then he seduceth men in another Temptation, under the pretence of setting up the spirit, and its revelations, it eryeth down the word of God, and all the ordinary Ministerial Officers Christ hath appointed. The first worthy Reformers, and glorious instruments of God found a bitter conflict herein, so that they were exercised not only with Formalists, and Traditionary Superstitious Papists on one side, but men that pretended themselves to be more enlightened, than the Reformers were, on the other side: hence they called those that did adhere to the Scripture & would try revelations by it, *Vocalistas & Literistas, Letteristi, & Vowallisti*, as men acquainted with the words and vowels of the Scripture, having nothing of the spirit of God. And whereseever in any Town the true Doctrine of the Gospel brake forth to the displacing of Popery, presently such opinions, like Tares, that came up among the good wheat, whereby great divisions were raised, and the reformation made abominable, and odious to the world; as if that had been the Sun to give heat and warmth to those Worms and Serpents to crawl out of the ground. Hence they inveighed against *Luther*, and said, *He had only promulged* Carnale Evangelium, *a carnal Gospel*, And that the Protestant Doctors did only *Carnalia sapere*, by them indeed *aliquot frondes de antichristianismo succisæ, sed arborem & radices adhuc supereſſe.* They burnt all books but the Bible, and said, *That happy time was come when all should be taught of God.* Many remarkable passages I might further relate, but this may suffice to shew, That as the Divel in one time of the Church in the deformation of it, deceived by superstitious, pompous, and visible worship, so at another time, in the reformation of it, doth he delude by revelations, and pretended high Teachings of the spirit of God, even above the Scripture.

6. The word of God is the rule by which the workings of the Spirit are to be tried.

Sixthly That therefore we may not split our selves upon inevitable Rocks, *God hath left us his Word as a Rule, by which all revelations, and operations of his spirit are to be tryed.* All the Scriptures are *θεόπνευστοι by Divine inspiration*; and therefore the breathings of Gods spirit are to be expected in this Garden: and those commands of *attending to the Scripture only* and to observe *what is written*, is a plain demonstration that God hath tyed us to the Scriptures only, so that as the childe in the womb liveth upon nourishment conveighed by the Navel cleaving to it, so doth the Church live onely upon Christ by the Navel of the Scripture, through which all nourishment is conveighed: Hence the Apostles Doctrine, though inspired by the holy Ghost, *Yet was examined by their hearers, whether agreeable to the Scriptures*: And for this their zeal was commended: hence it is, That because these erroneous persons could not prove all their dogmatical assertions by Scripture, they accuse the Scripture as insufficient and imperfect.

As

As the word of God is the Treasure of all revealed truth, so God also implanted a Natural truth in our consciences; so that the Spirit of God doth suggest nothing that is contrary either to *revealed Truth, or implanted Truth.* The Anabaptist inflamed by *Spanhemius* in his History, pretended he had a revelation to kill his brother, which accordingly he did; this revelation could not be of God, because against natural light, but of the Devil. Whatsoever is either against revealed, or implanted light in Men, cannot be thought to come from the Holy Ghost.

Seventhly, *As the operations of the Spirit of God are discovered by the rule of Truth, so also by the concomitants and effects of them:* Which are two especially, *holiness of life,* and *humility.* 7. Concomitants and effects difference the spirits workings from delusions.

If you examine the course of the false Prophets in the Old Testament, and of those recorded in the New, their fruit was corruption in manners, and worship, encouraging those that were ungodly in their evil wayes: I was *Micbaiah* only, not the other 400. Prophets that Ahab hated, because he only faithfully reproved him for his sin: So the Prophetesse suborned by *Nehemiahs* adversaries, was to discourage him in the work of Reformation. Humility also will quickly manifest the Spirit of God working in a man: *Paul* had a great rapture, even into the third heavens, *but least he should be lifted up with the multitude of revelations, there was a thorn in the flesh, and buffetings of Satan continually afflicting of him.* The Holy Ghost descended in the form of a Dove upon Christ, to show how meek and humble the operations of it are in those where it dwels.

Lastly, Not only suggestions from Satan may delude us, as if coming from the Spirit, *but also violent motions, and strong imaginations of our owne hearts;* we may take them as coming from Gods Spirit, which flow only from the violence of our own spirits: Thus the false Prophets, *they speak of themselves,* and according to the strong inclinations of their own heart: So great a matter is it to difference that which is humane in us, from that which is divine. Now the reason, why in delusions we are so confident, is 8. Strong motions and imaginations of our own hearts often deceive us, by seeming to us the spirits workings. VVhy men are so confident in delusions

1. First, *From the violence of all false motions, whether from our selves, or of Satan.* They being *drawn* irregularities, do hurry the soul beyond all bounds and limits; so that the Devil worketh in mens souls, as he did on their bodies, with violent and sudden alterations: and these must needs produce strong passions and affections in us, of love, joy, or hope; whereas the spirit of God working conformably to the rule, is more sedate and orderly. Indeed the efficacy of Gods spirit is demonstrated by that apparition *of fiery cloven tongues,* and by a *mighty rushing wind*; but at another time *appearing in the form of a Dove,* demonstrateth that it is such fire and power, as also is consistent with other graces of meekness and humility. Hence the people of God, who are partakers of the Holy Ghost, are also possessed with an holy fear and trembling in themselves, whereas others are not so. 1. From the violence of false motions.

Secondly, Therefore are men confident in these, *Because they are admired by others, and they draw a multitude of Disciples.* Many times even godly men have been drawn aside too much after those, who have pretended to Revelations and Extasies. The Apostle speaks, 1 *Cor.* 2. 4. *That he was among the Corinthians, not in enticing words of mans wisdom, but in the demonstration of the spirit.* But how was that? because his Doctrine was consonant to Gods word, and it was companied with an efficacious power, to raise up to all godliness. Now false Apostles, that they may also be applauded, would gladly come in some *demonstration of the spirit*; nothing so prevailing as such resemblances: It is known in Ecclesiastical story, how foolishly *Tertul.* was deluded by admiring of *Montanus* and *Priscilla* as Prophets, contemning all others as meer natural men: It is said of *Swinkfeldius,* who so much magnified Revelations, and debased Scripture, that *Caput regulatum ille defuit, cor bonum non defuit,* he had a good heart, though not a sound head: so easily are good men tempted away, with that which seemeth to be more spiritual than ordinary. 2. From others admiring and following them

3. It is inflicted upon many as a judgement.

Lastly, Therefore are men so confident in these things, *Because to many these delusions come by way of a judgement for abusing former light, and not receiving the truth in the love of it.* Those four hundred false Prophets in *Ahabs* time, are thought by the learned to be true Prophets at first, and such as were in the company and Colledge of the other Prophets; but abusing that gift to the pleasing of men, and seeking themselves, they were justly by God delivered up to such a false way: And that they were hardened in this deceitfull way, appeareth by *Zedekiahs* impudence, 1 *King.* 12.24. *When he strook Michaiah upon the cheek, saying, which way went the spirit from me to thee?* Thus if there be Revelations among the Papists as they bragg of them, What is the fruit of them, but to confirme them more *in beleiving of a lye?* And where spiritual judgements are, they make secure, and full of self-flatery.

Reasons for non-reliance upon these motions.

Now the reasons why we are not to rely on these, are

1. They are not marks of a Church.

First, *Because that cannot be the mark of a Godly man, which is not the note of a Church.* Now although *Bellarmine* make *Lumen Propheticum* Prophetical light a mark of the true Church, and would prove that we are not the true Church, because we have no Prophets, or Revelations amongst us as they have: yet the Orthodox do reply that even false Prophets may have prophetical illustrations, as is before quoted, *Deut.* 13. 1. and certainly *Balaam* was a wicked man, yet for all that, he had a spiritual Revelation from God. Yea, and *Caiaphas*, one of the worst of men, yet it is said he prophesied, because he was *high-Priest that year:* Therefore though thou hadst predictions, divers Raptures, and extatical illuminations, yet these are no sure mark of thy good condition: and seeing men unsanctified, may by the Holy Ghost work wonderfull things is, it such a strange thing if they may also have several raptures?

2. They are consistent with the works of unrighteousnesse.

Secondly, Neither may these be regarded, *Because such pretended illuminations, are consistent with the works of ungodlinesse and injustice, as appeareth* Math. 7. *Those that prophesied in Christs name, were yet workers of iniquity* Spanheimus out of *Sleidan* hath several instances likewise to confirm it, *In his short history of the Anabaptists.* Therefore the surest discovery of Gods spirit in us, is not by any pretended Revelations, raptures, or secret conference with God, but by holinesse, humility, and conversion justifiable by Scripture rules: Therefore what the Apostle said of all outward ceremonial worship, *Bodily exercise profiteth little,* and oppose it to godlinesse, but godlinesse is profitable to all things.

Use. Take heed of scoffing at the workings of the Spirit.

Use of instruction, to direct us between two rocks: Take heed of being found in the number of these that scoffat the spirit, and the workings thereof, condemning all the godly for Enthusiasts and Illuminists. This is the rod of prophane and superstitious men, that cannot abide the very word of the Spirit. This is to go far on in the way to the sin against the Holy Ghost: and then on the other side take heed of contrary error, that under the pretence of Revelations thou despise the Scriptures, the ministry, and the Ordinances. If Satan cannot seduce thee the former way, then he sets upon thee in the latter way. We might out of Ecclesiastical history, give you large instances of the sad ruins that have come upon many, being thus carried away: though upon some God had mercy, and recovered them out of such delusions. Be not therefore credulous: be afraid lest God should leave thee; take great counsel and advice, that thou mayst not be seduced

SERMON

SERM. XXIV.

Manifesting that the greatest Sufferings for Christ are not infallible Evidences of Grace.

1 COR. 13. 3.

And although I give my body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing.

THe Apostle his scope In the former part of this Chapter is to commend the graces of Gods Spirit above the gifts of the same. Hence he makes supp sitions of the most excellent perfections, which if without Charity, *are but as a tinckling Cymbal* that may please the ears of others, but it self is worn out and destroyed thereby. And by charity he means that unfeigned love of God, and the good of others, whereby all our gifts are improved for this end, and not for our selves. Charity, what?

His first instance is *diversity* and *variety of tongues*, a gift in the primitive times, that made the enjoyers thereof admirable.

A second is of *Prophesie* and *understanding of all Mysteries, all Knowledge, and all Faith.* This place doth not prove justifying Faith to be separa l from Charity. But either it is a conditional, hyperbolical speech, like that *Gal.* 1. *If an Angel from Heaven*, &c. as not onely some late Divines, but even the Ancients have thought; or else it may very well be restrained to miraculous Faith, in this sense, If I had all miraculous faith, so that I were able to work the greatest miracle. And thus it is plain, such a faith may be severed from true love. All faith.

The Apostle having thus instanced in Gifts, he further proceeds to give two glorious instances of the external works of grace, which are most admirable amongst men, whereby he would teach us, That the most specious and glorious external acts of grace, if seeming onely, are nothing, if grace it self doth not inwardly animate them; so that inward grace in respect of those external actions, is like the soul to the body, like art to the instruments of Musick, without which an uncertain sound is made.

These glorious externals the Apostle specifieth are of two sorts.

1. A work of extraordinary mercy, *If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor.* The Greek word ψωμίζω signifies to divide victuals in several pieces, and so to distribute it. Now this is very terrible to consider, that a man may do all the external works of mercy, even the highest and most transcendent, yet not have true love.

The second instance is of remarkable fortitude & glorious courage for Christ and his truth, which is expressed in the designation of that action, wherein my courage may manifest it self, *If I give my body to be burnt.* Where some observe this aggravation. Though a man be not summoned by others, and condemned to death, but although he willingly and ultroneously offer himself, & then not to be whipped or imprisoned, but to die, and that the most terrible kinde of death, even burning, yet if all this be without true love to God, his glory, Church and truth, οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖται, *All this will profit me nothing.* In which sense,

Hierom

Hierom said in *Gal.* 5. *Timeo dicere, sed dicendum est, Martyrium ipsum si ideo fiat, ut admirationi, & laudi habeatur à fratribus, frustra sanguis effusus est.* A man may be the fleshes martyr, the devils martyr, as well as Christs.

Observ. The greatest sufferings for Christ & conscience do not infallibly testifie grace in the heart.

No kinde of external sufferings, though never so grievous either for the truth of Christ indeed, or for that which a mans conscience judgeth to be the truth of Christ, is a sure and infallible sign of the state of grace.

This Doctrine will be like a *two edged sword, dividing between the joint and marrow.* Its not all thy marks, stripes, imprisonments, persecutions, though for a good cause, is enough to evidence thy true interest in Christ. To open this Point many things are considerable.

Consider, 1. Persecutions often discover firmnesse of grace.

First, *That many times persecutions are a true discovery of a mans firmness in grace.* Insomuch that all the while Christs cause & carnal accommodations are conjoyned together, every hypocritical and unsound heart makes as great a shew, as that which is faithful, *But when storms and tempests arise, then the house built upon the sand falls, but that on the rock endureth.* Thus *Mat.* 13. when the *hot Sun arose*, persecutors began to be violent, *then that which was not deeply rooted, presently withered.* So that howsoever we may not certainly gather the truth of our grace, by our perseverance in persecutions, yet troubles and oppositions do frequently discover who is false. Hence afflictions and not mercies are alwaies in Scripture called temptations, God is never said to tempt by a mercy, but by an affliction, because it is more difficulty to withstand an evil than to enjoy a good. The high and strong winds discover how well-rooted the tree is; the fire will manifest the crackt vessel. Oh then account it nothing to rest upon, that thou art for the truth, thou ownest God and good men! Alas as yet thou losest no good, no profit by doing thus. If a man may be imprisoned, impoverished, undone for the truths of God, and yet be nothing; then what a poor nothing indeed is Christs truth and thy riches with it! Alas Christ hath not put thee upon any trials, and thou knowest nothing by thy self as yet. Its true outward sufferings, and that to death, are the highest expressions before men; and therefore we are to judge with charitable apprehensions of all those who are able thus to suffer for that which is the truth, especially they at the same time demonstrating all Christian deportment. Therefore it was cruelty in the Popish Persecutors to charge those blessed Martyrs with stoutness and pride. Hence also it is, that we account the Martyrdom of so many millions of all sorts for Christ, to be an eminent testimony of the truth of Christian Religion. No Sect could ever instance in the like, as Christians may, which we read was acknowledged by *Trajane* the Emperour; and *Justine Martyr* confesseth the consideration of the willingness and zeal of Christians to die for Christ, was the occasion of his conversion. The Heathens instance onely in *Socrates* and some few *Gymnosophists* for their false Religion.

2. True motives that draw out the heart to patient sufferings for Christ, are supposed in promises to the external action

Secondly, From hence it follows, *That wheresoever the Scripture promiseth salvation to any external action that is by way of Patience or Fortitude for Christ*; That must be understood with this proviso, that as the action for the matter is good, and the cause is good; so the motives that draw out his heart be also good, *Mat.* 10. 33. *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will my Father also acknowledge before his holy Angels.* In this place a glorious reward is promised to a stout confession of Christ in the midst of an adulterous generation, yet you must explain it thus, supposing he do as for Christ, so out of pure ends and holy affections, without which these external actions are but as so many glorious branches without any root at all; for we may see this fully confirmed in a parallel about giving of alms, and relieving the poor. There is scarce any religious duty hath more promises made to it in the Scripture than this hath, yet a Pharisee, who frequently gave alms, could take no comfort at all from those promises, because his motives were carnal and unworthy. Thus in sufferings for Christ even in imprisonments and death it self, it being possible that corrupt grounds may

may sway us as well as heavenly, there can be no solid comfort from such external sufferings, though never so sad or miserable. Therefore no promise of heaven is made to the most specious external exercise of any religious action whatsoever; Even now as on the contrary our Saviour saith, *He that shall deny him before men, him will God also deny*. This is to be understood universally, for Peter and many godly men have denied Christ, yet God did not deny them, because their denial was through infirmity out of fear, not from any malicious or purposed obstinacy against him. So then in all externall duties we are not onely to look to the matter that it be good, but also to what frame of heart we do those things with; and in this lieth the marrow of Christianity, to look to internals, as well as externals; the former onely commends us to God, though the latter maks us admirable among men.

Thirdly, *It is very possible for a man to suffer much losse, and endure hardship for Christ, and yet have not his heart sound towards God.* In the Apostles times, troubles were so great, and carnal discouragements so many that we may wonder any hypocrites or unsound men should joyn to that way which was so opposed and persecuted, yet there were *false Apostles and false Brethren; There were many that sought their own, and not the things of Christ*, as *Paul* complaineth, *Phil.* 1. 22. and t is was strange, for if they did seek their own, why did they not renounce Christ? why did they not abjure the Gospel, seing that was the cause of all the violence brought upon them? All that professed Christ in those daies were like *Sheep among Wolves, Doves among Hawks*; yet even among those acknowledging Christ in the midst of an adulterous generation, all were not upright. *Judas* left all as w ll as the other Apostles, and this was a kinde of suffering, this was a *taking up of the Crosse and following him*; We see when Christ required such things of others, though they seemed ro profer themselves, yet they presently revolted. Therefore *Judas* went further. And the Apostle *Gal.* 3.4. supposeth men may suffer great and grievous troubles for Christ, yet all in vain, *Have ye suffered τοσαῦτα* in aggravating word, *so many things* for number, so grievous for quality, and *all this in vain?* implying, that if they revolted to those *Mosaicall* Ceremonies from Ch ist, all their former sufferings for the truth would be wholy unprofitable, indeed he addeth a rhetoricall correction [*If so be in vain*] as hoping better things of them. Take we heed then, that we do not only lose all our Prayers, Sacraments, & such like Duties, but also our sufferings & troubles for a good cause. For suffrings for God are more than doings for God. Hence the apostle speaketh by way of aggravation, *We account these light afflictions, not comparable to that eternal weight of glory*, and for an instance of losing our sufferings for God, we have a remarkable instance *Act.* 19. 33. of *Alexander* venturing his life in the multitude enraged at *Paul* and others for the cause of Christ, yet by most learned Interpreters, this is that *Alexander* *Paul* doth so complain of, 1 *Tim* 1.20. that did him so much wrong. And it is abundantly known, that many who in Queen *Maries* daies continued faithful to Christ, in Queen *Elezabeths* daies through peace and quietnesse grew corrupt.

3. There may be patient suffering for Christ, without soundnesse of heart.

Now that it may more plainly appear, our sufferings, though for a good cause may be corrupted, we may *take notice of what sinfull ingredients there may be which will make sufferings unprofitable.*

First, *A man may suffer for the truth, or a good cause, not as it is true or good, but as his interest is in it, and as it is that way he hath ingaged himself in.* Thus a man may die for Pr testanism against Popery, not so much because it's the truth of God, but because it is that truth he hath lived in, it is that wherein all his outward interest lieth. Obeloved! This cursed corruption is too common & frequent, not to look upon the truth of Christ, the cause of Christ, as his, but as it is ours. & so we become sufferers or Martyrs for our selves, and not for Christ. Among the *Corinthians*, some said they were for *Paul*, others for *Apollo*, others for *Christ*,

What sinful ingredients make sufferings unprofitable? 1. When men suffer for truth as their interest.

It is judged by ſome Interpreters, thoſe were indeed for Chriſt, but they ſet him up by way of a party and faction, as their Chriſt, rather than Chriſt. Although therefore impriſonments, perſecutions are terrible and dreadfull to fleſh and bloud, and they may be thought great teſtimonies of love to God and his cauſe; yet be not too confident here, make diligent ſearch of thy heart, whether that which moveth thee in all theſe ſufferings, be not thy intereſt, thou art ingaged in this way? And ſo an argument from thy propriety, not Chriſts propriety prevail over thee. We may obſerve of Chriſts kindred, how deſirous they were that Chriſt ſhould do miracles; now their motive was not ſpiritual, that hereby he might be demonſtrated the true *Meſſiah*, and ſo men graciouſly receive him, but from carnal pride, becauſe he was their kinſman, and this might exalt their glory among others, ſuch carnal ſelf-ſeeking affections men may have to the truthes of Chriſt, deſiring they may be exalted, becauſe hereby themſelves ſhall be exalted.

II. Suffering only upon truths conviction, not ſanctifying operations.

Secondly, *The power of truth may undeniably ſo work on the conſcience, that they cannot deny it, yet for all this not powerfully ſanctifie their hearts.* Thus a man may be ſo convinced of the true Doctrine, and his conſcience ſet ſuch a ſtrong ſeal to it, that if he had all the world, he dared not gainſay it. *Balaam, though he had a houſe full of gold, yet would not curſe thoſe whom he ſaw God would bleſſe.* There is a natural light and goad by the conſcience, whereby it makes a man willing to undergo any puniſhment rather than contradict it. Thus *Socrates* he died for this truth, that there was but one God, and when he was condemned by the Magiſtrates, ſtaid himſelf with that which we read of the Apoſtles, *It is better to obey God than man.* This makes it evident, that a man having no more than nature in him, may yet die for thoſe truthes he is convinced of. Thus there are many who it may be reform not their lives from groſſe impieties, yet would die rather than turn *Papiſts* or *Socinians*, I mean learned men, who have their underſtandings fully ſatisfied with the truth. And Hiſtory affords us many examples of Heathens, who would rather endure the moſt terrible death, than do any thing againſt moral honeſty: why may not there be ſuch orthodox Proteſtants, venturing as much for thoſe truthes, which they are perſwaded are of God? There is a known approved ſentence, *Cauſa non pœna facit Martyrem*, the cauſe not the puniſhment makes a Martyr, but this is not enough, for neither puniſhnent nor cauſe makes a Martyr, without a gracious frame of heart, at leaſt to God, though with man he may be judged ſo. So *that theſe three muſt go to make a Martyr, puniſhment, a good cauſe, and a good heart.* Therefore in all thy ſufferings, ſay, It is not enough that I ſuffer for God and his truth, but doeſt thou alſo ſuffer with ſuch a gratious, humble and heavenly heart, as Gods cauſe doth require? Look that beſides conviction of judgement, there be alſo renovation of affections.

III. Suffering for truth but from a ſtout ſtomack.

Thirdly, *A man may ſuffer, though for Gods truth, yet the motive be the meer ſtouteneſſe of his ſtomach and undaunted reſolutions of ſpirit.* As there is a ſpiritual fortitude wrought in us by Gods Spirit, ſo there is alſo in ſome men a natural height of ſpirit, whereby they fear not dangers or death. Now it is much to be enquired into, Whether thy ſufferings ariſe from the ſtrength of Gods Spirit, or the ſtrength of thy own? Even *Ariſtotle* with his purblind light of nature could make a difference between fortitude a vertue, when a man would die for vertues ſake, and upon vertuous grounds; and an audacious man, who would contemn death out of a raſh boldneſſe in him. Oh then! How *ſtraight is the way to Heaven*? How rare is grace, when our very ſufferings in a good cauſe, may be ſo much corrupted and polluted by ſinfull ingredients,? When men ſhall ſay not only, *Lord, we have prayed in thy Name, propheſied in thy Name*; but Lord we have ſuffered in thy Name, been impriſoned in thy Name, died in thy Name, and yet God return this anſwer, *Depart from me, I know ye not.*

Fourth-

Fourthly, A fourth corrupt motive in sufferings, though for God, *may be Pride and Vain-glory, Ambition to get a name in the Generations to come.* One would think this were a poor thing to venture a mans life for such an aëry bubble. Yet if we reade humane Histories, and see how willingly men have exposed themselves to death for this outward glory; or if we peruse Ecclesiastical Histories, and consider, how much the Patriarchall Hereticks, Heads of Factions, have suffered to propagate their Sects, we will cease to wonder; for as by the bloud of Martyrs, the Church hath flourished, so sometimes by the bloud of Hereticks, Heresies have encreased; as *Paul* said, *Many of the godly waxed bolder by his bonds*; So many times doe erroneous persons grow more obstinate by the sufferings of their fellow Hereticks. Though ashes and fire are barren things, yet pride is such a *Salamander*, that will live in these flames. IIII. Sufferings to get a name.

Fourthly, In the fourth general place, *As sufferings for Christ, do not argue necessarily a state of Grace, so much lesse doe sufferings for those things a misguided conscience thinketh the truths of God, but are indeed damnable Heresies, and dangerous Opinions.* Yet how often doe we finde this in Books to prove Heresies great innocency, because they goe with a good conscience, they deny all carnal emoluments, patiently suffer the utmost dangers: but (alas) here is no solidity in this: For first, A false misled conscience may put a man upon all outward dangers: A deluded conscience in matters of Religion, will throw a man, as that Devil did the party possessed, *Sometimes in the fire, and sometimes in the water*: So that as our Saviour said, *Some men thought they did God good service in putting others to death*: So again, they may think they doe God great service in suffering themselves to be put to death. Doe not Socinians die? Doe not Papists die for their Religion? A false Religion, especially if received upon conscientious, not politicall Principales, will make a man think his bloud not dear enough to lose for that. The Pharisees by *what reason they compassed Sea and Land to make proselytes*, by the same they would have lost their lives to defend their superstitious worship. Doe not then hereafter admire that specious Argument for Hereticks? Doe they seek themselves? Doe they not deny all worldly hopes? Doe they not give their bodies to be destroyed? for this is no more than Heathens do for their Idols. Nor is it any wonder, if men die thus for a false Religion, seeing we read of Atheists who have died because they held there was no God. *Vaninus* who once wrote a Book to prove God and his Providence, yet afterwards revolted to Atheisme, holding no God, and was put to death for it at *Paris*: And being commanded by the Judge, that he should ask forgivenesse of God, and the King and his Judges: He answered, Of God he would not, because he did not believe there was any: Of the King he would not, because he had not wronged him; Of his Judges he would not, but rather if there were a Hell, as he believed there was none, he would curse them all thither. Thus *Voetius de Atheismo*. You see here a miserable wretch, dying for this professedly, because he thought there was no God. So that all sufferings even to death, are not presently to move us. 4. To suffer for supposed truths but real errors, cannot possibly argue grace.

And if you ask, *What should make them thus venturous, if they be not in Gods way?* I Answer, two things, First, *There is a carnal Self.* Secondly, *A spiritual Self*; which also is carnal, though not grosse. *A carnal Self is then set up, when a man prostitutes all Religion to outward advantages*: Of such were some false Apostles *Paul* speaks of, *Whose God was their belly, who minded earthly things*, and did all they could to avoid persecution. Such an one was one *Theophilus* a Bishop in ecclesiastical History, nicknamed *Euripus*, because of his fickleneſſe in religion, turning his conscience, as *Diogenes* did his Barrell alwaies against the winde. This man, when the warre was between *Constantine* What makes men so ready to suffer, if not of Gods way. 1. Self.

the Christian, and *Lycinius* the Heathenish Persecutour, appointed his Deacon to reside at *Constantinople*, with this Direction, that he which did prevail in the battel, either *Constantine* or *Lycinius*, he should gratifie his victory with some Presents to him. This kinde of carnal Self is odious in the eyes of all men.

But then secondly, *There is a Spiritual-carnal Self. When a man seeks not outward greatnesse and pomp in the world, but is inwardly proud, ambitious, affecting a Name by some singular thing*; And because this cannot be had in the world, without outward passages of worldly self-denial, therefore he is diligent to deny himself carnally, that he may seek himself spiritually: and this hath been the temper of many Hereticks, prizing their Opinion and Intellectuall Abilities above all external glory. Now this spirituall carnal self, is that which may put them upon imprisonments, and all outward ruine; So that herein they be the fleshes Martyrs, Pride-martyrs, not Gods. Hence although they may suffer like true Martyrs, yet for the most part they discover a carnall temper then, not shewing that holinesse, humility, self-resignation into Gods hands as the godly Martyrs doe. So that their very externall sufferings have not such sweet Concomitants, as the godly men have. *The godly men burning in the fire, being like Juniper in the fire, sending a sweet smell. The Heritick like cracking Thorns in the fire, full of discontent, rage and revenge.*

2 Satan.

2. *The Devil who was a Man-slayer from the beginning, he through strong delusions tempts men to such hardinesse, as to be prodigal of their lives.* That as when he possessed the bodies of some, he delighted to torment them, and, to make them miserable; so he doth also when he hath bewitched their souls. It is matter of amazement to me, when I reade the Story of the *Donatists*, especially the *Circumcelliones*, how greedy they were to die, threatning to kill men, if they would not kill them. Whence should this madnesse arise, and fury to die, but from the Devil? yet they thought this great piety, and contempt of the world. Therefore the Devil by Gods just permission, may benumme and harden a man to die, as well as the Spirit of God in a gracious manner imbolden a man: And this may suffice to open the Point.

Why we may not judge of our spiritual estates by these sufferings.

Now two grounds among others that are, *why we may not judge the firmnesse of our spiritual estate by these sufferings.*

1. Because inward life onely maketh all externals good.

First, *Because no externals, whether in actions or passions, are any further good, than as they are animated from a spiritual life within.* These outwards may be informed from a corrupt principle, as well as a spiritual one. We cannot judge of the Tree by this fruit, because it will grow both upon good and bad. Now herein we daily delude our selves, because we judge our estate good by external Actions, when yet reprobates may do the like. It is not here as it was with *Moses* and *Jannes* and *Jambres*, *Moses* doth many miracles, and they do the like, but at last *Moses* doth such things which they could not imitate. If you speak of externals meerly as abstracted from inwards, we cannot judge. Do the godly pray, hear? so do the reprobates: May the godly suffer, be imprisoned, die for the truth? so may reprobates. It is true our Saviour saith, *Greater love than this can no man shew, than to lay down ones life for another.* So one would think, *to give ones body to be burnt, and yet have no Charity*, were to speak a contradiction. But when we consider how strong and potent corruption and a false Religion is, then we may no more admire. We read in the Old Testament of some superstitious parents, that would *make their children passe through the fire to Moloch*, that is, they offered them as a Sacrifice in the fire to *Moloch*: who would not wonder, how the tender bowels of a father or mother could ever become thus senselesse like a stone? But superstition made them thus

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unnatural. And certainly as they offered their tender children, so if *Moloch* their god had required it, or rather his Priests for him, They would have given up their own bodies into the flames. Judge not then the goodnesse of thy estate, by any externals whatsoever, though never so specious. They are a sheath that will receive either a golden, or an iron Sword in them. They are the Trumpet that make no other sound, than what the mouth bloweth into them.

2. *That is not a pillar to be relied on, which may consist with unmortified lusts and affections, yea with ungodly practices.* But experience teacheth us, how many men in their imprisonments, yea death it self, have been unsavoury, ungodly; insomuch that their ungodlinesse hath more dishonoured the cause they suffered for, than their sufferings have honoured it. Therefore if thou restest upon thy sufferings and yet livest in sinne, say as *Austin*, *Habes quod in te occidas*, martyr thy sins, before thy body be martyred. If therefore thou suffereſt for one truth, and holdest any thing, or practiseth any thing against other fundamentals, it's no true Martyrdom; Hence the Primitive Church never judged a *Macedonian*, for example, who denied the Deity of the holy Ghost, to be a martyr, though he were put to death by the *Arrians*, because he professeth the Deity of Christ.

2. Because our ward sufferings may consist with unmortified lusts.

Use 1. *Of Instruction, not to admire at sins of grace, or Gods being in a man, when you see a man patient, denying all outward advantages and comforts for his opinion and doctrine he holdeth.* As some misunderstanding places of Scripture, have given away all their goods and estates, and one parting with his very garments that covered him: being asked, Why he did so? held up the Bible, saying, *Hoc me nudavit*, This hath made me naked, whereas indeed it was his errour, his mistake. Thus many may say, It is their conscience maks them endure all misery, whereas it may be corruption or carnal motives, or at most, an erroneous misguided conscience, which although it may excuse *à tanto*, yet not *à toto*. Those that reade what Heathens have done in this way, will never admire at Christians. *Use* 1

Use 2. *Of Direction, If God call us to suffer, Rest not on all the hardship thou hast endured for Christ*, Boast not of the bonds and chains thou hast born for his sake, but *examine with what heart thou hast undergone all this.* It is a wofull thing to be imprisoned in chains here for Christ, and at the day of Judgement Christ to cast thee in *everlasting chains of darknesse*. It is miserable to be burnt with fire here for Christ, and afterwards Christ *to bid thee, Depart into everlasting fire hereafter*. Lose not then thy sufferings by any corrupt frame and sinfull disposition of heart. It is a great matter to suffer for Christ, but it's a greater to suffer with that heart Christ requireth. *Use* 2

SERMON XXV.

Shewing that, and whence men have such strong Perswasions of their exact keeping of Gods Law.

MAT. 19. 20.

The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: What lack I yet?

THis Text is a remarkable History, wherein many excellent practicall doctrines are contained. The whole scope being to represent a man that hath good affections and desires for heaven, yet because of some strong corruption and temptation violently detained from it; for in the close of the History he goeth away, not reviling and raging at Christ, as the Pharisees used to do, but περίλυπος, *exceeding sorowfull*, and as *Mark* hath it συγνάσας, as sadly affected, as the sky seemeth to be, when its black with clouds, and threatens rain; so that in this posture with Christ he is like the Poets *Medea*, or like *Aristotles* incontinent person, who hath great conviction, but strong corruption.

In the History observe *the Person and his Question propounded*: *The person*, as appeareth by the Harmony of three Evangelists was *a rich man*, a great man in power and place, and a young man: All which three were sore temptations to prejudice him against Christ and his way: Yet by *his Question* it seemed he was not altogether prophane and worldly, for his desire is to know *What he might do to have eternall life*. In which Question although we may perceive a Pharisaicall leaven in him, thinking by works to be saved, yet there appeareth for the main a good desire in him. Our Saviour intending to beat down his Pharisaicall confidence, which is as great an enemy to Christ as Publican sinnes, first reproveth him for his compellation, & then answereth his Question. His reproof is, *Why callest thou me good, there is none good but God?* Christ refused this title, partly because he called him good in no other sense, than as some eminent and singular Prophet, not as indeed the Son of God: but especially to teach the young man that he was wholly corrupted, and therefore whatsoever good is in us, is to be acknowledged, as comming from God: it is his gift, it is none of our work.

In the next place our Saviour directs him to *keep the Commandements*, instancing not in the Ceremonial, but the morall, nor in the morall duties that relate to God, but that belong to our neighbour, which were most vulgar, that hereby he might teach this Pharisaicall man, that he never yet performed any one Commandment aright. Therefore the ignorance & the arrogance of this young man in the text is remarkable; *All these have I kept from my youth up*; he thought he had kept not some but all, and that from his youth up, as soon as ever he could act with reason; some Expositors thinks, that he grosly lyed against his own conscience in saying so: but that is not likely, because, *Mark* saith *Christ loved him*, upon this speech, and that could not be if he were such a dissembler; and if you take

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the word *love*, for to praise or kindly to speak to a man; as the Septuagint sometimes do, *Cant.* 1. 1, 4. 2 *Chron.* 18. It will argue that he was no hypocrite, and hereby we see, that it is a Ministers duty to love and encourage those men, who though they have not the truth of grace, yet have a fair, civill, honest life, and have general desires for heaven. He did not therefore lie against his conscience, but yet he spake that which was false, for he had not kept one of those Commandements perfectly, as appeareth by that tryall or exploratory precept Christ puts him upon: Only he knew no better: He was brought up in ignorance about the spiritual latitude and extent of the Law, and so thought a meer negative, or not doing grosse wickednesse, to be a positive keeping of the Law.

Obs. *It is a very difficult thing to drive an unregenerate man out of his false sign of his good estate*, viz. *That he keeps the Commandements of God.* This was the πρῶτον ψεῦδος. In this was the fundamental miscarriage of this great man, that he had a confident perswasion of his good estate, because *he did no murther, he committed no Adultery, he bore no false witnesse against his neighbour.* Now falsly judging this to be all the Law required, he concludeth that unlesse Christ hath some new and extraordinary way about this, these matters are so low and easie, that he observed them a long while ago. Upon this point was our Saviours greatest controversie with the Pharisees, who like Serpents, though they had a fine skin and colour, yet inwardly were full of poyson: And the great work that the Ministers of God have to do in their Congregations in these times, is it not to shew to men the pure glass of the Law, that they looking therein may see their deformities, and be wonderfully out of love with themselves? Doth not every man walk with this self-damning principle, that his heart is good? What would you have him to do more than he doth? Is he any Drunkard, Whoremonger? And thus he pleaseth himself with an external righteousnesse, being altogether ignorant of the pure and excellent work of regeneration, and from hence it is that our auditors are filled with so much stupidity and security, that it is a wonder to hear of a man or woman, with fear and trembling, expostulating after this manner: The Law is so spiritual, and I am so carnal; regeneration and a new nature is so necessary, but I am so plunged in that sinfull estate and corruption I was born in, That I fear my self, I quake at my condition, Oh for the Lords sake, help ye Ministers by your prayers and directions, that I may be put in a safe way.

Obsev. Many men though falsly, yet confidently think they keep Gods Commandements.

For the clearing of the Doctrine consider,

First, *Whence it ariseth that men have such a strong perswasion of their good lives, as satisfactory to Gods Law.* Why is it that though a man by nature be indeed like a *Job*, or *Lazarus full of wounds and sores*: Yea, he judgeth himself like *Absolom, altogether fair without any blemish at all*?

VVhence mens strong perswasions of their exact lives arise.

And the first ground is *ignorance about the total, deep, and universal pollution of our natures*, whereby this Leprosie hath made all we are, and all we do unclean: And in this sense our Sauiour saith, *we may call none good*, for can we call any spiders, any serpents, any toads sweet? so neither can we call any men good or holy. Therefore the Scripture that it may lay a foundation for our prizing of Christ, and open our eyes to see the necessity of regeneration, is very diligent & copious in aggravating this natural defilement. Paul is a clear instance in this, *Rom.* 7. his heart was like a dungeon full of noisome and crawling vermine, but because no light was in his heart, therefore he did not see or believe this. Let me therefore expostulate with thee, who pleasest thy self in thy good estate: Is thy life as free from sin as the child new born? may no more iniquity be laid to thy charge now than could be to thee, when thou suckedst at thy mothers breast? yet, if no more, thou oughtest not to take any content or delight in thy self, but to tremble and earnestly to importune to be *translated from that darknesse into light*: lay aside then thy high, and self-flattering thoughts; say no more, thy good heart, thy good meaning, thy good life, but cry out *unclean and unclean*. Wo, wo unto me;

1. From ignorance of Natures pollution.

me, *for I am polluted in my blood, and God might not say unto me in my blood, live*, as he did to the Church, but to die, and be damned: Wouldest thou therefore no longer be sick of this dangerous surfet and fulnesse? study more, and meditate more of original corruption, how universal and diffusive it is, how contagious and infecting of every thing that we do, so that *although we could speak with the tongue of Angels*, and work with the hands of Angels, yet we being in our natural condition, all that would be abominable: *Without faith it is impossible to please God, and the tree must be good before the fruit; To the defiled, all things are defiled.* What therefore is external righteousnes, moral justice, formal piety, as long as we abide in that old bitter stock of nature? Pray therefore, Lord give me to understand what I am by nature, make me to know how sinful and loathsome it is, and let not this be a general, speculative, barren knowledge, but let it be a close, particular, applicative, and practical knowledge, whereby the whole heart, may be set on fire, and powerfully wrought upon, even to bid all creatures, all comforts, all businesses stand aloof till thou be redeemed from this thraldome.

2. Ignorance of the Laws spiritual exactnes:

2. Another cause of this bold perswasion is, *An ignorance of the spiritual exactnes and obligation of the Law.* It was the received opinion of the Jews, and the Pharisees they so explained it, as appeareth, *Mat.* 5. That the Law commanded only external acts, and that we satisfied it, if we did keep it in the outward man. Therefore our Saviour seemed to bring new doctrine into the world, when he explained the Law of heart-sins, and shewed that men might be adulterers, murderers, *&c.* though they never committed those external acts. This was so paradoxal to the received doctrine at that time that men were amazed at it: Now howsoever (it may be) people will acknowledge their doctrine true, yet in practise they are grosse and secure, as ever Jews and Pharisees were. Neither did they ever make their works a refuge, and a bulwark, more than people now adayes do. And no wonder, for *Paul* so great a proficient in the knowledge of the Law of God, yet confesseth his great blindnes and mistake herein, *Rom.* 7. in so much that when he cometh to understand how spiritual the Law is, and how carnal he is, he crieth out of himself as most miserable. *The Law is spiritual*, saith *Paul*, that is, it reacheth to the sins of the spirit, it forbiddeth all inordinate motions there, it prohibits all their secret irregularities: So that as *God is the father of spirits*, thus the Law is the Law of spirits, and thou mayest become an horrid transgressor of this in thy heart, when thy outward life seemeth pure and innocent, The Law is compared by *James* to a *glass*; now it's no wonder that a man never abhorreth the foulnes of spots and dirt upon his face, as long as he looketh not in there. No man can bewail the obliquity and crookednesse of his actions, that doth not diligently apply them to the straightnesse of the rule, Oh then say, This justice, this honesty, this freedome from gross sin is highly esteemed among men: But what is it to Gods Law? How foul a transgressor shall I be convinced to be, if I compare my self with that rule! Hence therefore ariseth all that self-righteousnesse, in that men do no more understand how holy and exact that rule is by which they ought to walk. There is a world of unseen, and unknown filthines in thee, and if thy eyes were open to behold it, thou couldest no longer abide thy self. But it is no wonder, that unregenerate men who have no life at all in them, feel none of these distempers, when the godly themselves as appeareth, *Psal.* 19. cry out, *Who can understand his errours, cleanse me from secret sins:* By that *David* implieth, that there is more corruption in his heart than he is aware of. Much unknown pride, hypocrisie, earthlines dwells in their hearts, and they perceive it not. If therefore it be thus with the godly, that they are not able to understand how loathsome and wretched they are, is it any wonder if men dead wholly in sin, feel not any burthen, though mountains lie upon them? Soon therefore wouldest thou depose those lofty imaginations, if so be thou wouldest on purpose consider how exact the Law is, forbidding the root, as well as the branches of sin, making every inordinate motion, (thousands of

which

which rise howerly in thy soul) a Transgression of the Law.

3. Therefore are they so confidently perswaded, because *they attend only to the negative Commandements, Thou shalt do no murder*; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not forswear thy self, &c. And so suppose that the whole duty required by God of us, is swallowed up in those negatives. This made the young man no doubt so bold; *from his youth up*, he had been preserved from such foul, gross sins. Indeed he speaks arrogantly when he saith, *I have kept these*; as if he by his own power had restrained that sea of corruption from overflowing the banks; for what evill hath been committed by *any* man, which *he* might not also have done, had not God bounded and limited his wickednesse? Well, but howsoever though he be thus spotlesse in his life: Yet that is not all God requireth, God hath positive commands, as well as negatives; and the same authority which saith, *Do not steal, do not kill*, saith also, *Keep the Sabbath holy*, and *sanctifie the Name of God*. Now although this be a very small matter to build a mans salvation upon, yet we may wonder to see that all the covering many men have for their nakednes, is only these fig-leaves: That they are no drunkards, no whoremongers, no thieves; A meer negative godlines, what pity is it, that a people instructed out of Gods Word, living under the means of salvation, should apprehend no better in matters of God? 3. From thoughts that the whole of mans duty lyeth in negatives.

4. Another cause of false perswasion is, that *although they may minde affirmative precepts, as well as negatives, yet they understand them not in their comprehensive sense*, and so think they have attained to what the Law requireth, when indeed they fall exceeding short. As for example, this command, *Thou shalt do no murder*, doth not only forbid that sin, but commands the contrary duty, and not only so, but all the means, occasions, and circumstances that tend thereunto; and so in every commandment. Now if a man consider seriously how many occasions and circumstances, and causes there are of all sins; as on the contrary, how many occasions, motives and causes there are of holy duties, he will stand amazed to see himself so much guilty in millions of sins, which he thought could never have been laid to his charge; so then as the Gospel hath a mystery of grace, and original sin a mystery of sin, so that we are never able to go to the depth and breadth of these: So the Law is a mystery of duties: And as the Logicians say, the ten predicaments do contain every created Being that is in the world; so do these ten Commandements all the duties required of us; It is therefore of great consequence if ever men would be driven out of these golden dreams, and foolish Paradises they fancie to themselves, to study and understand the comprehensive sense of every precept. 4. From not understanding the comprehensive sense of affirmatives.

5. Another stupifying and benumming principle, is the total neglect *of that necessary duty, self reflection and self-examination*; Whereby a man liveth fourty or threescore years, and is a meer stranger to his self. Hence are those duties so frequently pressed, *to commune with our own hearts*, to sweep them, as some translate, to dig into them, as others; and this duty is to be done with much stilnes and quietnesse of spirit, and at those times when we are most free from disturbances, according to that rule, *anima sedendo, & quiescendo fit sapiens*. In other Texts, it is called, *searching our hearts, and trying our reins*; which duties imply, that our hearts are not presently what they outwardly appear: Gold may be in the surface, and iron or stone in the bottom; you know how impossible *Hazael* thought that should be in his heart, and done by him, which the Prophet foretold. Man, in that he is rational, can only reflect upon himself, beasts cannot, and it is a great obstruction to salvation, that men use this no more, no man saith according to the Prophet, *What have I done?* Therefore deal with your selves as an enemy would do. The Hebrew word for an enemy, is an Observer, because he watcheth and lyeth at the catch to see what haultings and failings there be; Do thou thus become an enemy to thy self, and that is to be a friend to thy self: Say, O Lord, I arraign my self at thy barre, I would be winnowed that my chaff may 5. From neglect of self-examination.

appear, I would be filed, that my ruſt may come off. It is ſtrange to conſider what ſins men may live in, and yet not attend to the conſideration of ſuch. The making of a practical Syllogiſm would be very introductory to our full converſion unto God, in this manner: The Scripture in ſeveral places ſpeaketh terrible threatnings to ſuch and ſuch ſins. But I live in ſuch and ſuch ſins. Therefore all thoſe threatnings belong to me: Oh how can the ſoul put off this conviction? How can it extinguiſh this light ſhining upon it? What have I to do but to repent and turn to God! There is no other courſe can be taken by me.

6. From ſelf-flattery.

6. Therefore are men thus ſenſleſs, *becauſe of that abominable ſelf-love, and ſelf-flattery, which cleaveth to every man.* This ruined the Phariſees, our Saviour tells them plainly of it; *You are they that juſtifie your ſelves, but that which is highly eſteemed amongſt men is βδέλυγμα. an abomination before God.* Wonder not at this in wicked men: See *David* a godly man, through ſelf-love, how did he favours himſelf in his groſs ſins, and applieth nothing till *Nathan* ſay, *Thou art the man* And this lay at the bottom in this rich mans heart, an over-weaning of a man ſelf, and an immoderate love, whereby we judge every thing we do well done: Many times a godly man through puſillanimity of ſpirit, and an holy fear, doth bear falſe witneſſe againſt himſelf, he will not own or acknowledge thoſe good things Gods Spirit enableth him to do, and thereby he walketh both unthankfully, and uncomfortably. But the unregenerate man he is in the other extremity, he preſumeth of good to be in him, when it is not; a full inſtance of this is, the Church of *Laodicea*, who ſaid, *ſhe was full, and wanted nothing*, as if ſhe were God himſelf, for he only is all-ſufficient, yet ſhe boaſteth, ſhe wanteth nothing, not a God, or Chriſt, or his grace, when at the ſame time, *ſhe was miſerable, and wanted all things.* Here was a great difference between Gods judgement about them, and their own; and it is a poor ſmall thing to be acquitted by our ſelves, when God doth condemn us: Therefore ſay, it is thy folly, it is thy madneſs, it is thy ſelf-love, makes thee conclude thy ſelf in a good eſtate: Doth God ſay ſo? Do the Scriptures ſay ſo? It is a ſin to call good evil, and evil good, in our ſelves as well as in others.

7. Fear of guilt appearing upon examination.

7. *Fear of guilt*, that alſo makes us hoodwink our eyes, that we will neither look into the Law, nor into our hearts: So that it is with us as with Bankrupts, that are loth to caſt up their accounts, becauſe thereby they ſhall ſee how undone they are. As it argueth guilt in heretiques that they are *lucifugæ Scripturarum*, they are ſuch Owls that cannot abide the day, ſuch thieves that love not the light: So it argueth our guilt in our own hearts, when we are walking without any diſquiſition to perſwade our ſelves of the good in us. Oh we are afraid to be troubled, we think we ſhall find that which may diſquiet us, and ſo by this means, we reſt in generals; thereby to deceive our own ſouls. But as it is folly in a wounded man to fear the ſearching of his ſoar, for if that be not diſcovered he can never be made whole: No leſs wickedneſſe is it in a man not to ſearch out the worſt by himſelf, and to know the greateſt danger he is in, that there by he may indeed come to be healed.

8. From ignorance of the neceſſity of Regeneration.

8. Therefore are men thus well conceited of themſelves, becauſe *they are ignorant of regeneration, they know not the neceſſity of being born again*: Yea, they bleſs themſelves they are no changelings. They have found no manifeſt alteration of themſelves from the beginning. Wee ſee *Nicodemus* a man much converſant in the Law of God, yet altogether to learn about this great point. If therefore *a Maſter of Iſrael* knoweth not theſe things, is it any wonder that an ordinary diſciple doth not? Therefore take moſt men, they do as groſſly miſtake about godlineſs and regeneration, and know no more of it, than a blind man of colours. If therefore thou didſt know the nature and neceſſity of regeneration, thou couldeſt take no more delight in thy ſelf, or any thing thou doſt. Thou wouldeſt ſay I am but a weed and no flower in Gods garden, I am a thiſtle and no branch of the true Vine. And in this caſe thou wouldſt cry more bitterly than the blind or lame did: for thou needeſt life it ſelf.

9. There

9. There is an extrinsecall cause which addeth to all this, and that is the *devil, he reigneth in the heart of every one by nature, he hath blinded their eyes*, and hardened their hearts. Now our Saviour tels us, that *while the strong man keeps the house, all things are quiet:* There is no trouble or contest. Even as *Pharaoh* let the people alone, till he saw them desireous to go out of his power. Wonder not therefore to see morall, civill men, with such great peace and quietnesse in their conscience, never fearing of their condition, never doubting of their estate, for all this calmnesse comes in part from the devil, who keeps every thing quiet, and hardneth in presumption more and more: blesse not God then for every peace and quietnesse thou feelest in thy self: The body may feel no pain from rottennesse as well as soundnesse, and it may be thy condition were far better if thou couldst neither eat or drink, or sleep for fear of thy condition: *Blessed are they that mourn, and wo to those that laugh.* 9. From Satan blinding mens eyes.

10. The last and main reason is, because *every man naturally is destitute of the spirit, without which we are all devoid of light* and life. The Spirit of God *Joh. 16.* is that which *convinceth the world of sinne*; so that a man can never vigorously and powerfully be affected with his wretched estate, till these Sunne-beams shine into him, which will discover the least motes; *The spirituall man judgeth all things.* Hence it is that godly men though great proficients in grace, have lower thoughts of themselves than unregenerate men, only because the spirit of God is alwaies convincing them of sinne, as well as sanctifying, and comforting of them against it, *Paul* never had such debased and humble expressions about himself before his conversion, as after: Would he ever have said *all his righteousnesse was dung and drosse?* That he had *not yet attained* what he desired? Would he ever have acknowledged himself *the greatest of all sinners* in his former daies? No: The people of God are more debased for their imperfect duties than wicked men are for their greatest sins, and whence is all this, but because of Gods Spirit dwelling in them, and inlightning of them? But wicked men being without this light, are not able to judge any thing about themselves. 10. From being naturally destitute of the Spirit.

The Use is, To take heed of this self-conceit and self-love, & fire Gods Word may be a two-edged *sword in you, dividing between marrow and joynts:* I am afraid this *Laodicean* fullnesse is the sinne of most now adaies, and this is as desperate an enemy to Christ & his grace, as grosse prophanesse, yea, in some particulars worse. More Publicans and Harlots were brought to repentance, and so to the kingdome of heaven, than Pharisees. Oh then fear, lest that which thou judgest thy blessednesse and happinesse, be not thy greatest danger and misery. Thou thinkest it well that all is at peace and ease within thy soul: O pray rather that God would convince and trouble thy soul more effectually, and so give thee true peace. *Use.*

SERM. XXVI.

Declaring that many rest upon a strict way of Religion, which yet cometh not up to, but often is besides the appointment of the Word.

ACTS 26. 5.

Which knew me from the beginning (if they would testifie) that after the most straitest Sect of our Religion, I lived a Pharisee.

THe Text is part of *Pauls* Apologetical oration to *Agrippa*, wherein we have the *Exordium*, or Preface, and the Narration, or substantial matter summarily contained therein. In the Preface *Paul* doth with great Rhetorique *captare benevolentiam*, endeavour to incline the affections of *Agrippa* to him, accounting it an happinesse to Apologize before him, who was so expert of all the *Jewish* customs: In the Narration, we have

First, The history of his former life.

Secondly of his present state and conversation.

The Text is part of that Narrative which relates to his by-past conversation, wherein he described himself from the religious condition he then was in, and that first more generally, then more particularly: Generally, *He was after the most strict way of Religion*, θρησκεία the Originall for Religion, *Plutarch* tells us, it cometh from the *Thracians*, eminently taken notice of for their devotion: & it is used sometimes in a good sence, sometimes in a bad sence, as it degenerateth into superstition. The Original for *Sect*, is αἵρεσις, *Heresie*, and so the several sects among Philosophers were called *Heresies*. It is the opinion of *Gerhard* a learned man, That this word is alwaies taken in an ill sence in the Scriptures but this place with two or three more in the acts of the Apostles, seeme to imply the use of it in a middle, or indifferent sence, any particular way that a man shall chuse different from the rode, although in the Epistles it is used in an ill sence: Therefore *Tertullian* called it *Secta Christianorum*, *the Sect of the Christians*: Now this way *Paul* walked in, is aggravated with this adjunct. ἀκριβεστάτην in the superlative sence: and so *Josephus* speaks of the Pharisees as those that were most accurate in the observance of instituted and traditional obedience: more particularly, his way is described by its denomination, *a pharisee*. There were three sects sprung up among the *Jews*, the *Pharisees*, *Sadduces*, and *Esseues*; the Scripture speaketh nothing at all of the latter, because as some say, *They lived like Hermits, in remote solitary places*, and so the evangelist had no occasion to mention them: Now the *Pharisees were called*, either as some say, from a word *to open* and explain, because they expound the Scripture, or from a word to *Separate* and Segregate, & *Cameron* upon this place makes the Hebrew word פרש not to signifie every kinde of Division or separation, but that which is after a most subtile, and minute manner: Hence *Isa.* 28, 29. It is applied to *the teeth of a rake*, and *Horse riders* ἱππόται, are called,

called, פרושים, because of their spurs: and *Proverbs* 23. It is applied to *the sting of a Bee*: Therefore to be a Pharisee, was to be a scrupulous, anxious man, which did subtilly examine all things: Hence they were so strict, that they would not sleep upon any easie thing, least they should have any vain, or indecent thoughts so much as in their very dreams: and because of this strictness, it was that they were so admired among the people, whereas the *Sadduces* denying Angels, Spirit, and the Resurrection, were for the most part of the richer, and greater sort, because such opinions did best suit with their lusts; yet because of their greatness, though they held such fundamental Errors, yet they were not Excommunicated Errors.

From the Text we may observe,

That an extraordinary strict way taken up in Religion, is thought a sure and a good foundation by many for their eternall happinesse. *Observ.*

Many think a strict way in religion a good foundation for happinesse.

The *Pharisee* for this unusual, and supererogating way of exactness, as they judged, was reputed by himself and others, as those that should certainly go to Heaven, if any did. How confidently they used to presume of this, appeareth by *Paul*, *Phil.* 3 5,6,7 Where making a Catalogue of those things, *He once thought a gain to him*; he instanceth in this as one of the last and most noble priviledges, that *he was after the Law, a Pharisee*: Insomuch that if any might have confidence in external priviledges, he saith, *he might*. Where *Paul* also at another time, *Acts* 22. 3. Declaring his former conversation, mentioned this particular, as the main, saying, *He was taught according to the perfect manner of the Law of the Fathers*.

To discover this false sign, several things are considerable, as

1. The way to heaven is strict

First, *The way to heaven is a strict and exact way, and all our duties are to be done with a curious circumspection*: Our prayers are to be exact prayers; our obedience exact obedience: so *Ephes.* 3. *Walk ἀκριβῶς, exactly*: Hence the *Gate that leads to happinesse is straight and narrow, as the way to hell is broad and easie*. I shall not therefore speak against a true and Scripture-exactness: the people of God may, and ought to take comfort, in that they walk in a more singular and exact way than the world doth, and a man living & dying in the common rode and practices of men, having nothing more extraordinary in him than they, had no symptome of grace upon him: *Matth.* 5. Our saviour speaking to his Disciples, *That they should love their enemies*; For saith he, *If ye love your friends, what singular thing do ye? do not the publicans the same?* Therefore from hence it followeth, that the people of God ought to do singular things to men of the world: There is a good singularity and preciseness: and howsoever the prophane world make a taunt, and reproach of this, that you are so singular and Precise, yet none are Godly that are not so: *Do not even the Publicans the same?* He that goeth no further, and doth no more than Publicans, hath no evidence for salvation: Therefore lay down this for a foundation, *The way of Godliness, is a strict, precise, singular way*. The Scripture makes it an exact course; and therefore my dissolute, careless, negligent walking can no more claim a Title to heaven, than darkness to light. Attend to this, you whose lives are as most of the world are; proud as they, prophane as they, contemning of Religion as they.

I. From the contrariety of grace to our affections,

Now, *That godliness must be strictness, appeareth partly from the nature of Grace, which is contrary to our affections*, and so doth with prevailing power subdue them to the grief of the unregenerate part: Hence the Scripture calls it, *Mortifying, and crucifying the old man*; which implyeth the pain and Agony our corrupt part is exercised with Grace: *Christianus est perpetua naturæ violentia*, to conquer lusts, is *To pull out the right eye, and chop off the right hand*: and by this we may see how few are Godly, because they are rare that feel this spiritual conflict and agony there is no mortifying and crucifying within them.

Again, Godliness must needs be exactness: partly, *Because our duties are so bounded, and circumstantiated in their principles, manner and ends*, That to do a-

ny good action, is alwaies to hit the mark, as to ſin, ἁμαρτάνειν, is to miſs the ſcope and white. *Ariſtotle* placed his Moral virtue, *in medio*, and ſo made it difficult to avoid extremities on both ſides: but (alas!) the word of God requireth far more concurrences than ever the light of nature could diſcern: ſo that if you take any religious action, whether *elicitè*, or *imperatè*, to do it after a godly manner, there muſt be a great deal of circumſpection: there is ſo much required in the cauſe, in the manner, in the motive, that we may cry out for every particular duty, which, *Paul* did for one main one, *Who is ſufficient for theſe things?* ſo that negligence, formality, and luke-warmneſſe can no more conſiſt with godlineſs that is of a ſtrict and exact nature, than hell with heaven.

2. It is a great wickedneſſe to reproach ſtrictneſſe.

Therefore in the ſecond place, *It argueth a tongue and an heart ſet on fire from hell, to reproach, and cry out againſt ſtrictneſs* in the way to heaven. O that even among Chriſtians, there ſhould be men whoſe *Throats are ſuch open ſepulchres*, as to ſend forth ſuchnoiſome and filthy ſpeeches: What needs all this ſtrictneſſe. What needs all this ſingularity? Why ſhould men refuſe to do as the moſt do? Is it not their pride & hypocriſie? Alas ignorant & prophane wretch, What thinkeſt thou of that place, *The Kingdom of heaven ſuffereth violence, and the violent take it by force?* ? What thinkeſt thou of that, *Strive to enter in at the ſtraight Gate, for few enter therein?* Are theſe places of Scripture true or no? If ſo, then wo be to thee, for thou makeſt the Kingdom of hell to ſuffer violence, and takeſt that by force, though the Word, and Miniſter, and thy Conſcience be againſt thee: ſo thou that liveſt in diſſolute prophaneneſſe, ordinary neglect of publique and private Duties, Is thy life ſuch a ſtrict life? Muſt there be ſuch ſtriving to do as thou doſt? O conſider, either Gods word is wrong, or thou art out of the way: thou art not yet ſuch an Atheiſt to aſſert the former, be therefore ſo far ingenuous as to acknowledge the latter.

3. The number of the Godly is very ſmall.

Thirdly, from hence it followeth, *That the number of thoſe that are truely godly are very few.* They are but a little flock; and they are but few, not onely comparatively to the whole world, but in reſpect of titular and nominal Chriſtians, who have the name, and own the profeſſion of Chriſt, but they deny the *power thereof. Many are called, but few are choſen*, even few of thoſe that are called as the gold is but little to the other part of the earth; and flowers are few in reſpect of weeds: ſo that the ground why people do ſo eaſily perſwade themſelves of their good condition, is becauſe they underſtand not how exact and ſtrict the way of Grace is. You have this notably cleared *Mat.* 19.25. where our Saviour ſhewing that it was *as impoſſible for a rich man to be ſaved, as a Camel to go through the eye of a needle:* becauſe its hard to have riches, and not to truſt in them, or love them immoderately; when his Diſciples heard this, ſaith the Text *They were exceedingly amazed, ſaying, Who then can be ſaved?* They do not ſay what rich man? but, who can be ſaved? becauſe as a rich man hath his riches, ſo every man hath ſomething or other that his heart is too immoderately carried out after. Therefore ſay they, who can be ſaved? Oh beloved, while we look upon Gods gracious promiſes, and Chriſts merciful invitations: while we think of his love in dying and ſuffering for us, we are apt to think it a very eaſie attainable thing to be ſaved, and no queſtion the Diſciples looked on theſe conſiderations, elſe they would not have ſo ſtartled, and been ſo amazed at Chriſts Doctrine: But then on the other ſide, when we conſider what ſtrict qualifications, what exact converſations ought to be in thoſe that go to heaven, we ſhall then ſtand amazed, ſaying, who can be Godly? who can pray, hear, as the Scripture requireth theſe duties? Hence our Saviour to allay the Diſciples aſtoniſhment, bringeth that univerſal Axiome, *With men this is impoſſible, but with God all things are poſſible:* the way therefore to bring you to reſolve upon a more exact way of life, is to put you into this ſpiritual aſtoniſhment, and amazement at the accurate way of Godlineſſe.

4. The word of God alone reveals the exactneſs of the way to heaven.

Fourthly, As the way to heaven is a moſt ſtrict and accurate way, So *the word*

word of God doth only declare and reveal what that exactneſſe is: So that as in matters to be believ'd there is no doctrine can be urged as neceſſary, which is not contained in that writing; So in matters to be practiſed there is no degree, or high ſtrain of holineſſe that is a duty, which is not alſo commanded in Gods word: Thoſe two commands, one negatively, *Thou ſhalt not luſt*, the other affirmative, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and ſoul, and ſtrength*, do command both for matter and manner, all that poſſibly can be done by man, and therefore can never be fulfilled in this life, becauſe of thoſe innate and adherent corruptions in us. *I have ſeen an end of all things*, ſaith *David*, *But thy commandments are exceeding broad*: They contain the whole duty of a man, and this particular is more to be obſerved, becauſe we are apt to go to extraordinary wayes: As if the Word of God were indeed a total and adequate rule for our faith, but not for our practice and converſation.

Hence, Fifthly, *All ſtrictneſs that is not introduced according to Scripture, how ſpecious and glorious ſoever it may ſeem to be, yet it affords no true ſolid comfort to thoſe that are imployed therein.* Now you muſt know, that as there is a proneneſs in men, curiouſly to pry into doctrinal matters above the word of God, to be wiſe above that which is written, ſo there is alſo an itching inclination in us, to affect an holineſs above the Scripture, to bring in a greater ſtrictneſs than God hath required; not that it is indeed ſtrictneſs (as is to be ſhewed, carnal looſneſs) only it hath the appearance ſo to the eyes of fleſh and blood: As for example, The *Phariſees* way that ſeemed to be more religious and exact, than the courſe our Saviour taught, and therefore they called him a *wine bibber*, and charged him for *keeping company with ſinners*: The *Phariſees* would not come near any ſuch prophane men: They would not go out, or come in, but they would firſt waſh themſelves, leaſt they ſhould get any uncleanneſſe upon them. Here in outward appearance, they ſeemed to teach a more exact, and ſtrict way than Chriſt: though all this outward auſterity did flow from a poyſoned, corrupted fountain within.

5. All other ſtrictneſs is to no purpoſe.

Let us *inſtance in ſeveral wayes whereby men may affect, and introduce an higher ſtrictneſs, than the Scripture ſpeaks of*: And I ſhall not inſtance in falſe worſhip, which was a great part of Phariſaical ſtrictneſs, buſying themſelves in thoſe things God never required; for I ſhall ſpeak of that (God willing) in the next Sermon, becauſe it is the greater ſign by which many ſuperſtitious and ignorant people couſen their ſouls. I proceed therefore to other affectations of extraordinary ſtrictneſs, ſuch as theſe.

First, *When the Scripture or word of God is accounted too low a thing to guide us, and therefore they expect an higher, and more extraordinary teaching by the ſpirit of God, and that for other matter than is contained therein.* It is true indeed, the word of God as it is Scripture, without the Spirit of God cannot enlighten or change the heart: Therefore theſe two muſt never be oppoſed, or disjoyned; but the word of God is the only adequate rule, to which we are tied, and the Spirit of God that worketh in and by that: So that as God will not produce any extraordinary new material light to direct us bodily, but in and through the Son, ſo the Spirit of God will not vouchſafe any new ſpiritual light, but in and through the Scriptures. Hence it is, that although God be not bound himſelf, yet he hath bound us to that only: *To the Law and to the Teſtimony*, and *ſearch the Scriptures*: Yea, *Timothy* muſt not look for infallible directions from *Paul*, but *give himſelf to the ſtudy of the Scriptures, which were able to make him fully perfect for every good work*. Now the Papiſt and Enthuſiaſt they both agree in this, to debaſe the Scripture not to make it a full and perfect rule; to expect higher, and more noble teachings than are from that. Hence the papiſt call it inkie Divinity, thus to walk and believe only by Scripture: Who can think, ſay they, *That God would have us tyed to Paper and Parchment*: And they apply that place of *Paul*, *Ye are our Epiſtle*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 3. *Not written with ink, but the ſpirit of God*, &c. Making all thoſe that adhere to the Scripture as a rule to live by, the Letter, and not the Spirit: So on the other ſide, *Enthuſiaſts* they undervalue the Scripture; and its reported of them, that they

1. When the Word is accounted too low a rule.

called

called it, *Peſſimum idolum mundi*, the worſt Idol in the world: And no wonder if they cry down the Scripture as being a low form, ſeeing ſome Anabaptiſts have denied the humane nature of Chriſt, and called thoſe *Creaturiſtas*, Creaturiſts, that held it ſo: Even as ſome complain that Chriſt is made a form, and that we ought not to ſtay on him, but go immediatly to the Father. Howſoever theſe high things may ſeem to raviſh men, and put people into admiration: Yet they are indeed low and falſe things: Do not therefore grow weary of theſe plain truths concerning faith and regeneration, or thoſe plain Sermons that teach this; for thou wilt ſhortly come to be weary of the Scripture it ſelf, as too plain and mean a thing: That as ſome corrupt fancies have diſdained the Scripture (ſuch as *Politian* and *Auſtin* once confeſſed of himſelf) becauſe there was not humane eloquence enough in it: So theſe nauſeate the word of God upon another ground, as not having high and lofty Doctrines fit for their Eagle eyes. Therefore it is a miſerable thing to conſider how ſuch preachers, and people that are thus elevated up to cloudy things, do torture and perplex Scripture, to faſten their abſurd imaginations upon it: Alas, the Scripture was not made for ſuch curious Aerial ſpeculations: Let not therefore ſuch go any longer a tipto, as if no Chriſtian in all his glory were like to them, becauſe of their abſtruſe conceptions: For they are higher than others but as chimneys are higher than other parts of the houſe, that carry away empty, ſmoaky, obſcure vapours. I am the larger upon this, becauſe it is a great part of grace to ſit down contented with the plainneſs & ſimplicity of Scripture, both for matter of it, and manner of delivery.

2. When men ſet up an external ſevere diſcipline over themſelves.

A ſecond extraordinary ſtrict way in which men ſupport themſelves, is the undergoing voluntary penalties, or bodily chaſtiſements for ſins paſt, or ſetting upon external auſtere diſcipline, to prevent ſin to come. The Apoſtle deſcribeth ſuch, *Col* 2. 21, 22, 23. where he ſpeaks of *bodily diſcipline, as having a ſhew of humility, and neglecting of the body*; then he explaineth the manner how this neglect was demonſtrated, viz. by ſeveral precepts, *Touch not, taſt not, handle not.* Judicious *Calvin* doth think there is a gradation, and that ſuperſtition grew higher, and higher: Therefore by the firſt command *Touch not*, he underſtands according to the Scripture uſe of the word ſometimes Eat not, the Antecedent being put for the Conſequent: So that their ſuperſtition ſwelled higher and higher: Firſt, *Eat not*, then *Taſt not* which is more; then not ſo much as *handle*, which is higheſt of all: But what account doth the Apoſtle make of all theſe, in which ſome put the ſubſtantials of Religion? Truly, nothing at all, in that he calls them *Rudiments of the world*, and ſuch as argue men not alive with Chriſt. Where you may obſerve, that our ſpiritual reſurrection with Chriſt, doth not only raiſe up our hearts above ſin, and earthly things, but alſo all ſuch humane Ordinances, though ſeeming never ſo much to promote piety. True godlineſſe and participation of ſpiritual life from Chriſt, carrieth a man not only above luſts, and the world, but all humane inſtitutions that ſeem ſo admirable holy to fleſh and blood. Indeed there ought to be a ſober, moderate uſe of all bodily comforts: Therefore the Apoſtle ſaith, *He kept under his body*, an emphatical word, 1 *Cor* 9. 27. Yea, the whole Context is an expreſſion from theſe Wreſtlers, or Fighters that were known in antiquity: now the adverſary that *Paul* fought with, was his body, that hindered him in his courſe to heaven: Therefore he ſaith, *he did* ὑπωπιάζειν, *beat his face black and blue*, καὶ τὰς ὅλας παλαίστρας ἔχειν and συναγωγεῖν, *Triumph over his body, and make it a ſlave.* If you ask, how he did this? he expreſſeth it in that general rule, *Every man that ſtriveth for the maſtery is temperate in all things*: There ought to be in every one a temperate, ſober uſe of cloaths, food, delight: becauſe our bodies are ſo many adverſaries to hinder us in our race to heaven *Auferte ignem, adhuc enim paleas habeo*, ſaid a languiſhing ſick man of an alluring object ſtanding by him, *Take away that fire, for I have ſtraw, or chaff that will kindle quickly.* And certainly this Doctrine is much to be preſſed upon you that are Citizens, who live in much eaſe and plenty and go richly clothed: Are you ſo ſtrict and rigid as you ſhould be,

instrumental to serve God? The string of the Instrument, if it be wet and not dryed, is not fit to make any melodious tune; no more is the body overmuch repleniſhed with any pleaſure. We ſee *Timothy* going too far in the bodily diſcipline; Therefore *Paul* adviſeth him *To drink a little wine for his preſent infirmities. John Baptiſt*, he alſo came in an auſtere way, *his garments being of Camels hair, and his food locuſts:* This way of his was different from Chriſts: nor is *John Baptiſt* an example to us; but his deportment was peculiar, as being moſt ſutable to him that was putting a period to the old Teſtament-diſpenſations.

Therefore all thoſe affected Auſterities of σκληροπραγία, eating of herbs, and other dry things, as alſo *Humiciubations*, or lyings on the ground in rough ſack-cloth, though the exerciſers therein did no doubt much pleaſe themſelves, and thought hereby to endear God to them: yet all this is but a vain refuge: The Apoſtle determineth, 1 *Tim* 4.8. *Bodily exerciſe profiteth little, but godlineſs is profitable to all things.* He makes a diſtinction between bodily exerciſe, & godlineſs; therefore one is not the other: Do not then meaſure thy hopes and aſſurances of heaven, though very ſpecious to a carnal eye, by ſuch outward ſtrict obſervances.

Thirdly, An extraordinary ſtrictneſs which maketh men confident, *Is a voluntary abdication, and actual diſpoſſeſſing our ſelves of all outward comforts, and applying our ſelves onely to religious exerciſes.* How did this miſtake ſeduce thouſands of devout ſouls, who were zealous for God, but wanted knowledge? Hence came thoſe Monaſteries, renouncing of riches, wealth, and whatſoever comfort was in this life: As if thoſe places, *Vnleſſe a man forſake all, and deny himſelf, taking up the croſs and follow me*, &c. did command an actual abdication of all, and not rather an habitual preparation of heart to leave them all when God ſhall call for them. And if we read of Philoſophers that have thrown all their wealth away, that they might the better ſtudy Philoſophy, is it any wonder if a falſe zeal carry ſome to part with all, that according to their thoughts, they might the more expeditely come to the races end? It is true indeed, the Scripture cõmands ſuch ſtrictneſs in our affections & deſire to all worldly comforts, *That thoſe that have them muſt be as if they had them not:* And who is there that can ſtand under thoſe exact cõmands of God herein? yet we may err on the right hand, as well as on the left. Such were thoſe *Euchetæ*, that gave themſelves onely to pray: And the *Donatiſts* upbraiding the Orthodox with their impiety, and commending their own godlineſs, *Nos formidamus divitias, We* (ſay they) *are afraid of riches.*

Fifthly, Men may judge their ſpiritual conditions the better, *Becauſe of an extraordinary ſtrictneſſe in Church Diſcipline, and Church Diſpenſations*, when yet there is no ground at all for it: That there may be overmuch rigor in Diſcipline, appeareth plainly, 2. *Cor.* 2 7. where the Apoſtle blameth them, *That they did not receive into favor that inceſtuous perſon, who had truly repented:* And the Apoſtle doth in part ſuppoſe it is part of Satans ſubtil devices, when he cannot deſtroy a Church by prophaneneſs, and diſſoluteneſs, to overthrow it by too much ſeverity. Now how many waies there may be an exceſs in rigid Church waies, we have upon another occaſion ſhewed: As when men hold only perfect men; or if not ſo, onely truely godly men to be admitted into Chuch-fellowſhip; and men though qualified with ſufficient knowledge, and free from Scandal, to be debarred many priviledges: As alſo when they think men committing ſuch and ſuch ſins, were never to be received againſt; which was the error of *Novations* and *Donatiſts*: or if they did admit ſuch repenting, yet not for many years, in which exceſs the primitive Church did fall. Now all theſe doctrines and Practiſes, having a ſpecious pretence of more ſtrictneſſe, and exactneſs than others, is a temptation to many, that they build themſelves upon theſe wayes and manners, not at all attending to the power and life of Godlineſs; this is ſeaſonable Doctrine at this time. Oh, puff not up thy ſelf: do not conclude great things for thy ſelf, meerly becauſe thou judgeſt thy ſelf in a more ſtrict Doctrinal, or Church way than others. Alas theſe *external wayes profit little, but godlineſs profiteth to*

all purposes. Many times high principles, have but low practices, and strict opinions; sometimes large conversations. Now the ground why these instituted, and introduced strictness, are not to be rested upon, Is becausе they are not what they seem to be. We call them high things, but they are indeed low things; we call them strict things, but they are indeed large and loose things. For take this Pharisaicall most exact and straight way; alas, their hearts were large and loose enough; so that all strictnesse, which is not commanded by Scripture, comes from a loose principle, and tends to a loose end: for it proceeds from a carnal heart, not acquiescing in *Gods* word as a rule: it is not subject to Scripture directions, and then the end is carnal; for it is alwayes for some self-advantage, though it be in a subtile and crafty way. As you see the Pharisees strictness was, πρὸς τὸ θεαθῆναι, *to be seen of men*: should they not have applause, and profit, and Disciples to admire them, they would never have engaged in such austere ways.

Use 1. *Is there indeed a true Scripture strictness, without which heaven cannot be obtained*; Then see what a gulf there is between heaven and you, who live in all looseness, negligence, and careless contempt of what is good. Is thy life thou liveſt so difficult, so contrary to flesh and blood; Is to be drunk, to couſen, to be unclean, like pulling out of the right eye? Thou canst not have bread for thy mouth without the sweat of thy brows, and thinkeſt thou to have this prize without earnest running in the race? Dost thou think *God* will provide Salvation for thee, as he did a wife for *Adam*, by casting thee in a dead sleep, and thou know no thing nor discern nothing of it? But especially do you tremble who scoff, reproach, yea, persecute and oppose men for strictness in religious wayes: This argueth a legion of Divels in thee: thou canst not abide the image of God: thou canst not indure to see the practicall power of it. The fire of Gods wrath will be heated seven times hotter for such opposers as thou art.

Use 2 *Of admonition, to examine and judge wisely of all strictness commanded to thee*, For the Devil may seduce thee in thy zeal, as well as in thy prophaneness: and do not perswade thy selfe of grace, becauſe of a more strict opinion, or Church practice thou conceiveſt thy self to be in: For this is not the Scripture-strictness in which the essence of godliness consists; for that lyeth in the *inward circumcision of the heart*, in the powerfull mortification of the affections, in *walking humbly*, in *living by faith*, and heavenly-mindedness. Oh, it is easier to be of the strictest Church way in the world, than to practise strict grace. Oh, what a reproach is it, to pretend a singular way, and not to have a singular heart, and a singular conversation? but are men in the broad way, proud, covetous, earthly, wanton? so art thou in thy strict way; what a contradiction is this.

Sermon

SERMON XXVII.

Zeal and diligence in false worship no ground of Comfort.

MARK 7.7.

Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the traditions of men.

THe Text is part of an historical Narration, wherein is manifestly deciphered the envious and malitious disposition of superstitious persons and hypocrites against the pure and upright, for here we have the Scribes and Pharisees, that were reputed the only Saints of the world, because of their outward devotion, quarreling and contesting with Christ, about the neglect of a superstitious custome. So that you have their impeachment in the 5. verse, *Why walk not thy Disciples according to the tradition of the Elders, that eat bread with unwashen hands?* They do not say, why is Gods Law, or *Moses* his Law transgressed? but the tradition of the Elders. The Elders among the Jews had brought in under a specious pretext of piety and religion, many devout customs & religious usages, which they called *Sepimenta legis*, hedges to the Law of God, but they were indeed *Impedimenta*, for hereby Gods commands were frustrated. Now among other traditions, this was introduced by them, that they did before they went to meals, or when they came home from businesse abroad, wash themselves. The ground was, least they should touch any thing unclean, and so be defiled unawares; hereupon also it was, that they used frequent washings, as of themselves; so also of their *Cups, Pots, Vessels* and *Tables*: Where by the way we may observe βαπτισματα and βαπτιζομαι, to signifie in the general *any washing*, and not *dipping* only, as some contend. If you ask, why our Saviour would not conform to such a tradition, seeing there was no visible appearance of evil in it, neither was it a sin to do so? *Chrysostom* giveth this reason, because those that are intent to the most necessary and serious matters of Religion, use to neglect what is superfluous: But we may say, this tradition was used not upon civill respects, for so to wash their hands was comely and decent before they eat bread, but upon religious considerations, hereby worshipping God, and thinking thereby to approve themselves more acceptably to him.

To this Accusation of the Pharisees our Saviour answereth two wayes:

First, By Recrimination, and then by Positive Information, *verse* 14.15. My Text is part of the Recrimination, which consists partly in application of *Isaiahs* Prophecie to them, *This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.* This was spoke to the Jews living in the Prophets time, but because they were guilty of the same sin, he extendeth the Prophets speech to all that are guilty of hypocrisie in the like kinde.

Again, Christs upbraiding is partly in the manifestation of the vanity and unprofitableness of such false worship, *In vain do they worship me.* The Hebrew word is *Fear* in the Prophet; but because that is many times used for the whole

worſhip of God, therefore it is expounded ſo here, And although the word *in vanum* is not uſed by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, yet the *Septuagint* hath it, and this ſenſe is neceſſarily implied by conſequence.

Obſerv. *That it is a vain and unprofitable ſign to ſupport and comfort our ſelves by, that we are diligent in the worſhip of God, if not commanded by him.*

The Phariſees made their obſervation of religious traditions to be the eminent ground of all their happineſſe. In this they placed all their Religion and Sanctity; whoſoever concurred not with them herein, was accounted prophane and curſed; but how light and empty is all this found, when *weighed in the balance of the Sanctuary?* And it is wonderful to conſider, how in all the ages of the Church, this Phariſaical leaven, hath leavened moſt perſons. In ſo much that Gods commandments have been wholly laid aſide, while mens traditions have been admired; So that it is a true Aſſertion of *Auguſtines*, *Sincerus Dei cultus apud paucos eſt*, The ſincere and pure worſhip of God, is but among few. So that the diſcuſſion of this point, will much clear the true nature of the ſervice of God.

Several propoſitions about worſhipping of God.

Therefore to be informed herein, conſider,

1. It lieth upon all as a duty.

First, *That it lieth as a neceſſary duty upon all to worſhip and ſerve God.* The Hebrew words and Greek are ſeveral and obſervable, that expreſs this worſhip, which are exactly handled among the learned; The ground of this worſhip is, *Becauſe he is the Jehovah*, who giveth us our being, and all other mercies: It is therefore a moſt natural, and a moſt indiſpenſable debt to acknowledge him for his ſupream excellency herein, and to give him a peculiar and proper worſhip. Now this worſhip and ſervice is either *internal*, or *external*, or *mixt*, compounded of both; *Internal*, conſiſts in our love of God above all things, Faith and hope in him, Obedience to his commands, which the Scripture prefereth before all external worſhip; *External*, is that of adoration and inclination of the body, kiſſing the hand, bowing the knee, dedicating Temples, Altars, and Offering of Sacrifices: *Mixt*, is compounded of both theſe, ſuch as calling upon Gods name by Petition and Thankſgiving.

Worſhip diſtinguiſhed.

2. God needs no worſhip. It is for our own good.

Secondly, *This worſhip and ſervice of God is not given to God, becauſe he needs it, or is made more happy thereby.* This is a good conſideration to debaſe hypocrites who are ſo apt to ſwell and to be ſecure, becauſe of their worſhip of God. Thus *David* doth acknowledge *that his good reacheth not to God.* God is no more bettered by our worſhip. than the fountain is, becauſe a man drinks of it; or the Sun, becauſe a man ſeeth by the light of it. Such do not advantage the fountain, or the Sun, but their own ſelves. So God hath appointed this worſhip, not that he might receive good from us, but communicate good to us. Thus God

Pſal. 50.10,11. ſaith, *The beaſts upon a thouſand hills are mine.* God there ſheweth, he needeth not their Sacrifices; This is a neceſſary truth, for hypocritical formaliſts to meditate on. Thy worſhip of God conſiſts not in thy giving to him, but receiving from him. It is for thy own good and advantage that God hath appointed thee to hear, pray, and to be exerciſed in any godly duty.

3. We are to be aſhamed of our beſt ſervices.

Thirdly, *Such is the infinite excellency and Majeſty of God, that we are to tremble and greatly to be aſhamed of any worſhip or ſervice we tender to him.* The Angels that are not conſcious to the leaſt ſin in themſelves, but are pure above the Sun, that cannot call themſelves duſt and aſhes, *yet cover their faces before God.* An expreſſion to ſignifie the dazling Majeſty of God in their eyes: Then much more ought man to abhor himſelf in any worſhip, and that as he is a creature, though he had nothing but that excellent and pure ſtamp of holineſſe, then with what humiliation and ſelf-abhorrency ſhould ſinful man ſtand in the preſence of God! It is a remarkble expreſſion in *Joſhua*, *Ye cannot ſerve God, for he is an holy God*, Joſ. 24.9,10. Ye cannot ſerve him, *viz.* According to his nature, as his Majeſty deſerveth. Oh how ſhould ſuch conſiderations as theſe worke more awfull and trembling thoughts upon you, when you are in any worſhip, why are yeſo

drouſie,

drowsie, sleepy, dull and careless, when ye are worshipping of God, what high contempt is this?

Fourthly, *God only may appoint that worship which he will accept of.* The second Commandment containeth all the instituted worship of God, and by what reason Images are forbidden, by the same are also prohibited all parts or means of worship invented by man, though upon specious and glorious titles. Hence are they so often blamed for a way of worship, which they chuse of their own heads, and for walking after their own *imaginations*. The deformity of an ape lieth in being so like a man, and yet not a man; so doth the loathsomnesse of all false worship lie in this, that it imitateth the worship of God, but indeed it is not so. *Augustine* acknowledgeth that of *Socrates*, as good and true, God must be worshipped in that way only he hath appointed: And the same *Augustine* layeth down an excellent position, *Erroris hoc est principium, quod quæ placent nobis, etiam Deo placere putamus; & quæ nobis displicent, etiam Deo displicere.* Nothing, though it seem never so good, may be added to Gods precepts. Therefore in all worship look to a warrant, else thy sinne is very great. Hence *Joh.* 4. The *Samaritans* are said *to worship they know not what*, because they finde not Gods appointment for what they did. 4. God only may appoint the worship which he will accept of.

Fifthly, Our Saviour doth excellently and briefly lay down what is acceptable worship unto him, *John* 4. 22. *Those that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and truth, and as a Father; such worshippers he seeketh for*, though he needeth them not. To worship God in the Spirit, is to have a spiritual and holy inward frame of heart in all our addresses to him. This is worshipping of God in a way the most of men are not acquainted with: The Jews and Pharisees were generally ignorant of this; *Paul* said, *Whom I serve in my Spirit*. Oh it is an hard matter to have a spiritual man in prayer, hearing and other worship! And indeed this is the soul and life of the service of God. The other way of worship is in truth, which by some is explained against hypocrisie and guile of Spirit; for this God complaineth of, *That they drawed nigh with their mouthes, but their hearts were farre from God*. Lastly, as a Father, they must worship, though humbly, *yet not slavishly and servilely*. *Seneca* speaketh of the superstitious intimidated person, that while he worships God, he provoketh him, *Quem colit, violat*. 5. What it is to worship God in the Spirit.

Sixthly, *However worship of God be commanded by him, yet such is the nature of all moral duties, that the obedience to them is required before any instituted worship. I will have mercy and not Sacrifice. Go and learn what that meaneth*, saith our Saviour. Insomuch that comparatively to obedience, God is said not to command these at all. And herein *Samuel* gives *Saul* a remarkable lesson, *Rebellion* or *disobedience is like the sin of witchcraft*. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, to walk humbly, to do justly*, &c. Therefore how diligent and busie soever thou art in outward worship, yet if not obedient to the known Commandments of God, thou canst not be called a true worshipper of God. Consider this, you who live in grosse sins of swearing, lyings, filthy lusts, yet what a stirre do you make for outward worship and ceremonies not commanded. If so be that God be to be worshipped, why doth thy tongue blaspheme him by curses? Why doth thy body dishonour him by filthy defilements? *What hast thou to do* (saith God) *to take my words in thy mouth, and hatest to be reformed?* Oh remember obedience is better than all bowings, inclinations and incurvations of the body! 6. Obedience to moral duties required before instituted worship.

Seventhly, *The heart of man is exceeding subtil and ingenuous to palliate over all false worship*: Insomuch that there never were superstitious abuses of the worship of God, but that there have been learned men, and wise men to plead for them. The Pharisees were accounted the only learned, and knowing men of the Jews, yet who more zealous for this traditional worship than they? And thus in Popery for their Altar-worship, Image worship, all their pompous adoration. What heaps of distinctions have they minted to represent them lawfull? Insomuch 7. Many wise and learned men have pleaded for superstitions in worship.

that *Sixtinus Amama* ſpeaks of a Papiſt, that confeſſeth he had need have *ingenium valde metaphyſicum*, a moſt metaphyſical ingeny, that can underſtand all thoſe abſtractions and preciſions which are requiſite for the full conception of the manner of their worſhip. How do they colour over their worſhip of Angels and Saints, by making a two-fold religious worſhip, one primarily as to the fountain of all excellency, and ſo they acknowledge God only to be worſhipped: The other ſecondary, as to inſtruments and mediators, yet ſtill they hold it religious. But divine worſhip appointed by God is indiviſible, like conjugal love. Hence falſe worſhip is ſo often compared to whoredoms and adulteries, and Gods anger to jealouſie. Now as it would be no excuſe to a married woman, if ſhe commit leudneſs with another man, to ſay, ſhe keeps her primary love to her huſband, for that were not lawful, no not in that woman in the ſtory, who yielded her ſelf to the luſt of another, to redeem her husband from captivitie, though love to her husband put her upon this fact, yet it was not juſtifiable; ſo neither can any good intentions, or a loving heart to Gods glory and zeal for him, excuſe or legitimate any worſhip he hath not appointed. Take heed therefore of pleading good intentions, and a good meaning in Gods worſhip. Who ſeemed to be more excuſable than *Uzzah*, yet God ſtruck him ſuddenly dead for that tranſgreſſion? If people were truly ſenſible of this, they would not ſo revile and rage at a Reformation as they do; What is more cheering and rejoycing a true godly man, than to ſee the pure adminiſtration of all Church-worſhip? and on the other ſide, nothing doth cut and pierce the hear of a carnal ſuperſtitious man more, than to have his ſuperſtitions removed: Then they think all Religion is removed with it. Well, howſoever thy intentions are good as thou ſayeſt, yet God accounts it ſo much worſhip done to Devils. It is ſaid of *Jeroboam, his worſhip was to Devils.* Alas did the people think ſo? Were not their intentions for the true God? But God calleth it worſhipping of Devils, for all falſe worſhip is brought in by the inſtigation of the Devils.

8. The worſhip of God plain and ſimple.

Eighthly, *God in the New Teſtament hath appointed all his worſhip in a plain ſimple way, not to pleaſe the eye, or affect the heart, but only to draw out the ſpiritual exerciſe of the ſoul.* Inſomuch that it is the moſt difficult thing that can be, not to be offended at the ſimplicity of Gods worſhip now appointed; *I am afraid,* ſaith *Paul, leſt as the Serpent beguiled Eve, ſo your minds would be corrupted from the ſimplicity of the Goſpel of Chriſt.* *Paul* was afraid of this, the Devil is to be feared more as a glittering ſubtil Serpent, than a raging roaring Lion: And in nothing doth his ſerpentine art appear more than in introducing worſhip that is pompous and ceremonious. As children love to play with babies; ſo do ignorant, carnal people with an external ſenſible worſhip. And the more ſpiritual any Ordinance, or the adminiſtration of it is, the leſs glorious it is unto a corrupt heart; whereas a gratious heart ſeeth glorious Majeſty in ſpirituallity. Chriſts preſence in the Temple, *expounding, informing, and reforming, made the ſecond Temple more glorious than the former,* which did exceed in gold and other magnificence. As the painting of a precious jewel hinders the native and proper luſtre of it. So doth humane pomp added to the pure inſtitutions of Chriſt, take off from the innate beauty and glory of them. God indeed in the Old Teſtament appointed a ſolemn external worſhip, full of ſenſible glory and pomp, but it was becauſe they were Infants, and children had rather have a baby than a rich inheritance. Expect therefore in the worſhip of God, that which may exerciſe thy faith, heavenly-mindedneſſe, and dependency upon God, which may make a divine impreſſion and ſtamp upon thy ſoul, not that which may raviſh thy eyes, and thy ears.

2 Cor. 11. 3.

VVhy falſe worſhip and worſhippers are vain.

In the next place, let us conſider, why ſuch men ſo addicted unto external ſuperſtitions, though they much admire themſelves, yet are indeed vain men, and lean upon vain props.

1. *Becauſe alwayes ſuch perſons have the bitterest ennity againſt true godlineſs.* Our Saviour and his Diſciples had no greater enemies than theſe of the Phariſees.

Luther

Luther had no flouter oppofites out of ale-houfes and brothel- houfes, than he had out of the Monafteries and other religious places, as they call them. And obſerve now adaies, who are more implacable enemies to all godlineſs and the power of it, than thoſe that dote upon Seremonious worſhip? who manifeſt a greater enmity unto a Reformation than ſuch. Shalt thou therefore take delight, and have hope in thy ſelf and wayes, when thou art in the firſt rank of thoſe that oppoſe true piety: And the reaſon of this enmity is, becauſe true godlineſſe doth diſcover the falſhood and hypocriſie of that painted worſhip, and brings it out of repute in the world, all which is a torment to their galled hearts. How canſt thou ſay thou art godly, who abhorreſt, reproacheſt and perſecuteſt it, where thou findeſt it practiſed?

2. *Here is no ground of confidence in theſe, becauſe they are conſiſtent with the ordinary practice of groſſe and ſinfull courſes.* The Jews cried, *The temple, the temple of the Lord*, when yet their lives were fraughted with murders, adulteries and all kinde of notorious ſinfulneſs; and this is ſtill to be ſeen, none ſo zealous for ſuperſtitious wayes, as men of corrupt lives, and diſſolute converſations; and it ſeemeth very ſtrange that a man ſhould be ſo ſeemingly for God in worſhip, and yet ſo really againſt him in practice. The firſt Chapter of *Iſaiah* is a moſt excellent remonſtrance againſt ſuch men, *I hate your new moons, your ſacrifices are as if a dogs head were cut off. Waſh ye, make ye clean.* Here you ſee that which God looks at, is real Obedience: yea God judgeth all ſuch worſhip a great diſhonour to him. And indeed it muſt needs be ſo, for ſuch men think God like themſelves, *Thou thoughteſt* (ſaith God) *that I was ſuch an one as thy ſelf.* God is indeed the *God of Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob*, the God of believers and of holy men, but not the God of *Cain, Lamech, Eſau and Judas:* What blaſphemy would it be to entitle God to ſuch. *God is God of the living, and not of the dead*, in this ſenſe, *viz.* who are dead ingroſs and wicked impieties. Know therefore, that notwithſtanding all thy worſhip, thy ceremonious addreſſes, thou art but a dead corpſe, which makes every thing unclean it toucheth. 2.

3. *If a man may not relie or truſt on the inſtituted worſhip of God, yea nor on the grace wrought by Gods Spirit in us, then much leſſe in a worſhip of his own.* Paul who once put confidence in his ſtrict way of Phariſaiſm, when converted, accounteth his very graces and holineſſe, but dung comparatively unto the righteouſneſs of Chriſt: If therefore *the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord*, be not ſanctuary ſure enough to flee unto, ſhall the *temple of Baal*, or the *Image of Moloch*, be a City of refuge? If the Sacraments and Ordinance appointed by God are no ſymptom of thy grace, Can thoſe bowings and incurvations or external Diſcipline ſet up by thy own ſelf? If the green tree cannot indure the fire, ſhall the dry hay and ſtubble encounter with it? If thy own graces are not helmet ſtrong enough to repell Gods wrath, than thy own voluntary worſhip is but as ſo many cobwebs, when a furious tempeſt bloweth upon them. 3.

4. *Theſe are not to be relied upon, which are vain and unprofitable, and ſo fruſtrate of that end we expect.* Now the Text ſaith, *In vain do they worſhip me*; other duties commanded by *God*, though they are not *pillars to be leaned on*, yet they are *not vain. God ſaith not to Jacob, to ſeek his face in vain*, but all this ſervice is loſt labour: *Who hath required all theſe things at your hands.* Now of all things to labour in vain in religious matters is the ſaddeſt expence of all. After all that zeal thou art never a whit the nearer heaven, thou art no more indeared to God, Thy ſtate is no waies ſpiritually advantaged: yea though it be a fruitleſs labour one way, yet it is not another way; for there is a fruit of theſe labours, but it is bitterneſs & wormwood, God is more provoked by thee. Theſe falſe worſhips will be written down in the catalogue of thy other ſins, a drunkard, a ſwearer, a Sabbath-breaker, & a falſe-worſhipper. Now conſider that this ſin of falſ-worſhip, though it be not ſo condemned by a natural conſcience, yet it is far above all ſins againſt the ſecond Table *cæteris paribus*; for, 1. God is ſaid onely to be jealous 4.

about

about this sin. The rage of a man is seen in his jealousie, if wronged therein, he can least bear it. And thus God describeth himselfe about superstitious worship. That which thou with a great deal of comfort and satisfaction delightest in, is an abomination unto God. Thy lies in thy trade, thy curtain sins do not so offend God, as thy Church sins, those superstitions thou art acting there. 2. It is a sin against the first and second Commandment; yea if our worship be not done as God hath appointed it, it is (as you heard) done to Devils; and hence it is that of all sins God did most remarkably punish the *Israelites* with captivity and sword, for defiling and corrupting his worship. How then can that be a plea for thee, which will be the greatest plea against thee? Of all blindnesse, it is most terrible to take your crimson-sins for your service to God, and to place Religion in that which is the greatest irreligion.

5. 5. *That which is a sad curse and fruit of former sins, that can be little comfort to any man that rightly considereth of things.* Thus we say, it's an absurd thing to be proud of cloaths, for in that thou needest cloathing, it's an argument thou art fallen from integrity and innocency: But in this matter, the curse of God is more wonderful upon thee, for that admiration and applause of false worship is inflicted upon thee as a punishment, because thou hast not received the truth in the love of it. That Antichristian spirit in Popery, whence is it? to believe a lie for truth; to take Idolatry for Religion, Is it not because men are given up to believe a lie? because they loved not the truth. And thus our Prophet *Isaiah* from whom our Text is alledged, speaks of the blindnes God hath given these idolatrous Jews up unto, that they cannot understand nor know the minde of God: As therefore you have Gods judgments upon some to be delivered up to carnall grosse sins, which they cannot leave; so there are also some given up to spiritual delusions and superstitions.

6. 6. *These of all men are in a most unsafe estate (notwithstanding their security) because they are in a most absolute contrariety and indisposition for receiving of Christ, in whom only our souls have rest.* Publicans and Harlots went to Heaven before the Pharisees, why so? because the former were sooner convinced of their sin, their undone estate, and so more willingly flying unto Christ. *Come unto me ye that labour, and I will give you ease.* But when do we ever hear of such pharisaical spirits burdened with sin? when do such feel the weight and load of it, desiring to be refreshed? *The full stomack loatheth the honey-comb. And God filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich he sends empty away.* As in Gods providence we see he commonly helps not, till all the oil in the cruse be spent, till all outward helps fail. And Christ when he was upon the earth, cured not those diseases, which for the most part could be healed by Physicians; so it is in the work of Justification, the righteousnesse of Christ is not revealed, but to those that are *naked, poor* and *miserable* in their own feeling.

Use. Use. Of *Information, Why of all men those are so hardly recovered out of their wayes unto Christ, who accustom themselves to false worship,* why they are so bitter unto the powerfull wayes of godlines, why they make such out-cries when such superstitions are taken away: all this ariseth from that self-fulnes and self-righteousnes they perswade themselves of, by such religious practices, How unacquainted are such with the heavy weight of sin, if they were, how insufficient would they see these plaisters for their wounds? They would call them miserable comforters, and throw them away. When do you see any of these lying like the man of *Jericho, wounded and half dead,* desiring *oil to be poured in his wounds:* therefore let such be awakened from that desparate condition they are in; let them see they run in vain, they worship in vain, they serve God in vain. Let them *tolere & legere,* take up the Scriptures, and read those many places that spake against such corrupt worship.

SERMON.

SERM. XXVIII.

Externall Obedience to the Law of God no ſure evidence for Heaven.

MAT. 5. 20.

For I ſay unto you, that except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in no wiſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

I ſhall take that doctrine for granted which the Orthodox prove againſt Papiſts and Socinians, *viz.* that in this Chapter our Saviour doth not as a Law-giver impoſe new commands, and duties, which were not obligatory in the Old Teſtament; but doth only vindicate the Law of God from corrupt gloſſes and interpretations; ſo that although his doctrine and interpretation was new, through the default of thoſe corrupt traditionall Expoſitions, which the Phariſees had delivered, yet it was not new indeed, for the ſame duties had alwayes been commanded. Our Saviour doth as the Painter, which doth not draw a new image or picture, only varniſheth it over, where the colour and beauty was loſt; He doth not dig up new fountains, but cleanſeth away that earth and mudd which theſe Phariſees had thrown in. The Lord Chriſt in this Chapter teacheth excellent and admirable purity and holineſs, tranſcendent not only to Phariſaicall gloſſes, but to all the corrupt opinions and judgements of men, preſſing upon us heart-duties above externall obedience, and prohibiting inward and ſoul-ſinnes above outward filthineſſe. And in the Text he doth by a vehement aſſeveration, remove all that reputed righteouſneſſe, which dazeled the eyes of the world in thoſe dayes.

So that in the words you have a neceſſary qualification for our entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven,

The qualification is in an exceptive expreſſion; *Unleſſe your righteouſneſs*, &c. By righteouſneſs is not meant that Evangelicall righteouſneſs imputed to us, but inherent, wrought by Gods grace, and therefore called your righteouſneſſe, becauſe ſubjected in us: our holineſſe is called righteouſneſſe, not becauſe we are juſtified or accounted righteous before God becauſe of it: but becauſe there are all the eſſentiall parts of righteouſneſſe commanded by the Law, though defective in the graduall intentions thereof.

In the next place there is the neceſſary requiſite to our righteouſneſſe, *viz.* that it doth exceed, abound, as the greek word, or encreaſe and be greater than [*of the Scribes and Phariſees*] Scribes are named becauſe of their learning, and Phariſees becauſe of their pretended exactneſſe in piety. He doth not ſay, unleſſe your righteouſneſs be more than Publicans and Harlots, for that would eaſily be granted, but more than Scribes and Phariſees. Nor unleſſe it be like and equall to that of the Phariſees, but unleſſe it exceed. This was extreamly offenſive and paradoxall, and it is ſaith *Muſculus*, as if in the time of Popery a Preacher had ſaid, Unleſſe your righteouſneſs exced that of the *Minorites* and *Carthuſians*, you cannot be ſaved; Now the general ground why the Phariſees obedience was in ſufficient was, becauſe it conſiſted in an external conformity to

the Law without any inward change or renovation of the heart, as *Paul* ſpeaketh of himſelf, that he knew not inward luſts to be ſins.

Obſ. Externall obedience unto the law of God is no ſure evidence for Heaven.

That externall morall obedience unto the Law of God, though it be much relyed upon by men; yet it is no ſure evidence for heaven.

To open this, conſider theſe particulars,

VVhat is meant by externall obedience. 1. A freedom from all groſs ſins.

First, *That by externall obedience we mean an innocency or freedom from all groſſe vices.* No drunkard, no whoremonger, no prodigall, &c. For the Phariſees made clean the outſide, howſoever inwardly their hearts were dens of theeviſh luſts: Now although this innocency be no ſymptom of grace; yet how many ſuch noiſome and filthy weeds grow in Chriſts garden? how many ſuch beaſtly ſwine are in Chriſts ſheepfold, ſins that ſhould not be named among Chriſtians, are yet practiſed and boaſted of among them. What comfort and hopes canſt thou have in thy conſcience, who carrieſt about with thee ſuch evident plague-tokens of Gods wrath? What do ſuch Crows among Chriſts Doves? What do ſuch Brambles among his pleaſant plants? *Depart ye workers of iniquity* from Chriſtian aſſemblies, for theſe know you not: God called you not to uncleanneſſe but unto holineſſe. Oh that theſe ſpots and reproaches of Chriſtianity were once purged away from us.

2. An external conformity to the duties of the firſt and ſecond Table

Secondly, By *this moral obedience, we mean a fair externall conformity both unto the duties of the firſt and ſecond Table*: ſo that they have the outward lineaments both of piety and righteouſneſſe. For thus the Phariſees, they were carefull about the externall worſhip of God, how zealous about the *Sabbath*, charging the pollution thereof upon Chriſt! and as for morall duties among men, had they not excelled therein, they could not have enjoyed ſuch admiration and applauſe of men. It is true, our Saviour made them the worſt of men, pulling off their vizards and diſcovering their pride and covetous ends in all they did: but though they were inwardly *ravening Wolves*, yet outwardly they ſeemed innocent ſheep. Hence our Saviour called them hypocrites ſeverall times together; If therefore you have a man that is carefull in duties to man, faithfull in his word, juſt in his dealings, but neglective of Gods worſhip, a prophane deſpiſer of the Sabbath; this man is not to be accounted ſo much as a morall righteous man. Again, if you ſee a man ſtrict about the worſhip of God, in keeping of the Sabath, in writing & repeating of Sermons, yet unjuſt and deceitfull in his doings, this man riſeth not ſo high as this Phariſaicall righteouſneſſe. That which muſt be exceeded is an univerſall, generall conformity unto all the Commandements of God.

3. VVherein this obedience is defective.

Therefore thirdly, *That wherein this morall obedience to all the Commandments of God is defective in, is, that it is a body without a ſoul*, a ſhell without a kernell, a picture without life, there is nothing but an outward ſhape of righteouſneſſe; as for a principle of regeneration, *and a new life within, that is wholly abſent.* Now this was the fundamentall miſcarriage of the Phariſees, as appeareth by *Nicodemus*, they were wholly ignorant of originall corruption. They believed not that all was carnall and defiled within them, and thereupon ſaw no neceſſity of being born again, of having a new nature infuſed into us, and ſo become new creatures. And this is the rock upon which thouſands ſplit their immortall ſouls ſtill. They pleaſe themſelves thus, I live honeſtly, I do juſtly to every one, I frequent the Church, and receive the Ordinances of God, what further thing is there to be done? I thank God no man can accuſe me, nor doth my conſcience accuſe me. But in the mean while, are miſerable ſeduced men, & are at that very time, in the ſtate of gall and wormwood; *Paul* though he walked with a *good conſcience* and *concerning the righteouſneſs of the Law unblamable:* yet when God inlightned his ſoul, what a heavy doom did he paſſe upon himſelf, & called all that *dung*, which he judged gold once! Therefore herein is the danger of meer morall obedience, that it is like a glorious houſe without any foundation, a fair apple with a rotten kore, a comely beautifull face with impoſtumed vitals.

4. *This*

4. *This moral obedient man, though he comes so far short of heaven, yet is the worlds Saint*, and admired by them: For he having only the lineaments and form of godlineſſe, without the power and activity of it, hence it is that he is the more beloved of the world; whereas if he had the vigorous life of grace, and were zealous for the glory of God, and active to pull down the kingdome of ſin and Satan, then all the rage and hatred of the world would be derived on him. Look upon Chriſt and his converſation, there was more righteouſneſſe, holineſſe, patience, meekneſs, and all lovelineſs in him, than in the ſtricteſt Phariſee: Yet the people generally preferred a Phriſee before him, becauſe the one had but the picture of godlineſs, and the other the lively expreſſion of it, which is very offenſive and troubleſome to a carnal heart. Hence the world ſaith, give me an honeſt, quiet, peaceable man, that troubleth us not for our drunkenneſſe, wickedneſſe, and debauched courſes; but as for theſe ſtrict, preciſe, zealous men, what have we to do with them?

4. Such a man may be the worlds Saint, and why.

5. *Although external obedience and outward actions of piety are not to be reſted on, yet this external obedience is neceſſary.*

5. Yet external obedience is neceſſary.

First, Becauſe outward actions are a complement and a perfection of the inward habits of grace; God hath put all the internal habits of grace in the heart, that they might produce external operations in our lives, and when they do ſo, they attain their ultimate perfection. *Ariſtotle* placed happineſſe in the actions of the ſoul, not in habits and faculties, becauſe they are not moſt excellent: It is not therefore enough for a man to pleaſe himſelf with contemplative good affections, but he is alſo to demonſtrate his grace in the powerful operations thereof. 1.

Secondly, Outward actions of obedience are neceſſary, becauſe the commands of God do eſpecially oblige to theſe. Thus thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God, and this is his commandment to believe on him: Howſoever therefore that actions are not ſufficient, unleſſe they flow from ſupernatural principles within, and an inward rectitude of the frame of the heart; yet the commands of God do binde to theſe, as thoſe whereby God is moſt glorified, it being not the having of a thing ſo much as the exerciſing of it, which makes us acceptable to him that imployeth us therein. 2.

Thirdly, Outward acts of obedience are neceſſary, becauſe theſe do corroborate and ſtrengthen grace within. The frequent exerciſe of outward duties do greatly confirm the inward principle of grace. Even as it is in ſin, the outward acting and daily committing of ſin doth encreaſe and inhance the power of ſin within. Hence ſins we have been long practiſed in, become like an old Oak, that is hardly removed out of its place: Such devils as poſſeſs us from the youth up, are not caſt out without prayer & faſting. Thus it is alſo in the works of grace, and outward obedience, the more diligent & frequent we are in them, the more doth our outward man grow ſtronger and ſtronger. 3.

4. They are neceſſary in reſpect of others, *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they may glorifie your Father which is in heaven:* We ought by our outward converſation to draw on others to godlineſſe, and to give good examples, in our externals, that men may not learn from thee to curſe, drink, ſcoff at godlineſſe, but to pray and fear Gods Name. Thus you ſee, that howſoever outward obedience be not foundation ſure enough to build thy hopes of heaven upon, yet it is neceſſary in its kinde, and therefore the want of this doth diſcover two kinde of hypocrites. 4.

1. Thoſe that are called *Nicodemites*, who think it enough to keep their heart for God, although they pollute their bodies with any corrupt worſhip. There have been ſome who have much pleaded for this, and it's very pleaſing to fleſh and blood, for hereby we ſhall alwayes ſave our ſelves, and martyrdome will be a fooliſh and unlawful prodigality of a mans life: But that place doth wholly cut the ſinews of ſuch an opinion, *With the heart we believe, and with the mouth con-*

ſeſſion is made unto ſalvation. The heart without the mouth is not enough for ſalvation.

The ſecond ſort of hypocrites diſcovered by external obedience, is profeſſedly diſputed againſt by *James*. There were ſome who thought it enough to believe the doctrine of Chriſt, although no good works flowed from this faith: Now the Apoſtle doth by many arguments demonſtrate the abſurdity of ſuch a conceit, and makes this faith no better than that of devils. *Shew me thy faith by thy works*: ſaith the Apoſtle. So that it's a vain confidence in any man to preſume of ſalvation without external obedience, and good works iſſuing from faith: For faith and holineſs is inſeparable, and faith hath a twofold operation, which can be no more disjoyned than light and heat in the fire, the one relating εἰς ἔνω, within, to Chriſt laying hold on him, the other εἰς ἔξω, without, bringing forth godly fruits to eternal life. Though therefore you cannot by the preſence of outward obedience neceſſarily conclude eternal life, yet by the abſence of them you may inferre eternal death. Theſe things are conſiderable by way of expoſition.

The ſad effects of truſting in an external obedience.

In the next place, conſider the ſad effect upon that mans ſoul who deceiveth himſelf with this ſign, thinking all that God requireth lieth in ſuch an outward conformity.

1. Firſt, *He will never ſee the neceſſity of being a new creature*; He finds no neceſſity of change but in the outward man only: Whereas the main and principal work of grace is that which reacheth to the heart of a man: yea, God beginneth the work of grace firſt upon the inward principles & affections of the ſoul, 1 *Theſ.* 5.23. *I pray God ſanctifie you through out, your whole ſpirit, ſoul and body*: Firſt ſpirit, then ſoul, then body: And thus our Saviour pleadeth that the *tree muſt be made good before the fruit can.* When the Prophet intended to make the bitter waters ſweet, he threw his ſalt into the ſpring as the fountain and cauſe, which if once ſweetned, would make the ſtreams ſo. It is therefore a woful condition to live, a man ignorant of the heart-change that ſhould be in thee. Thou haſt been prophane, but now thy life is changed; Thou didſt commit ſuch and ſuch ſins, but now thou haſt left them, this is well, but if a greater change and alteration hath not been made in thy ſoul, thou art yet in a ſtate of ſin and wrath, oh therefore look about thee, and fear leaſt God have not wrought ſuch a glorious work within thee as is neceſſary.

2. A ſecond ſad conſequent is, *the neglect of Chriſt and all his offices*; for as a man is trained up in this external obedience, and thinkes the Law requireth no more, he ſeeth no need of Chriſt; He finds not the heavie and weighty curſes of the Law hanging over him, but is ſecure and quiet, as if all were ſafe and well; *Come unto me ye that are heavie laden, and I will eaſe you.* Till a man finde a load upon his ſoul, he deſireth no eaſe: Ye are they that juſtifie your ſelves, ſaith our Saviour: hence they ſought to eſtabliſh their *own righteouſneſs*, and would not *ſubmit to the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt*: So that what Atheiſm doth in reſpect of God as he is governour of the world, exclude and ſhut him quiet out; the ſame doth a moral righteouſneſſe to Chriſt as he is a Mediatour, and cloathed with righteouſneſs for us; ſuch being full of themſelves, they are as if there had been no Chriſt, as if he never had died for us. Theſe make Chriſt in vain, his life and death in vain, and all the riches of Gods wiſdome and grace in the Goſpel a meer figment.

3. Thirdly, Here is this evill effect alſo, *that purity and holineſs of heart which God doth eſpecially look at, is quite laid aſide*; for how can men bewail the inward defilements and foulneſs of their heart, when they feel them not? how can they deſire the purifying and cleanſing of the ſoul, when they ſee no neceſſity thereof? Hence all this obedience is but a work of nature, not of the holy Ghoſt, and ſo come far ſhort of the excellent frame God requireth.

Reaſons of the point.

In the third place, let us examine the grounds, why it is no ſafety to reſt upon ſuch outward obedience.

1. And the firſt is, *From thoſe many cauſes which may produce this outward righteouſneſſe*

teousneſs that come ſhort of a true ground: As firſt, this external freedom from ſin may ariſe onely from the reſtraining providence of God, which as it hath put bounds & limits to the ſea, that it overflow not the earth, ſo alſo doth ſtint the corruption of man, that he doth not ſin ſo much as his corrupt nature would carry him to. That every man is not a *Cain*, a *Judas*, an *Abſalom*, comes from the mercy of God determining and ordering mens ſins. As on the other ſide it was from God that ſo many *Romans* were endowed with morall vertues in a glorious manner. *Abimelech* was ready to fall into whoredom, not knowing any thing, and God by his providence meerly prevented him. Do not therefore preſently build thy hopes, becauſe thy life is a good and an honeſt life. Thou haſt not thoſe blemiſhes and ſpots upon thee which others have, whence comes all this? Is it from grace reſtraining or grace ſanctifying? *Is* it from the love of God checking thy corruptions, or changing thy heart?

VVhence external freedom from ſin may proceed.

Secondly, If thy righteouſneſſe come not thus, then it may be from the ſole power of natural conſcience and humane ſtrength: for although it be true that by the ſtrength of nature we are not able to do any thing ſupernaturally good, but there muſt be antecedent to ſuch an action ſpiritual illumination of the mind, and a powerful alteration of the heart: yet thoſe things that are good in a civil, or political ſenſe, and ſo, good for the matter, may be done by the naturall dictates of conſcience, ſuch implantations are made in man, that he believes There is a God, That parents are to be honoured and ſuccoured in neceſſity. Now according to that natural light we have about God and a conſcience perſwading to it, there may alſo be a natural proſecution of the ſame good; But all this is wholly within the ſphear of nature, not above it. Art thou then a man doing all the works of moral righteouſneſs? Conſider from what ſtock this grows, from what fountain this ſtreams, Doth it ariſe from any other principle, but meerly that of a natural conſcience? and if ſo, this cannot be a plaiſter to any ſoar; or a balm to any wound. As good Saints as theſe grow of themſelves in the heatheniſh parts of the world. 2.

Thirdly, This outward innocency and righteouſnes may be meerly for want of a temptation. The heart is ready enough to conceive ſuch monſters, but theſe want objects to cauſe this. We ſee in Scripture ſuch ſins latitant in our breaſts, which will break forth by the midwifry of opportunities, that a man before would abhor the very thoughts of them, as in *Hazael* and *Peter*. Hence the diſciples were warned by Chriſt to take heed of drunkenneſs, a ſin that probably the diſciples were far remote from, yet for all that occaſions might kindle ſuch luſt in their hearts; its not therefore preſently to be concluded that all is well, becauſe our lives are unblameable, for its not from any goodneſs within, but from defect of matter without. We ſee the hedges and ſprings of wood are free from ſnakes and venimous creatures in the winter time, but its not becauſe they are not a fit boſom to nouriſh them, but there wants the Sun-beams to warm and revive them. As godly men many times would do good, but they cannot becauſe they want the objects and opportunities thereof: ſo alſo wicked men many times have hearts prepared to do a great deal of evil, but theſe mad men have not thoſe ſwords ready whereby they would deſtroy themſelves & others. 3.

Laſtly, Therefore may thy converſation be ſo laudable, becauſe the fear of humane laws and puniſhments, or elſe Gods judgments are like a fiery ſword to keep thee off, Magiſtrates are a terror to thoſe that do evil, ſo that many men are not ſo unclean, unjuſt, as they would be, becauſe the Magiſtrates ſword affrights them: and truly its a great mercy, when in a kingdom men be neceſſitated to do things that are good & righteous; the end of all civil puniſhments is, that others may ſee & be afraid, & do no ſuch thing: ſo that many mens external conformity to good things is from the laws of the kingdom he lives in: or if theſe curb him not, ſometimes the heavy judgements of God impending over him make him to do his duty. Thus *Ahab*, when he feared no humane 4. *Rom.* 13.

laws to punish him, yet *he humbled himself and mourned before God*, because of Gods judgements that were almost devouring him; if then a mans outward Obedience may arise from so many various grounds, & they all rotten & corrupt, What comfort can a man take from it? Therefore unless beyond and above all these, there be an heavenly and supernatural principle within thee, moulding and forming thy outward conversation, thou art not to live quietly in such an estate, but seek out for a redress.

2. Secondly, *External Obedience cannot be ground sure enough to stand upon, because it is not such which doth answer the command of God.* There is a two-fold Obedience to the Law accepted of by God; The one is perfect without any defect at all; and thus the Law of God is not satisfied by any; The other is true and sincere, but being imperfect the defects are pardoned by Christ. But external Obedience meerly, is not that true Obedience required by the Law; I do not say the Perfect, but the True, and the reason is because the Law is *spiritual*, and so reacheth primarily to the hearts and spirits of men; and God calleth for them, yea, he rejects all external addresses to him without this; and therefore being this Obedience, this Righteousnesse, this Piety, is not such as the Law would have; therefore think not to put off thy brass for gold; God is not like old *Isaac* that takes *Jacob* for *Esau*, he regards not the garments thou hast on, but looketh into thy heart.

3. Thirdly, *Meer outward morality will not afford any comfort, because this is consistent with a professed hatred of, and enmity to the practical power of godlinesse.* Therefore it's not godlinesse, for like would never hate like. Yea, it's an argument that all that righteousness is but a carnal, earthly, fleshly righteousness, because so opposite unto that which is true godlinesse; Now experience will abundantly confirm this, that none commonly are such enemies and bitter adversaries to the wayes and life of godlinesse, as those that are meer civil righteous men: What needeth all this zeal, all this forwardnesse, all this exactnesse, (say they?) Hence they can no more abide a powerful and soul-searching Ministery, than prophane wicked men; yea, Christ and his Apostles had not such opposition and persecution from prophane Publicans, as from those righteous Pharisees

4. Fourthly, *It is not true Righteousuesse, and therefore he that thinks himself happy because of this, is as if a man should judge himself rich, because of a coffer of brass Counters.* It is not true, partly because it is but the outside only, the external lineaments, *There is not the inward soul and life of godlinesse*, partly because this is not the image of God, which properly is true holiness; for the image of God consisteth not in bodily actions, but in the actions of the Spirit after a godly and holy manner. Therefore as in all your earthly commodities you buy, you examine whether it be the right and true commodity indeed, you would not have that which is sophisticate: So do here. Here are in the world many pretences to righteousness; some judge this godlinesse, some judge that, others thinks this is enough, others that it is not enough. Let me therefore make a diligent search hereinto. For the Word of God that only is the standard to discover what is true, and what is counterfeit.

5. Fifthly, *This is not true grace, because all this external Obedience is done with ease and facility:* There is no strugling or wrastling by the contrary corruption, whereas in all godly actions, *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things we would.* It is in matters of good to be done, as in truths to be believed; If a man assent to a conclusion in Religion, drawn by the meer power of reason, there is no difficulty to believe it, because this is suitable to our nature. but if he do it, because of Gods word, then he finds difficulty, for here is a supernatural motive, so if a man do that which is good upon humane motives, here is no contrariety in him, but if carried out upon heavenly considerations, then the unregenerate part gain-saies.

Use

Use of *Instruction*, Upon what a weak prop many lean for their everlasting hopes! The Scripture-signs and symptoms of Grace they have none at all, only they please themselves with false evidences of their own; & as counterfeit pearls do many times glister more than true ones, so false signs of grace many times make a greater dazeling than true ones. We are to bless God that he restraineth mens corruptions, that men are of honest, civil, righteous deportment, otherwise Commonwealths would become robberies, and men would be wolves to one another. Only this is not enough for Heaven; we may say, even to such a man, as well as to a prophane man, *Unless thou beest borne again, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*: And unless your righteousness be a better than this, there is no salvation for thee. *Use.*

SERM. XXIX.

That a divine Faith or Perswasion of the Truths in Religion, is not Evidence sure enough of our being in the state of Grace.

JAME 2. 26.

For as the Body without the Spirit, is dead; so Faith without Works is dead also.

HOwsoever the Apostle his scope in this Chapter be much controverted, yet *vers.* 14. doth manifestly evidence his purpose, which is to take off Titular Believers, who glory in the Name and Profession of Faith from all their confident boasting, if their Faith be not accompanied with an holy and godly life. Some think this dangerous mistake grew from a misunderstanding of many places in *Pauls* Epistles, where he seemeth onely to set up Faith, and makes no matter of Sanctification. Whereupon the reconciliation of *Paul* and *James*, these two great Apostles, hath to all seemed very difficult; to others impossible, who therefore have expunged this Epistle out of the Canon.

I will not trouble you with the several waies of Reconciliation endeavoured by the learned; That which I shall pitch upon is this, That *Paul* speaks of Faith in it's relation to Justification, considering it onely in that act, shewing that Faith onely, and no other grace justificth. *James* demonstrateth what kinde of Faith this is, *viz.* an actual operative one, which puts a man upon all holy duties. *Paul* proveth that Faith alone justifieth, and *James*, that this Faith which doth only justifie, is not alone, but accompanied with other graces. *Paul* argueth against a Pharisee that sets up his own works against Faith, *James* argueth against a carnal Gospeler or Publican, that thinketh a bare profession will save. Nor is it any wonder that such an errour spread, That a man by his Faith only should inherit heaven, seeing even in *Augustines* time it was a general opinion, which that Father did with much fear and modesty gain-say, *That every Christian, in that he was a Christian, though a drunkard, whoremonger, &c. would be saved.*

The Apostle useth several weighty arguments to overthrow such a vain confidence

confidence, in all which he doth not derogate from Faith, but discover Presumption.

For in the first place, to shew the weakness of such a profession of Faith, he compareth it with a profession of Charity, *vers.* 15, 16. If one give good words to a brother in need, bid him, *Depart in peace*, be warmed and filled, but give him nothing, would not this be ridiculous? So thou believest there is a God, a hell, a day of judgement, but livest in prophaneness and impiety, Is not this thy Faith a mockery?

Secondly, He compareth this Faith with that of the Devils, and sheweth the Devils go further than such loose Christians, they believe a God and tremble, but so do not many dissolute believers: how Devils believe, and whether an hypocrites faith goeth further than theirs, are noble Questions, but not at this time to be discussed?

Thirdly, He proveth the insufficiency of such a Faith from *Abrahams* faith, the pattern of all: *Abrahams* faith that justified him, was a working faith, it made him offer up his onely Sonne, when God commanded him, That very place which *Paul* brings to prove *Abraham* was justified by faith, *James* brings to prove, that this faith was not alone, but working eminently.

Lastly in my Text, the Apostle argueth *à simili* from a similitude, as the *Body without the Spirit is dead, so is Faith without Works*. By Spirit, some understand breath, and so they think, that as without breath the body is discovered to be dead, so without holy works faith is declared to be dead, and this they doe, lest it should be thought, that as the soul is the form of the body, so a godly life should be the form of faith: Whereas indeed by other places, Faith is the form or efficient rather of holinesse, and therefore Faith is much rather to be compared to the soul, for it's that which animateth all our actions, and makes them acceptable to God. But we may retain the word Spirit, understanding it of the Soul, for the Apostle doth not consider a man here *ad intra*, in respect of God and Justification, but *ad extra*, in respect of others, and the declaration of his Justification. And so the sense, as the body is known to be dead, if we perceive no vital or animal actions flowing from the soul, we perceive it not breathe, stir, or move; so is a mans faith dead, if we see it not demonstrated by effectual operations in the way of grace. Thus as it was in Christ, his Divine Nature, which was hidden, became manifest by those miraculous operations he wrought, that none else could do; so faith is latent in a man, and breaks out in the discovery of it self by a holy life; and in this sense Faith is said to be made *perfect by works*, *viz.* declaratively, and by manifestation.

That a divine Faith, or perswasion of the truths in Religion, is not evidence sure enough of our being in the state of grace.

Orthodoxy is not enough for Heaven. To be a good sound Protestant and no more, will not carry us out of the wilderness into *Canaan*. To have a sound judgement, but an ungodly life, is to be like the Toad, which they say hath a Pearl in her head, but her body is full of poison. It is not enough to say, You thank God you are none of the Hereticks or Sectaries, unless also you can say You are none of the swearers, proud, prophane men. We may by experience observe what a strong support this is to many men, when they die, that they die in the true faith, they die no Papists, no Arminians, &c. Now although when errors creep in, as the Frogs once did into *Egypt*, getting into every house and chamber almost, it be a great mercy to be preserved in the truth, and that also by truth we come to grace; yet because there are too many Solifidians, as the Papists calumniate the Protestants Doctrine, men who relie onely upon this, that they are of the Reformed Religion, but yet are not of a Reformed Conversation, it is necessary to drive this Point home to the very heart.

For the opening of it, consider these particulars.

First

First, That although the word *Faith* be of a very vast signification in the Scripture, yet this distinction is necessary to be observed; Faith is either taken for the Object which we do believe, or the true Doctrine; in which sense the Apostle cals it *one Faith*, and *Jude* exhorts *to contend for the faith*. Though *Junius* very improbably would interpret that of the act of Faith, expresly rejecting that Exposition of the Doctrine of Faith. This was afterwards called Dogmaticall and Catholick Faith, or *Fides quæ creditur*; or secondly, it is taken for that act of the soul, whereby we give assent unto truths revealed in Gods word, and this is in the heart, not Catholick, but Personal and particular; and in this sense the word is most commonly taken, and this is *Fides quâ creditur*. 1.

Secondly, This Faith thus in the minde and heart of men, Is by the Orthodox divided into an *Historical Faith*, not called so because they believe the Scripture for the Authority of the History-writer, nor because it believeth the History of the Scripture only, for it believeth the threatnings and Promises also, but because the historicall part is the greater part in quantity of the object believ'd. 2, A miraculous faith. 3. A temporary, 4. A justifying: by which division the learned do not distribute an univocal genus into its distinct species, but onely grossely laid down this difference, for in a justified person its the same habit of faith that believeth the History, and particularly applieth the promises of Justification, the one being a general act, the other specifical. The Papists scorn at this distinction. To the Protestants, saith *Maldonat*, *Tot sunt fide, quot in Lyra*, jesting upon the word faith: The Protestants have as many faiths, as there be Fiddle strings upon a Fiddle; but the Scripture compels us to make such a distinction; for we read of many who are said to believe in the Scripture, who yet had not a true lively work of grace upon them. 2.

3. To Faith or believing, there are three acts required, Knowledg, Assent and fiducial Application; Hence its usual with the Scripture to describe faith by one of these acts, not excluding but supposing the other, as, *This is eternal life, to know thee*, &c. *Joh.* 17. 3. by knowledge is meant the powerfull receiving of Christ into our hearts, and herein doth this historical faith come short, because its not so fiducial, and so receptive of Christ, the fountain of life, as it should be; and in this act its said to justifie, compared therefore by Divines to the hand, to the eye, to the glasse-window in the house that only lets in light; to the navel by which the childe in the mothers belly liveth and obtaineth all its nourishment; but we at this time speak of faith in the second act as it is a sensitive, and giveth credence to the truths of God. 3.

4. Our assent and perswasion of the truth in matters of Religion, may be either humane meerly, because of custome, education, and the Authority of the Church: or divine, being enclined and moved thereunto, because of Divine Authority. This distinction is much to be observed, because 1. is to be feared, that most Protestants have no more than a humane faith. They believe our Religion upon no more divine ground than Papists theirs, or Turks theirs. It is the Religion of their Fathers, and of the State and Commonwealth wherein they live. Thus you see how in K. *Edwards* daies the generality of the Kingdome turned Protestants, and in Q. *Maries* Papists, why so? but because their Religion was placed as the *Heathens* did *Fortune* upon a round Globe, which quickly moved this way and the other. But Divine Faith hath this ground, *The Lord hath said it*. And as a man seeth the Sunne by the light of the Sun; so they believe, the truths in Scripture, because of that Divine Authority shining therein, I do not therefore speak of an humane faith in matters of Religion, but a divine faith, whereby men are inabled upon supernatural grounds to believe the truths of God revealed, for faith is *the gift of God*, and that in all the acts of it, Knowledge, Assent and fiducial Application, and the Spirit of God doth so enlighten the minds of many unregenerate men, that they believe the word of God, as Gods word, and yet for all that, are not in a soul-saving way united to 4.

Christ. It may indeed be well doubted, and some Divines incline that way, that no unregenerate man hath so much as an historicall faith, as infused by God in them, and acting upon divine motives: only they say, they have an humane assent, as we spake of. But because the current of learned men go otherwise, and we see the Scripture expresly saying, that many did beleeve in him, who yet did not mortifie vain-glory, and sinfull fear of men, therefore we shall take it for granted, that they have a divine faith, though not justifying.

5. Historicall faith absolutely necessary.

5. This historicall faith, though it be not enough to justification and salvation, yet it's absolutely necessary, and is to be laid down as the foundation. The ground why men living under the Ministry are damned, is because they have not so much as historicall faith. *Who hath beleeved our report?* They do not firmly beleeve that there is a God, that there is an hell, that the threatnings of God are true; for if so, what fear, what great alterations would this make upon them! We see what humane faith will do, if a man beleeveth that he is in such danger, that such enemies lie in wait to kill him, that he is condemned by the Law to death, how restlesse and troubled is his soul? how much more would the heart of a sinner quake within him, if he did beleeve, That Word of God which doth thus threaten and damn my sins is infallibly true, it will be made good, do I what I can: heaven and earth will sooner fall to pieces than one iota or tittle of it: Whether shall I fly from it? how shall I escape it? These vehement workings of faith would be like fire in his bowels, burning and consuming him, till he be cooled by the bloud of Christ. Therefore though this faith be not enough, yet here is no building without this foundation.

6. Difference between this faith and that of the devils.

6. This historicall faith though in some respects it be like that of the devils, especially because of the barrennesse and unfruitfullnes of it: yet it is in other respects farre different: for this faith is an habit infused into the beleever, and so wrought by God, but in the devils it's from evident experience, so that it's not a voluntary but a necessary faith, for they being already in torments, and finding part of their torments already inflicted upon them, they are forced *to* believe there is a God. Now although this be so, yet we may with the Apostle make a comparison of both of them together, and thus farre argue, that if the meer acknowledging and beleeving of the matters of religion were enough, that the devils might be saved as well as such believers.

7. Although faith hath knowledge (for a man cannot beleeve that which he hath not either *evidentiam rei*, or *evidentiam testimonij* at least. The Trinity though it hath not evidence of the thing, yet it hath evidence of the testimony plainly in Scripture) yet that knowledge is not by demonstration, which Philosophers call *scientia strictly*, and therefore is obtained not so much by disputation as resignation, *bringing the understanding into captivity*, saith the Apostle: and this should be thought on by these sceptique times, who are busied in knowing but not in assenting, which makes them so fickle and unconstant: *Austin* saith, that not *intelligendi vivacitas*, but *credendi simplicitas tutam facit turbam*? but how many like those *Valentinians Ireneus* speaks of are puft up with arrogancy and pride in knowledge, as if they could number the hair of a mans head, and tell the stars in the heavens, or the sand on the sea shore!

7.

8. Lastly, It cannot be denied but that the Scripture doth attribute salvation in some places even to this historicall faith, *Mat.* 9,28. Christ required only of that blinde man, a faith that he was able to help him; so *Luke* 7.9. *Mat.* 8 10. The faith of the Centurion so much commended, seemeth only to be of the historicall truth of Christs Divinity, and omnipotency. Peters faith which Christ so praised, was only, *Thou art the Son of the living God*: so *Martha's* faith, *John* 11.26. and that is remarkable, *Every one that beleeveth that Jesus is Christ, is born of God.* 1 *Joh.* 5.1. These and the like places make Papists conclude that all the justifying faith that is, is to believe these truths only: yea *Arminius*, & I wish not too many of late, hold this to be saving & justifying faith, when we believe that Jesus Christ is the Mediatour, & will save all those that beleeve in him, & they are not afraid

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to say, that *Abraham* believed no more: I am not now to confute this unsound Tenet; only take notice, that the reason why the Scripture sometimes attributeth salvation to the meer believing of Jesus Christ to be God, was because the only question then was about the person of Christ, not the office of Christ; The godly doubted not whether if he were the Christ he would be a King and Priest to them, but whether he was the Christ or no; and because it was so great a matter to believe him to be the promised Messiah, who was outwardly so mean and contemptible: Therefore doth the Scripture so much magnifie this act. And 2. Though the Scripture give salvation to such acts, yet it doth suppose the other, so that we must compare other places with these, and then we shall see, that it is not enough to give a bare assent to these things, but there also ought to be a powerful influence of this faith into our conversation. These things thus explained, let us consider why such a faith is not enough, that so you may not deceive your selves. Comfort not your selves meerly in this, I have the true religion on my side: But rather enquire, whether all the concomitants and effects of it also be to be found in you.

Now the deficiency of this faith ariseth several wayes. First, *The subject wherein it is, This reacheth no further than to the perfecting of the understanding.* Whereas full saving faith, *Rom.* 10. is fixed in the heart, *with the heart man believeth*, so purifying their hearts by faith, and Christ dwels in our hearts by faith; so that faith extending no further than to the understanding, cannot bring that happiness the Word speaks of. A man of a sound brain, but corrupt vitals, will quicly go down to the gates of death. Now this is the general temper of most Protestants, they have no further work then upon their understandings, many times their lives are as noisom as dunghils; Men are Protestants in doctrines and Recusants in lives, because they refuse the yoke of Christ, and will not submit to his Law. Hell is filled not only with Pagans and Heathens, but ungodly Christians: Truth like *Aarons* oil must not be poured upon the head only, but run down to the heart and other parts: The Orthodox were called Protestants first, because at the beginning of reformation they made a solemn protestation against those Articles of Popish Religion, which were to be established: But what if thy tongue protest for the truth, and thy life protest against it? The deficiency of this faith discovered, 1.

Secondly, *There is a defect in its acts, for although this faith carrieth us out to believe it as true, yet not to embrace it as good*; Whereas the word of God is not only faithful, but worthy of all acceptation: It's a frigid exposition to say, that faith is called the substance of things, because it makes them to subsist in us by way of understanding meerly; no, it causeth those things hoped for to dwell in the soul by strong imbracements, so that the heart of a man is knitted to them, *Abraham believed my day, and rejoyced*; The people of God believe, and herein their hearts do all burn within them: It's like the burning-glass, which by its beams sets the prepared object on fire: Pray therefore to love the goodness of it, as assent to the truth of it. 2.

Thirdly, *There is a defect in the efficacy and power of it*; True lively faith will like fire devour all dross, whereas we see the historical believer cannot subdue sin. The Jews though they did believe on Christ, yet they for fear dared not to confess him, because they loved the praise of men more than the glory of God; They believed him to be Christ, but would not be afflicted or persecuted for his sake; so *Joh.* 2. 23. *Many believed*, but Jesus would not commit himself to them, for he knew what was in man; but lively faith would make a man like *Paul*, triumph over all difficulties, because they look upon the things that are not seen: If faith bring Christ, the fountain of grace into a mans soul, that mans life can be no more constantly wicked, than if a man could carry the Sun in his hand he could walk in darkness. As therefore the people stood looking upon *John* as if he were the Messias, & *John* deni'd himself to be the Messias, saying, there is one more noble than I, *whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to unloose*, so do thou say, Though there 3.

are these acts of faith, to know, to assent to Gods truths; yet there are such further noble acts, as that these deserve not the name of faith comparatively, such are, to purifie the heart, to justifie, to sanctifie, to keep from all sin, and to bring Christ to dwell in our hearts.

4. Fourthly, *It is defective in its Concomitants*; This Historical faith is not necessarily conjoyned with other graces, whereas a true and lively faith can no more be separated from other graces, than light and heat can be divided in the Sun-beams, for true faith is that branch which sucks of the Olive fatness, it uniteth us as members to Christ, and when we are so, it's impossible but that power and life should be communicated to us; Hence all those eminent acts of holiness spoken of *Heb* 11. are given to faith, and *Gal.*5. faith is said to work by love; but *Simon Magus* had Historical faith, and it was alone, there was no graces to accompany it. Hence we distinguish between faith alone in the subject, and faith alone in the act of Justification. The hand alone receiveth that which is offered to it, but the hand could not do this if it were alone, separated from other parts. Hence it is that Believers and Saints are used promiscuously one for another, because true Believers can no more be without holiness, than the Sun dark, or the fire cold: Yet for all this, this historical faith is a true faith, and it's the gift of God, even as other common gifts of Gods Spirit are: As copper is a true mettal though it be not gold. By this means it cometh about that a lively faith is proper to the Elect only. Hence it's called *the faith of the Elect*; and *as many believed as were ordained to eternal life.* Oh therefore consider your selves, you who boast of your faith, you who glory in this, that you change not your faith as others do, make diligent search whether it be not a *Simon Magus* his faith that leaveth thee still in a state of gall and bitterness, I am (thou sayest) for the doctrine of the Church of *England*, and art thou also for the life required in Gods word?

5. Fifthly, *The deficiency of it is seen comparatively*, with other graces; If a man make a boast of such a grace in his heart, and demonstrate no real effects thereof, is it not hypocrisie and delusion? The Apostle maketh a parallel in charity, which gives good words, fair promises, but exhibits no real comfort: Even such a titular believer is a man that assenteth to the true doctrine of Christ, but neglecteth real godliness: Faith is called the acknowledging of the truth after godliness; when a mans heart comes to be heated with burning love, as well as inlightned with shining light, this is of sure consequence. All the graces of God have their real affects, they are not barely notional, but as fire doth really burn, gall doth really imbitter, so doth grace produce its sensible and powerful effects, *Shew me thy faith by thy works*, saith the Apostle: Shew thou believest there is a God by fearing of him, by obeying of him: Shew thou believest a day of judgement by preparing to give an account at that time. All grace is for operation as its perfection, therefore the commands of God are for the acts, not the habits, and we may as well carry fire in our bosoms and not feel it burn us, as carry true lively faith, and it not cleanse our life.

6. 6. *Historical faith if not growing into a saving, lively way, is but a kinde of hypocrisie* and mocking of God; for to profess that we believe him to be omniscient, omnipotent, that all those terrible threatnings belong to us, and yet we live in those sins that will bring those judgements; what is this but to delude God as much as lieth in us? But be not deceived, God is not mocked: Nay, we delude, and mock our own souls; for so saith *James*, *If any man seem to be religious, and bridles not his tongue, he doth* παραλογίζεσθαι, *deceive his own soul*: Put a fallacy upon himself, he argueth *a non causâ pro causâ*. He thinks this outward profession, this solemn, external acknowledgment is enough, and a good cause of comfort: Whereas it is none at all: God complains of this of old, that men draw nigh to him with their lips, but their hearts are far from him. Consider this, you who are apt to judge the people of God that endeavour faithfully to secure him, though subject to many infirmities, hypocrites and deceitful persons; know you

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are the groſſeſt and moſt notorious hypocrites that ever were; You profeſs you believe in God, you love him; you proclaim to the world, that you think there is an hell and heaven, but is not thy life a flat contradiction of all this? Only to all this which hath been ſaid, we muſt adde this caution, that while we make hiſtorical faith thus ſeparated from a godly life, poſſible in many men, and that it is in eſſe & a dead faith, becauſe its not available for thoſe neceſſary priviledges of juſtification and ſalvation: Yet we lay not any ground for that Popiſh diſtinction of a faith *informis* and *formata*: An informed faith they call a belief of the truths of religion, without any love to them, or of God: A formed faith they call that which is enabled by love, and animated by that to do that which is holy. Thus they make faith of it ſelf a meer ſpeculative apprehenſion, which is to be moulded into obedience only by love. But this is falſe, for it's true and lively faith that puts us upon loving and doing all for God, therefore called faith that works by love, and *I believed therefore I ſpake*. Thus, *Heb.* 11. *By faith Noah, Abraham, & all thoſe eminent Saints did thoſe glorious acts of holineſs*. Therefore faith is rather a form of love aſſiſtant of other graces, than they of it: Hiſtorical faith when its formed into obedience, is thereunto enabled not by love, but by juſtifying faith.

Uſe. Uſe of inſtruction concerning the neceſſity of diſcovering this falſe ſign. There is nothing more common than to build our hopes upon this, that we are for the truth. That as the Jews boaſted, the Law was given to them and not to other Nations: And therefore thought, though they lived in all wickedneſs, that would ſave them; thus do Chriſtians about Chriſtianity: Oh, they believe as well as any; They will live and die good Proteſtants, not attending to what iniquity may be ſeen in their lives: But what are thy oaths, thy luſts, thy oppoſings of godlineſs? Are theſe ſigns of a good Proteſtant alſo? There was one *Eunomius* a wretched heretique in the Church, and he taught, that whoſoever would be of his ſect, a diſciple unto him, his very faith would be enough to ſave, though he ſhould commit the moſt flagitious crimes that ever were; and do not we thus about the true Religion? The Antinomian he makes that a dead and dangerous faith, when we do not believe that God ſeeth no ſin in us, and that we are as perfectly righteous as Chriſt, & therefore chargeth all the godly Miniſtry and people of *England* with no more than a dead faith: But we ſee that is a dead faith in Scripture ſenſe which doth not inable to all mortification and godlineſs: Therefore the Antinomian faith is a dead faith in the Apoſtles argument: Well then, let none run to this Altar, He is a good Proteſtant if ungodly in life, for it will fall out to him as to *Joab*, though at the horns of the Altar, he will be dragged away, and adjudged to eternal death. Many complain the Creed is baniſhed out of the Church, and they conſider not they have long agon baniſhed it out of their lives; for what doth not thy prophaneneſs, thy impiety, ſay there is no God, there is no reſurrection, there is no day of judgement? *How can ye believe* (ſaid Chriſt) *when yee ſeek the glory of one another*; Alas, that ſeemeth a ſmall matter, how can ye believe, when you oppoſe and ſcoff at godlineſſe, prophane Gods Sabbaths, neglect all Familie duties? Conſider you are not called out of Popery to have a better Religion, but out of the world to live better lives.

SERMON XXX.

That every peaceable frame of heart, and perſwaſion of Gods love, is not a ſure Teſtimony of ſaving grace.

JOHN 8. 54.

If I ſhould honour my ſelf, my honour were nothing, it is my Father that honoureth me, of whom you ſay, he is your God.

IN this Chapter we may obſerve ſeveral ſharp skirmiſhes between Chriſt and the Phariſees: but as Satan in his conflict was overcome by him, ſo are his children in theſe hot diſputes. The Phariſees in the latter end of this Chapter, charge two things eſpecially upon him to make his doctrine odious, the one is, *That he had a Devil*, and ſo all his Doctrin and miracles to come by Satanical impoſtures: The other, *That he did all out of vain-glory, to have a multitude of Diſciples*, and to be admired by them: Our Saviour is both defenſive in this cauſe, vindicating himſelf from thoſe horrid aſperſions; and offenſive, retorting the ſame things upon them, *That they were of their Father the Devil*, becauſe he was *a man-ſlayer, and abode not in the truth*: So ſaith he, *You ſeek to kill me, a man*, that is cruelty, *who tells you the truth*, that is ingratitude, *which he heard of God*, that is impiety: And becauſe they gloried in this, *that Abraham was their Father*, he ſheweth the diſparity between their works, and *Abrahams* works, becauſe alſo they ſaid, *God was their Father*, he driveth them alſo out of this refuge; for if they were of God, they would hear and know his Word; Children do preſently diſcern their Fathers voice. To that accuſation of vain-glory, he anſwereth in my text, by ſhewing the *vanity of all humane glory*: If I ſhould look at this, I ſhould but catch at a ſhadow, open my mouth to ſwallow air: It is nothing. Now if Chriſt did judge all the glory which he ſhould hear by his doctrine & miracles, nothing; how ſhould this make Miniſters afraid, who affect honour for ſome new notions, excellent Sermons, and parts? Chriſt did not glorifie himſelf, why ſhould we then? Yet leaſt they ſhould think him without glory, he tels them, *There is one that honoureth him*, viz. *God the Father*, by immediate teſtimony from heaven, and by many miraculous operations: And to humble them the more, he ſaith, *This that honoureth me thus, is he of whom you ſay, he is your Father*, of whom you make your boaſt and brags, that he is yours. I ſhall ſtand only upon this paſſage, intending to ſhew that a people may have great confidence, & a bold perſwaſion of heart that God is their God, and yet they be of their *Father the Devil*. For whereas the laſt time I told you a man might have an hiſtorical, or dogmatical faith in matters of religion, and yet be deſtitute of Gods Spirit in a ſaving manner: now I ſhall ſhew you, he may have ſome fiducial applications of Gods favour, & confidently repoſe himſelf in the boſom or arms of Chriſt, & yet Chriſt ſay to ſuch, *Depart, I know you not*. A neceſſary ſubject to be handled, becauſe moſt people who have no true claim or intereſt in God, yet it is ſtrange to conſider what quietneſs, & peace, and boldneſs the

they have in their hearts, when indeed fear ſhould compaſs them round about.

Doct. *Every peaceable frame of heart, and confident perſwaſion of Gods love, is not a ſure teſtimony that ſuch an one is in the ſtate of Grace.*

Paul, Rom. 7. *Sheweth he was alive without the Law*, That is, he had great quietneſs and eaſe of minde; he thought himſelf in a ſure and ſafe way: but alas, this was his ignorance, his blindeneſs. Even as a man in a dungeon may think himſelf ſafe, when there are Serpents and poyſonous creatures round about him, only he doth not ſee them: or as a man in a Lethargy feels no pain, though he be near the gates of death: ſuch is the condition of many perſons, they thank God they have no trouble, their ſoul is at much eaſe and quietneſs, they doubt not of Gods favour and love to them: hence in the midſt of their afflictions they will ſay, *I thank my good God*, when (alas) we may ſay of ſuch, as Chriſt of the *Jews*, *You ſay he is your Father, but you have not known him*; ſo they know nothing powerfully and practically about God.

To open this, Let us conſider what is the nature of this ſecure quietneſs. The nature of this falſe peace

1. Free from terrour.

Firſt, *It is accompanied with a great deal of eaſe and peace in a mans heart, ſo that their conſciences have no terrour, no tremblings, but all is well within them.* Now that wicked men may be in ſuch a condition, is plain by that where they ſay, *Peace, peace, then ſhall come ſudden deſtruction*: and the Pſalmiſt doth with ſome kinde of emulation, deſcribe the joyful quiet condition of many wicked men. They have no bonds in their death: They ſeem to live more cheerfully, and dye more quietly than Godly men: ſo then, all peace and quietneſs in thy conſcience, is not preſently a good teſtimony; for this ſecurity may ariſe from blindneſs, from ſelf-love, from a ſenſeleſs cauterized heart, as is to be ſhewed: So that this frame of Spirit is ſo far from being boaſted of, that it is indeed the wofulleſt and ſaddeſt calamity that can be: better to be ſo many *Cains* fearing every thing will damn a man, then to be one of *Lachiſh*, ſitting at eaſe, and fearing nothing. It is true, the Prophet ſaith, *There is no peace ſaith my God, to the wicked*: and is therefore compared to the ſea, alwayes foaming and diſquieted: So that by this place we would think it were not poſſible for a man to be a wicked man, and have any peace, but the Scripture ſpeaks there of a true and right peace, ſuch as when the Apoſtle ſaith, *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God*: Inſomuch that the wicked mans quietneſs doth not deſerve the name of Peace. There is only a forbearance of wrath: and it is becauſe his heart is rotten, that it feeleth no pain; even as the member of a mans body rotten, is not ſenſible of any torment. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome, who had cauterized conſciences, *Seared with an hot Iron, or cut off*, as ſome expound it: and of others who were paſt feeling. They were ſo brawny and cruſted over, they had no ſenſe of any pain: Alas this cannot be called peace. Take heed therefore leſt that ſecurity and quietneſs in thy heart come not from a meer rotten, ſenſeleſs, ſtupidity in thee. Certainly this truth doth much concern us; do not think to put off God as *Jacob* did *Iſaak*; do not think to ſteal a bleſſing and heaven from God.

Secondly, *As there is nothing but quietneſs within, ſo there are bold and confident perſwaſions about God, and his love towards them.* Now a mans condition cannot be more deſperate than when he is deluded with a reſolute perſwaſion that God loveth him; even as ſome mad men have been perſwaded that they were great Kings & Emperors, and had ſuch great Kingdoms, when at the ſame time they were under cruel hardſhip. Oh ſuch a madneſs is upon moſt men, that do not, with the Devil, look upon all the Glory of the world, & ſay falſly, *all that is his*, but upon all the Glory of heaven, & ſay preſumptouſly, *all that is his*: this was the Phariſees impudencie, who were confidently perſwaded that God was their Father, that he loved them, when they were the miſerable wretched Impps of Satan! This alſo was the grand cauſe of all thoſe expoſtulations the Prophets had

2. They are perſwaded of Gods love.

had with the *Jews*; they trusted in Gods love, though they did lye, steal, swear, yet they would come into his Temple, and call upon him, which the Prophet *Jeremiah* with much heavenly zeal expostulates with them for. Oh, this gross impudencie is too visible in our daies: have you not many prophane sinners? many lyars, cursers, opposers of what is good? Yet they will come here, and say, *Our Father*: nay, you cannot meet with any beastly sinner, but his heart is filled with this bold impudencie, to think and hope that God is his Father; So that we may cry out, Oh that God would touch these mountains, that they might melt before him, Oh that God before whom the very earth did tremble and quake, would also make such mens hearts afraid before him.

3. They may have fiducial applications;

Thirdly, *Where such bold apprehensions are concerning God, there is not only confidence in the general, that God is mercifull, but they have also a fiducial application, and appropriation of God to their own selves in particular*: And herein they have a great resemblance of justifying faith, as *Paul* said, *Who loved me, and gave himself for me*: so these will apply Christ to their particular: I thank Christ my Redeemer, my Saviour. In the godly such applications are of faith in the most excellent manner, in the wicked it is of meer presumption, without any true ground at all. It is indeed the glorious fruit of the covenant of Grace, that thereby God becomes the God of his children, *Hos.* 2. *They shall call me Ishi, and no more Baali*, i.e, *My Husband, not my Lord*: they shall have more dear & appropriated meditations of God; and at the end of the Chap. *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*. Hence *Jer.* 4. 3, 4. God would have the Church repenting, say, *My Father*. Fiducial applications of Gods love to us are a duty, as the learned prove against the Papists; Hence faith is called, *Eating and drinking of Christ*. When a true broken heart loaded with sin, cries out with *Thomas*, *My God, my Lord*, this is not carnal presumption, but holy believing. But now when men whose hearts were never smitten with Gods displeasure for sin, find no burden of it, and so cry not for ease to Christ; when (I say) such say, *I thank my God, and my Redeemer*, this is bold presumption in them. God is not the God of the dead, we may say, but of the living; he is not the God, the Father of such who live in, and love their wickedness. It would be a dishonour to be a Father of such Children; but he invites those to call him Father, and my Father, who are deeply humbled for sin under his hand, who are of self-emptied and poor spirits, acknowledging his Grace only. As therefore we are not to discourage the wounded heart, but to imbolden him to appropriate Christ to himself in particular, and that he is to set against all servile fears and doubts that would, like to the Devils to the possessed man, keep him alwaies about the tombes, and make him gash and wound himself; so we are also to set a flaming sword, as God did to *Adam*, to a prophane man, lest he venture to come into this Paradise. Oh then be advised and consider, whether it be faith or presumption makes thee say, *My God, my Redeemer*. A *Paul* may say so, and a Pharisee may say so.

Fourthly, *Where this boldness is, there is a shifting and putting off all those considerations that may bring us to make any doubt, or any question about our selves*: and truly that's a real demonstration; thy peace, thy comfort is not right, thou art so unwilling to be brought to light: the thief hates the light, saith our Saviour: now observe it, many of those persons who have such bold perswasions of Gods love, they cannot abide to hear terrible sermons, they love not to hear of hell, & the day of judgment, they love not to hear of the differences of Gods work upon mens hearts, & how far hypocrites & reprobates may go: Oh these things cut them, & make them mad; & why is all this? but because the peace & comfort they have, is a false & unsound one; which will abide no touchstone, cannot endure any shaking or moving at all. What was the cause that the Pharisees were so immoveably perswaded of Gods love to them? did hate and oppose Christ even to death? It was only because he manifested their godlinesse was not true godlinesse, their comforts were not true comforts, their peace was not true

true peace, & thus wofull self-flattery was their ruin. God seeing such a pronenes to deceive our selves, makes expres provision against it: If a man when he heareth all the curses of the Law, shall yet bless himself in his heart, and say, None of these evils shall come upon me, God will expresly set against such a man. Oh it is terrible when God curseth thee, the Law curseth thee, the Ministers of God declare his curses against thee, yet thou to bless thy self, & to say, *God loveth thee & will do good to thee*: Oh take heed of these cursed shiftings: this untempered morter will not hold our, though thou daub it up never so craftily: do not evade and say, These judgements of God, these threatnings do not belong to me; for I love God, I have a good heart, I do that which is just and good to all; for all this slippery Ice will thaw when the sun ariseth

Fifthly, *Where this quietnes is, there is much boasting and glorying in this, that they have a good heart, and so rely much upon this.* It is a wonder to hear men that liv in a constant neglect of holy duties, yea, sometimes wallow in the filth and mire of loathsom sins, yet how they will boast in this. *They have a good heart*, and that as good as any of the strictest professors have: What wild Logick is this? How can there be a good heart, if there be not a good life? How can there be a good tree if there be not good fruit? Is that a good fire that burneth not, that warmeth not? Is that good meat that nourisheth not? Oh, why do not such consider that excellent Aphorism of the wise man, *He that trusteth in his own heart, is a fool?* Oh take heed that all thy boastings of thy heart being good, whatsoever thy failings be, are not meer folly. It is folly to trust in a mans heart, because it is so deceitful: He thinketh he doth repent, when he doth not: he thinketh he loveth God, when he doth not. Dost thou therefore appeal to thy heart, and call thy heart to witness for thy godliness: Oh that is the very cheat and cousener in the world: It is deceitful in all things saith the Prophet, *who can know it?* Do not thou rest on that which is naturally full of lies, and hypocrisie: It is true when the heart is enlightned by Gods spirit, as in the godly, then it is made a true heart, and a faithful heart, though not perfectly: and so those graces in us which of themselves would never evidence themselves, by Gods Spirit become visible; even as some relate of a precious stone, which will not cast any glorious lustre unless the sun-beams shine upon it. 5. He is much in glorying of his good heart.

Sixthly, *This carnal presumption and boldnesse may hold in the midst of Gods calamities and wrath, yea at the stroaks of death it self*, The people of Israel, though smitten by God for their abominations which were evident, yet saith the prophet *Micah*, would come and leane upon God: they were either actually under Gods judgements, or under the terrible denunciation of them by the Prophet: yet they would lean upon God, as if he were their God, and that such secure confidence may hold to death, appeareth by the foolish Virgins, who found no lack of oyl till it was to late: And we see those condemned persons at the day of judgment, pleading for themselves with a wonder why they should be condemned, for they neglected no duty required of them: *When saw we thee sick, and visited thee not?* So that it is no sure sign, though a man even at deaths door abareth not his confidence in God for all that. The Psalmist saith, *they have no such bonds in their death*, or pain and fear as sometimes other men may have: a godly man may dye doubting, and a wicked man presuming: It is not then the saying, and the professing they have a great deale of peace in God, but the grounds why, and the motives, they must be searched into. Therefore though we blame Papists for teaching to doubt, and making a doubt a duty, yet we presse for an holy search, and a godly fear and trembling in the trying of our hearts, lest we be deceived. 6. This false confidence may continue in calamity and death it self.

In the next place let us consider, why such bold confidence is not to be relyed upon: And

Why such confidence is not to be relied upon;

First, *Because it comes not from a true and genuine ground, which is the spirit of adoption, the comforter, the seal*, who only quieteth the heart in a gracious sure way, but it cometh from carnal self-love, and self-flattery: we are in love with our 1.

ſelves, and we think God loves what we love. Thus the Pſalmiſt notably to the ſecure wicked man, *Thou thoughteſt I was ſuch an one as thy ſelf:* as the *Roman* painter being in love with a woman, painted every goddeſs like the woman he loved; ſo doth every man ſet up ſuch a God in his thoughts and affections, which he would have, and is moſt like himſelf: and by this means, becauſe he ſaith, *all is well*, he judgeth all good within him, therefore he ſuppoſeth God doth ſo alſo. Oh then know, that ſelf-love and the *Spirit* of Adoption, differ more than heaven and hell; Indeed if thy aſſurance, if thy boldneſs come in the Spirits way, it were a comforting by *it*, a rejoycing by *it*, then thou mighteſt rejoyce and be glad in God: But when it cometh from thy muddy and filthy heart, all this will waſh away. It is God that juſtifieth, and it is God that condemneth; it matters not though a thouſand hearts juſtifie us, if God do not. If a malefactor be condemned, and hath a pardon from inferior magiſtrates, he judgeth that nothing, unleſs the ſupreme Magiſtrate abſolve him. Oh, therefore judge thy ſelf: think, it may be for all my good thoughts God ſaith otherwiſe, I bleſs it may be, but God curſeth it may be; and know, it cannot come from any thing but carnal love, if thou haſt this boldneſs, and yet liveſt in groſs ſins unrepented of, and unreformed.

2. Secondly, *It is becauſe Satan doth not frown upon, trouble & moleſt them.* Now that cannot be call'd a good quietneſs, or a good peace which is ſo only becauſe the Divel looks upon them as his own, & ſo will in no wiſe diſturb them: our Saviour doth abundantly confirm this, when he ſaith, *That as long as the ſtrong man keepeth the houſe, all things are at quiet*: Thus thoſe that are under Satans Dominion, they have jollity, ſecurity, hardneſs of heart, that ſo they may not be ſenſible of their miſery, and thereby ſeek an eſcape out of his ſnares. *Pharaoh* then uſed the Iſraelites moſt cruelly, when they began to be weary of their bondage, and to ſeek comfort ſomewhere elſe; ſo that thou haſt little cauſe to be glad of this thy peace, for it is a peace thou art beholding to the Devil for; it is he that hardens thy heart; it is he that makes thee deſperate; that hath put out thy right eye that thou canſt not behold the enemy that lyeth in wait againſt thee: Therefore do thou no more be ſecure in this quietneſs.

3. Thirdly, *This bold confidence doth not ariſe from a good motive*: It cometh from general apprehenſions of Gods goodneſs & mercy, ſuch as heathens have. They conceive of God in general, as one who is altogether merciful: they think he that made them, will ſave them, whereas devils might thus argue for hope, becauſe God made them, yet he will not ſave them. What a miſerable ſupport is it to have no more ground for thy ſalvation, than the damned ſpirits in hell have? But a true gracious confidence is from the Covenant of grace in Chriſt; it hath reſpect not to the nature of God abſolutely conſidered, but relatively, as in Chriſt reconciled with us. Hence the promiſe of God is mutual, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people*: Do not thou think that any natural apprehenſion about God can give the leaſt hope, know this muſt come wholly by revelation: ſet the word of God aſide, which doth reveal Gods good pleaſure to believers, and the way of pardon and ſalvation is no more poſſible than that of the devils: ſo then the godly mans confidence is from Scripture-revelation and direction, whereas the preſumptuous mans is from natural ſuggeſtion.

4. Fourthly, *This confidence is defective, becauſe it doth ſeparate and divide thoſe things which God hath inſeparably joyned together, and that is the means and the end.* The preſumptuous mans confidence is maintained and kept up, though he go not in the right way, yea, though he walk in a contrary way as thoſe wicked men, who though they defiled themſelves with abominations; ſaid, *No evil ſhall come nigh us*: and ſuch as had made a Covenant with Hell & death: but the godly mans faith, it cleanſeth the heart & he that hath this hope *purifieth himſelf even as God is pure*. How unſufferable is it to ſee a man confident of Gods love, and yet walk continually in the waies he hateth! There is no making our calling & election

lection sure, but by the gracious fruits of Gods Holy Spirit. Think not to go into the North, by taking a journey Southward: and it is as absurd to call God thy God, when Gods wayes are not thy wayes, Gods commands are not obeyed by thee. The Spirit of God that sealeth and comforteth, doth also sanctifie and make holy: Think not therefore to have fire, and no heat.

Fifthly, *This secure confidence is not filial and Evangelical in its operation:* It is not spiritual and ingenuous: they are not hereby carried out to obey Gods commandements, out of love and delight in God: love apprehended by servile slavish dispositions, makes them more dissolute, they turn the grace of God into wantonnesse, and make sin abound, because Gods love aboundeth: But love shed abroad in the hearts of Gods Children, it works Evangelically, graciously, desiring to become like God who thus loveth us. *Having these Promises* (saith the Apostle) *let us cleanse our selves from all filthinesse*, 2 Cor. 7 1. The promises were, *That God would be our God and Father*: So then, confidence of Gods love in an unregenerate heart is like some unkinde influences of the stars, that cause diseases and putrefactions. When Papists object against Filial assurance, that it breeds contempt, neglect of means, and dissolutenes, We answer, Presumption indeed doth, and a vain perswasion, which wicked men have of Gods love; but in the godly it breedeth a childe-like reverence, and holy fear to displease that God, whose goodnesse we so plentifully taste of. Examine therefore what the operations of this confidence are upon thee: Doest thou hereby take libertie in the wayes of sin? This is ungodly. 5.

Sixthly, *It is not a confidence arising out of spiritual conflict and agony:* and this is indeed a notable discovery of all false confidences: carnal presumption of Gods Favour, it meets with no opposition: a man so carried away, never felt what trouble of sin is, what the terrible darts of the Almighty are, how difficult and supernatural a work it is to rely upon Gods promises; but all his joy & peace comes with a great deal of ease to him: but in the godly it is otherwise, *I believe, help my unbelief*: so *Davids* Psalms, what ebbing and flowing he hath, confident of Gods favour at one time, then presently as much dejected & despondent: See how he expostulateth, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? still trust in God.* Now the ground of this difficulty and combat, is from the opposition every thing spiritual hath to that which is carnal: an unregenerate heart doth oppose Gods spirit sealing & comforting, as well as couvincing and sanctifying. The easinesse therefore that thou findest in having this comfort, may justly make thee suspect it: say, My quietnes is from the Devil, else my heart would oppose it more, I could not get into a true Canaan, unless I went through some wilderness. 6.

7. *This carnal security is at that time, & in those conditions, when the Scripture calls for the contrary, Therefore it cannot be of God.* As for example, Thou art thus perswaded of Gods love, though thou livest in constant wayes of prophanes; though thou neglectest the exercise of all holy duties. Now remember, doth the Scripture call upon thee to believe that God is pleased with thee? That he loveth thee? No, Gods word commands the clean contrary: it bids such mourn and weep: it calls upon such to believe that the threatnings of God belong to them; that God is not their God; that their sins are not pardoned: Oh then, why will ye presumptuously, and wilfully believe a lie? why do you apply promises to you, when you should do threatnings? Thou must make a new Bible, a new Scripture, e're thou canst take any comfort to thy self. Oh therefore if thou didst know what thou didst, and how it is indeed with thee, what an alteration would there be? For all that quietnesse, horrour and trembling; for all that jollity, mourning and howling: for that easinesse to believe, thou wouldst finde it most difficult; *Oh, who can believe? Lord make me to believe.* 7.

Use of Exhortation, To awaken, if possible, all such secure persons: Do not the generality of Christians, as those of the Jews glory in this, *God is their Father*? But how comes this about? Where is your evidence? How will you prove *Use.*

it? put your hearts to it. If this confidence of God being your Father were right and of God; thy life would differ from what it is, as much as light from darkneſs, a wilderneſs from a garden. Oh how may the Miniſters of God with *Jeremy* ſay, *Our ſouls ſhall mourn in ſecret for you.* Had we not as good ſet our ſhoulders to a great Mountain to remove that, as make men begin to ſearch whether their peace be a good peace or no, their quietneſſe a good quietneſs? Oh do ye not ſay to us as the devils to Chriſt, Why are ye come to torment us? As we would not unſettle or put doubts into any that truly fear God, ſo on the other ſide, to thoſe that vainly rely upon God, when yet he is not theirs; we could deſire theſe words might be as arrows ſhot into their hearts, wounding of them; ſo as to take no reſt till they have a true peace indeed.

SERMON XXXI.

That outward Succeſſe, Proſperity, and Greatneſs in the world is no true Evidence of Grace.

DEVT. 9. 4, 5.

Speak not in thy heart, after that the Lord thy God hath caſt them out from before thine eyes, ſaying, for my righteouſneſs the Lord hath brought me in to poſſeſs this land, &c.

THe people of *Iſrael* after a ſore and dangerous voyage are now entering into their haven, after a wilderneſs full of troubles and dangers they are now poſſeſſing a land of Reſt, a land that flowed with honey: but leſt they ſhould ſurfet of this hony, and leſt this reſt and quietneſs ſhould be like that of pools, which breedeth nothing but noiſome creatures, *Moſes* is exceeding vigilant to inform them as of the great mercies God had done for them, ſo of the great duties he required of them: and this is the ſcope of *Moſes* both in the precedent, and this preſent Chapter, with ſome others that follow. The mercies God vouchſafed to them are aggravated by an enumeration of the ſeverall wonders God had wrought for them, as alſo by a lively deſcription of that Land and Countrey they were now made Lords of, *Chap* 8. 7, 8, 9. called therefore the good land frequently, and is made a type of heaven, for the joyfull pleaſure of it, as if the *Iſraelites* now poſſeſſed of *Canaan* were brought into Paradiſe again; and for the full commendation of it the Scriptures expreſſion is remarkable, *Deut.* 11. 12. *A land which the Lord thy God careth for, The eyes of the Lord thy God are alwaies upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of it:* a phraſe much like that which the Scripture uſeth even of his own children, as if he had the ſame care of that Land as of his own people. As he thus lively deſcribes their mercies, ſo he doth as powerfully quicken them up unto their duty, which is to take heed of all thoſe ſins, that fullneſs, eaſe, and ſecurity, would quickly breed; whereof he inſtanceth in one more eſpecially, *viz.* an apprehenſion that God had done this to them, for their righteouſneſs, becauſe they were more holy than others, as they thought; Therefore they concluded themſelves more happy, becauſe their land abounded with all excellent fruit, they judged their lives to overflow with all graces. They took all this proſperity as a reward of their piety. Now *Moſes* removeth thoſe foundations they built upon, inſtructing

ſtructing them that this mercy befell them, not becauſe they were ſo good, but theirenemies ſo bad.

So that in the Text you have the ſin forbidden, a falſe conceit of their righteouſneſs & uprightneſs, amplified with their confidence therein; *Speak not in thy heart*, &c. The ſoul can talk to it ſelf, & though man cannot hear what it ſpeaks, God doth. Thus *John* to the Phariſees, *Say not in your hearts*; and the exhortation in a good ſenſe is, to commune with our own hearts; This phraſe doth excellently imply, what diſcourſes & apprehenſions men are ready to frame to themſelves, & although theſe lie in the breaſt & cannot be diſcovered by men, yet God takes notice of them to puniſh them. When *Moſes* excludes righteouſnes & uprightneſs of heart, by the former he meaneth all outward actions of righteouſneſs, & by the latter all inward intentions & purpoſes of heart, though they fall ſometimes externally; Now as *Canaan* was a type of heaven, ſo as the introduction of the *Iſraelites* thereunto was only of Gods grace, ſo is our poſſeſſion of heaven. This their groundleſs apprehenſion to make outward bleſſings a ſign of their righteouſneſs, *Moſes* confuteth, by attributing this to other cauſes, as firſt the impiety and wickedneſs of their adverſaries; as for their righteouſneſs it moved not God, but the horrid tranſgreſſions of the *Canaanites*, they provoked him: The iniquity of the *Amorites* was now full, not the righteouſneſs of the *Iſraelites*, Another cauſe was Gods Oath and promiſe, which he made to their fathers, whereby though he was not a debter to their righteouſneſs, yet he was obliged to his own truth and fidelity: Hence *Deut.* 7. 7. The originall of all the bleſſings vouchſafed to them, is reduced to Gods love meerly, not any excellency in them. Now that this ſinfull perſwaſion might not abide in them, ſee how the Scripture followeth it over and over again in theſe three verſes; Speak not that it is for thy righteouſneſs, *&c. ver.* 4. Not for your uprightneſs *ver.* 5. Underſtand therefore that it is not for thy righteouſneſs, *v.* 6.

That men are very prone to make the outward proſperity and encreaſe which God giveth them, an argument of their righteouſneſs, and ſo of Gods love to them, to ſave them. They think it impoſſible that ſeeing God hath ſo bleſſed them here, he ſhould damne them hereafter. This falſe ſign doth not belong to every one, but to thoſe that have abundance of outward mercies, eſpecially if brought to partake them from a low and indigent condition: The more their change is admirable, the more teſtimony they think of Gods goodneſs to them, and their own inherent goodneſs. For the diſcovery of the weakneſs of this prop, take notice firſt of theſe particulars.

Firſt, That proſperity, wealth and ſucceſs, they are in themſelves bleſſings, mercies; and ſo good things to be deſired. Hence the Scripture doth ſo often uſe them as incouragements and incentives to holineſſe, If you obſerve theſe, you ſhall be bleſſed at home and abroad, ſee *Deut.* 29. and leſt we ſhould think, that outward wealth and proſperity were only to be regarded in the Old Teſtament, becauſe they had not ſuch a meaſure of Gods Spirit, we ſee what *Paul* ſaith in the new, It is more bleſſed to give than receive, and he ſpeaketh of it as a ſpeech that the Lord Jeſus was wont to uſe, though the Evangeliſts do not record it: ſo that outward mercies are in themſelves bleſſings, and the want of them by the Scripture is made a miſery and affliction: *Ariſtotle* made the outward affluence of wealth neceſſary to that Beatitude he ſpeaketh of, but Chriſt his diſcipline is otherwiſe. Hereupon our Saviour when he ſpeaks of ſeverall bleſſednes to ſeverall graces, with ſpirituall happineſs he reckoneth temporal, *Bleſſed are the meek, for they ſhall inherit the earth*. Hence we reade of the people of God praying for theſe earthly mercies, and we have a direction for it, in the Lords Prayer, when we pray for daily bread, which although ſome learned men underſtand of heavenly bread, and tranſlate it ſuperſubſtantiall, yet that hath no probability. It is true indeed the very petition doth much limit and moderate our deſires, for it is after the greater things that belong to Gods glory,

and it is but one Petition, whereas there are divers for ſpiritu ll things, ſo that our Saviour would have us to be about theſe earthly things, as thoſe fowls of the heaven are, which on a ſudden fall on the ground for their food, but preſently fly up to heaven again: and then, it's daily food, or as the moſt learned expound it, food convenient, and decent for our place and calling, not ſuperfluity. Thus though theſe outward mercies are bleſſings, yet we are to circumciſe our affections about them; leſt as when the waters overflow the banks, it getteth much ſoil and dirt, ſo our affections immoderate grow polluted.

2. They ſanctifie not thoſe that have them. Are of themſelves neither good nor evil.

Secondly, *Although theſe are bleſſings and mercies, and ſo good things; yet they are not ſanctifying of thoſe that have them.* *Dives* ſaid, *he had good things laid up in ſtore*; but how were they good, which made him bad? how were they good which could not keep him out of hell? Riches therefore are neither good or bad, but indifferent in their nature, and ſaith *Auſtin*, *God gives wealth to wicked men, to ſhew, that the nature of it is not good: and ſometimes to godly men to ſhew that it is not evill in their nature.* Therefore theſe outward mercies are not good, as grace and holineſs is, which makes them good that have them. Hence though they come to the godly from the grace of God, yet the Scripture never calls them grace, as it doth the fruits of Gods Spirit; ſo that this may abundantly comfort thoſe that are poor in the world, yet rich in grace. Thou haſt the beſt good that is in all Gods Treaſure, in making thee godly, he hath beſtowed a greater bleſſing upon thee than if he had given thee all the riches of the world. A man that hath gold, thinks not himſelf poor for want of clay or braſſe, ſo neither may a Chriſtian that is inriched with holineſs think himſelf poor, becauſe he wants outward mercies. Thoſe are good things, which make us good.

3. As they belong to godlineſs by promiſe, ſo they are bleſſings.

Thirdly, As outward wealth and encreaſe are bleſſings, ſo they do belong by promiſe unto godlineſs; *Godlineſs hath the promiſe of this life, & the life to come*, 1 Tim. 4. 8. Look over all temporall mercies that are in the Scripture, and you ſhall finde them made only to the godly man. Hence theſe earthly mercies, they are appendices to the Covenant of grace; when God promiſeth to be our reconciled father, then he promiſeth us alſo heaven and earth, and whatſoever is therein for our good. I do not ſay with ſome Divines, That wicked men have no right to their goods; That they are uſurpers, and ſhall anſwer for every bit of bread they eat, as robbers and theeves: No, it is a dangerous poſition to hold civill dominion and right to be placed upon godlineſs. The earth hath he given to the children of men, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, to all men as well as to the godly, but as there is a lawfull, civil right, ſo there is a ſanctified uſe, and thoſe only the godly have. All wicked men ſhall indeed anſwer for every morſell of bread, every drop of drink, every peny in the purſe, but not as if they were theeves, only as thoſe that did not improve all they had for the glory of God. This is alſo of comfort to the godly; art thou poor? art thou deſpiſed, art thou impriſoned? The promiſe of wealth, honour, liberty, belongs to thee, as well as of pardon of ſin and grace, only theſe are not ſo abſolutely neceſſary; if they were as neceſſary as Chriſt & grace, & heaven is, thou ſhouldeſt be no more without them than without theſe: Thou art rich in bonds and bills, even wherein the Lord is obliged, though thou haſt not the actual uſe of thoſe good things.

4. Wicked men have a right to worldly goods.

Fourthly, It is no wonder, that particular perſons may conclude of their good eſtate by the outward felicity God beſtoweth upon them, ſeeing it's the profeſſed and maintained doctrine of the learned men in the Church of *Rome*, that temporall felecity is a marke of the true Church: Would ye know (ſay they) what Church to joyn to? joyn to that Church which aboundeth in outward proſperity and wealth (ſay they,) and it cannot be (think they) that the Pope is Antichriſt, and *Rome Babylon*, for if it were, the Lord would have plagued it with ſore deſtructions, and not ſo wonderfully have bleſſed them for many ages together. But this is a weak

argument

argument, and it hath no ſtrength, but with carnall hearts that account nothing great and good, but what is earthly. *Paul* was diſcovered a faithfull Apoſtle by his iron chains on his legs, not his golden ones about his neck. By this doctrine we may ſee how imbred a thing it is in a man to be high-minded, and ſecure in his ſpirit, as if God loved him more than others, becauſe he hath beſtowed more of theſe earthly bleſſings upon him than others. They think that as God giveth them a higher place here on earth, ſo he will alſo in heaven: Eſpecially this ſin is committed by you of the City, many whereof have been bleſſed by a bountifull encreaſe from little or nothing: you ſay with *Jacob*, *With a ſtaff came I over Jordan up to London, and now I am become two bands.* You are above him in the parable, his five pound gained tenne, yours one peny a thouſand, and do you not take this great providence of God to you as an argument of your righteouſneſs? Do not you ſpeak in your heart, as the Text ſaith, though not with your mouth, that this makes you have hopes, that God who hath done ſo much for you here, will doe much more for you hereafter? Here is little true comfort in all theſe thoughts, as is to be ſhewed.

Fifthly, Although we cannot conclude grace by outward mercies, yet thus far we muſt by Scripture ſay, that God out of a generall love in a providential way doth give many a man outward proſperity and wealth, for his diligence, induſtry, upright and honeſt dealing in the world. Thus *Solomon* ſaith, *The hand of the diligent maketh rich*, and truth and juſtice in our way is bleſſed by God to encreaſe. Thus *Auſtin* attributed all the temporall greatneſs that the ſtate of *Rome* came to, unto the juſtice of the common-wealth, but this comes only from a generall Love of God, not from that peculiar love which belongs to his people: it doth not come from the ſame fountain that mercy and pardon comes; Therefore it's a fruit of providence, not of election: it argueth upright dealing, but not an heart made pure and upright to God: what then though thou ſaiſt, God hath bleſt my diligence, my honeſt dealing? yet thou canſt not ſay, this is the fruit of my converſion and regeneration, being turned unto God. 5.

Laſtly, Some go into another extremity, and conclude of their good eſtate and holy condition, becauſe they are in a poor, needy, miſerable eſtate, and deſtitute of all earthly comforts; They read in the Scripture, that the poor receive the Goſpel, Chriſt invited the lame and blinde, That perſecutions and afflictions are the way to heaven; They hear Chriſt ſaid, Bleſſed are thoſe that mourn and weep, and Wo be to thoſe that laugh; They hear God hath not choſen many rich, many noble, and therefore becauſe they are in great extremities here, they do not think God will make them have an hell here and an hell hereafter: But every poor man is not a *Lazarus*, nay there are many times none more wicked, curſed, prophane, and enemies to all goodneſs, than thoſe that are in a low and miſerable condition; A woſull thing it is indeed to have nothing but miſery here, and nothing but torments hereafter. If thy poverty indeed were ſanctified, thou waſt more holy, humble, heavenly, then that eſtate would not be condemned by God: he doth not diſdain the prayer of the poor, humble and lowly ones; but then be ſure thou art ſuch a poor man as the Scripture ſpeaks of, otherwiſe as thou many times here one earth wanteſt a crum of bread, ſo thou wilt in hell a drop of water.

In the next place, let us conſider why outward proſperity and bleſſings do not argue a mans good eſtate. VVhy outward proſperi y doth not argue a mans good eſtate. R. 1.

And firſt, *It may be demonſtrated from the original or fountain whence they flow*; It is not only from Gods love but his anger & hatred alſo: Sometimes God giveth men the outward comforts of this life in his hot diſpleaſure; Thus *Dives* it was Gods anger to him made him rich: *Solomon* ſpeaketh of this vanity, that many times a wicked man hath wealth given him, not for his own good, for he hath no power to enjoy it, but for the good of others, *Solomon* often taketh notice of this, that the wicked layeth up for the righteous; not that intentionaly he doth ſo;

so, but providentially it shall be so, *Quandoq; divitiæ dantur ad pœnam*, saith *Austin*; God giveth wealth to men, as *Saul* did *Michal* his daughter in wife to *David*, not out of love, but to be a snare unto him, let their table become a snare to them. As the immoderate length of *Absaloms* hair was an occasion to hang him, to be his death, so the overflowing of mercies and comforts are sometimes the instruments of mens destruction: Do not thou therefore boast and grow lofty by that which cometh from wrath and will end in wrath. Thy fat pastures are only to fat thee more for hell; Do not bear thy head high, because thou hast more abundance, wealth, greatnesse than others. The higher the trees are, the nearer to thunder and lightning. Oh what a difference did *Dives* in hell finde from himself faring deliciously every day!

K. 2. Riches and prosperity do wicked men hurt.

Secondly, *Therefore may not outward plenty and mercies be made a sign of our good estate, because they have alwaies in corrupt hearts corrupt and sinfull operations*: which we will take notice of, that so you who have what your hearts can wish, may know you have not what your hearts ought to wish.

1. As 1, Outward comforts in the plenty of them are apt to beget pride and loftinesse of heart, so as to despise and contemn those that are under them. Hence *Paul* bids *Timothy* charge the rich men of this world, that they be not high minded, but fear; charge them, as if entreaties and milde perswasions would not do them any good, but charge them, and then that they be not high-minded; all outward comforts are apt like ripe fruit to breed some worms, especially that of pride and insolency of heart: Mark therefore whether the blessings thou hast make thee bold, secure, lofty, Thou beginnest to care for nobody, to fear nothing: Alas, God hath not done these great things to thee out of love to thee, for they have unkindely and sinfull influences upon thee.

2. 2. If these outward mercies deadden thy heart to the things of God, or the exercise of those means of Grace God hath appointed, O thou hast cause then to tremble in the encrease of them. We see *Mat.* 13. that the cares of this *world* & deceitfullness of riches, did eat like a Canker into the heart of those hearers that come nearest to godlinesse. They were next to the good, but these thorns springing up choak the good seed; so the Apostle saith, *That they made shipwrack of their faith and conscience, because of their inordinate love to the world, Divitiæ a dividendo*, saith one, if they divide the heart between God and them, if they distract in prayer, in duties, all thy profession of religion, is more withering and languishing, since God hath done thus mercifully to thee; think thou hast little cause to have any confidence from hence; *Demas* he did cleave to this world, some think he totally apostatized, others that he did wonderfully abate in his former zeal, that he forsook *Paul* in his Pilgrimages and Travels for the Gospel, and betook himself to some more profitable way: which soever it was, we see how quickly such worms as these may devour the fairest gourds. Thou therefore that saist, God hath blessed me thus much from nothing, God hath given me a great encrease; Tell me true, Hath God blessed thee in thy love to God in the exercise of holy duties? dost thou pray better? are thy family duties more vigorous and zealous? Oh it is an ill symptome to grow up more into the world, and down more towards hell. Thou blessest God thou art come from nothing to a great estate, and thou tremblest not to think that thy flourishing hopes of grace are now come to nothing. O therefore take heed how you boast your selves in that which God abhorreth: Hath the encrease of mercies been the decrease of duties? Is the flowing of wealth the ebbing of holinesse? Then thou hast no cause to be confident, but rather to fear and tremble. Though duties and the means of grace, be wings to elevate thee to heaven, yet if these outward blessings are a clog or mill-stone about thy neck to press thee down, the latter will quickly justle out the former.

3. 3. Then can outward abundance be no comfortable sign, when the means to get it and the way to preserve it are unlawfull, and such as the Scripture condemneth:

demneth: The Lord many times ſuffereth unjuſt and deceitfull men to thrive for a while in the world, and ſo ungodly men have much outward proſperity, even Idolaters, when Gods own Church hath been much afflicted: *David* and *Jeremiah* expoſtulated with God about this, no wonder wicked men thought the better of themſelves, when *David* a godly man was ſo diſcontented hereat, that he thought all his integrity and pure worſhip of God was in vain: Yea, the Heathens they have buſied themſelves, *Plutarch* and *Seneca* have on purpoſe debated this providence of God, Why it is many times ſo ill with the godly, and outwardly ſo well with the wicked: But till *David* went into Gods Sanctuary, underſtood Gods word, he was not ſatisfied, but by that perceived they were in ſlippery places, and he began to think he would not have all their proſperity with the ſad conſequents of it; and indeed it is never well with the wicked, though in abundance, and never ill with the godly, though in deep extremities: Say ye to the righteous *it ſhall be well with him*, ſay ye to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, ſay it, Gods Miniſters are boldly and peremptorily to pronounce this; that morſel which went down at firſt as ſweet honey, will at laſt be emptied like gravel out of the belly. Do not therefore conclude of thy great mercies, it may be the manner and way may afford thee little comfort, it may be that which thou thinkeſt a demonſtration of Gods love to thee, is an argument of thy wickedneſs; when men come to great eſtates, preſently we ask, how is it raiſed? As the Geographers diſpute about the ſpring of *Nilus*: Outward mercies in Gods wayes are ſweet & comfortable, but in unwarrantable and unlawful wayes, they melt like wax before the fire, & beſides they ſting like a Scorpion & bite like an Adder.

3. Thirdly Therefore may we not truſt in outward proſperity, becauſe God many times giveth a man all the good things he ſhall have in this life only; and afterwards there is nothing but everlaſting woe and miſery. Thus *Abraham* anſwered *Dives* in hell, *Remember thou receivedſt good things in thy life time.* Now this is an heavy doom if men did rightly conſider it. Thou haſt much abundance, much eaſe, thou thriveſt and groweſt fat in the world, thou eateſt and drinkeſt, and makeſt merry Oh fear leſt God give thee all thy good things in this life only! What a wonderful change was made with *Dives* and *Lazarus*; the one having only good in this life meeteth with only evil, not a drop of water to cool his tongue; the other having nothing but evil, meeteth with that which is altogether happy. You may read in *Judges* about *Gideons* fleece, how that was firſt all wet, and then the floor dry, afterward the floor was wholly wet, and the fleece dry. Thus *Dives* in this life, *Soul, take thy eaſe, for thou haſt much good laid up for thee*; in the other life Soul tremble, and plunge thy ſelf in horrour, for thou haſt much torment and wrath treaſured up for thee, all is changed.

4. Fourthly, Therefore may we not truſt in theſe, becauſe we many times abuſe them to a contrary end for which God gave them; he gave them to be inſtruments of much glory to God, and good to others. If God give thee honours, dignities, ſucceſs, wealth, thou art to be glad of them no further than they may make thee ſerviceable to God; Thou doſt not look at thy own eaſe, thy own profit by them, but only attend unto the ſerviceableneſs thou mayeſt be capable of thereby: But oh how rare is this! Rich men are the greateſt men in debt of all others; they are much to God, much to the Publick, much to others neceſſities; now what comfort canſt thou take if God bleſs thee with theſe things, if thou doſt not alſo find him making thee thereby inſtrumental to his glory? If thou keepeſt all the good mercies God vouchſafeth to thee, as the Ants and Piſmires do their grain and corn which they hide in their little hils, and as they ſay, bite it that it may not grow.

5. Fifthly, They are not to be relied on, becauſe though all power to get wealth and proſper in the world, argue God is with thee, yet he may be only with thee providentially and powerfully, not graciouſly; As when *Nebuchadnezzar* conquered and prevailed; when *Alexander* became great, *Auguſtus* happy. God

was with these in a mighty providential way, but not graciously. It is an opinion that God vouchsafeth to some men an ἐυτυχία a good success, so that they prosper in all their enterprizes. Again, others though as prudent, as pious, yet never have good success. *Julius Cæsar* was perswaded of this, when he said *Cæsarem vehis & fortunam ejus*: And concerning *Alexander* it is observed, that his very pictures were successful; but Psal. 75.6. doth well conclude this matter. Well, grant there are such men whom God will prefer, make rich, great, honoured, whether they will or no; yet all this argueth God is only with them powerfully, not graciously. Now it is no solid comfort to perceive Gods power and assistance with us, unless we also find his gracious presence.

Use 1. Of reproof to those who desire these outward good things more than inward and spiritual, that say of all earthly greatness, as *Rachel* about children, *Give me children else I die*; or as *Chrysostom* reproved some that would say, *Give me that which is sweet,* καὶ ἐπνιγέτω, *although it choak me*, give me wealth, greatness, power, although it damn me: Alas, the fading, vanishing nature of them should make thee temperate; these flowers will presently die. You will cry out with *Jonathan, I have tasted a little honey, and behold I must die.* I have enjoyed a few years profit, a few years pleasures and now I must be damned.

Use 2. Of Instruction to those who meet with much prosperity & outward encouragements in this world: Take heed of thinking that God doth this to thee, for thy righteousness, for thy piety. Do not think this is, because God loveth thee more than others: Nay, fear least these mercies prove not like oil in hell flames to make it scorch the hotter. O do not let thy heart run out thus, God hath blest me in my trading, in my buying and selling, in my enterprizes and undertakings; but withall consider how he hath blest thee with an heavenly heart, with a gracious life: Since thou hast had more wealth hast thou also had more grace? The ship in the sea goeth swiftly, till it touches upon the sands and gravel under it, and then it is stopt. Oh take heed that you be not like *Corah, Dathan* and *Abiram*, swallowed up of the earth in a spiritual way, as they were in a temporal.

Use 3. Of Consolation to the godly, who itmay be want many of those outward mercies the wicked have. Let them know they are no arguments of true godliness, or of Gods dear love in Christ. If indeed thou hadst no portion in Christ, no interest in his grace; If thou hadst no gracious fruits of his Spirit upon thee; then thou mightst justly cry out, ah me, a wretched and barren wilderness near to cursing and burning: But now it is otherwise, thou hast those things that do indeed accompany salvation. Besides, let not thy heart be troubled at the want of these things, for they are not the best things, nor are they the most necessary things, and God hath vouchsafed them to thee: Oh it is a sign thy heart is too carnal and earthly, that crieth for earth, when God hath given thee precious pearls! Though all be gone, yet if grace be left in thy heart, and God be not gone from thy soul, thou mayest abundantly rejoyce.

SERMON

SERMON XXXII.

That a mans leaving those gross sins he hath lived in is no Sign of Grace.

2 PET. 2. 20.

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of Jesus Christ, &c.

THis Text may be called like that place in the *Israelites* travails, *Meribah a place of strife and contention*; The Arminian, Papist, and others confidently asserting a total and final apostasie from true grace, out of this Text. *Nulla orationis suada, nulla argumentorum vis*, is required for this, *Textus per se lucet*, say the *Remonstrants*. But you have the Orthodox as valiantly beating them out of this ground: What is the true meaning of the Text will appear upon a brief discussion; only in the general take notice of the excellency of this Chapter wholly spent in describing of false Teachers, manifesting their several evils of sin, and their several evils of punishment, which is so great that the Apostle *Jude* hath almost transcribed his whole Epistle out of this, with very little addition: *Pulchra sunt bis dicenda*, said he. For the understanding of the words, the Apostle used in the precedent verses two excellent similitudes, whereunto he compared false teachers; first to fountains without water; these invite the wearied passenger to drink, but when he cometh near he findeth nothing but clay and mud; so false-teachers promise such excellent and wonderfull truths, that were never heard of before, but indeed give noisome filth. 2. He compareth them to *clouds without rain driven with the winde*, which denoteth two things, First, their vain ostentation, as the cloud seemeth to bring rain but yet emptieth none; and secondly, their instability, *They are clouds driven up and down*, λαιλαπι, that is properly an impetuous turbulent winde; and as such clouds do both raise great tempests, and obnubilate the Sun, so do false-teachers make heavy storms and troubles in the Church, and withall bemist the glorious light of the Scripture. A third description is from their affectation of great and swelling words. All tumours argue a windy inflammation. In the next place he aggravates their condition by the pernicious and damnable effect of their false doctrines, they do not only damn themselves, but draw a troop of others into hell with them. And this they do in a sly way, they do δελεάζειν, as the Fisherman or the Fowler shew the bate, but hide the hook or snare. Whereupon the Apostle enlargeth himself concerning the miserable estate of the seduced persons, as well as the seducers, the followers as well as the guides tumble into the pit of destruction. The misery of seduced persons is aggravated first in my Text, from the greater curse and wrath that will now befall them since their apostasie, than if they had continued in their pristine unbelief and Paganism. So that you have the deceived wretches described by way of supposition;

First, In their former estate.

Secondly, In their fall.

Their former estate is deciphered in what they have done, and the means

whereby. The matter done by them, *is to escape the pollutions of the world*, that is, their idolatry and great vices, which formerly they lived in, betaking themselves to the true profession of Christ. The word μιάσματα is but once, and that here used in the New Testament, *Jer.* 32. 34. It is used by the *Septuagint* of more grievous and gross crimes, but *Ezek.* 33. 9. of the pollution of the heart only by covetousness. *Budeus* saith μίασμα was *piaculum*, when a man had contaminated himself with some grievous crime, contracting such guilt, that he made himself and others obnoxious to the wrath of God in a conspicuous manner: With Physitians the word signifieth those pestilential seminals that are in the corrupted air, whereby a general infection is procured; so that the Apostle meaneth whatsoever idolatry, or the great sins committed by them in Paganism, they had escaped.

Secondly, The means by which, is *through the knowledge of Christ*, so that their lives were clean, not by moral precepts, and prudent dictates of nature, but by faith historical or temporary in Christ; now here is the great Question, *Whether these were truly regenerated or no?* Those that hold the Saints Apostasie, say the Affirmative, and they press that word in the verse before, ὄντως, they *did indeed escape*; I confess that is all the probability, but divers have read it ὀλίγως or ὀλίγον or ὅτως, *for a little time*, or *almost they had escaped*, as *Agrippa* was almost a Christian, and thus reading it would be no advantage, and so we see it in the Margin of our Bibles: But I think it dangerous to depart from universally received copies. Others therefore that are Orthodox, say indeed, These were regenerated, but their fall was only partial and temporary, for they did recover again as *David* and *Peter*: But the Text affordeth no help to such an Assertion. I shall therefore conclude, That although by the Christian Religion there was made a great and wonderful change in the lives of these men, yet they were not inwardly regenerated, and my reason is, because the Apostle compareth them to a washed Swine, which though never so white, yet is a Swine still, her nature is not altered, therefore she will return to her mire again. So these, though purified in their lives by the profession of the Gospel, yet were indeed in their natural condition; and therefore when temptations came, they returned to their own natures, therefore *verse* 14. are called *unstable souls*. But you will say, if they were not godly, how are they said *indeed to escape the pollutions of the world?* *Piscator* answereth, because in the judgement of charity, and account of believers they were judged so. *Beza* better *indeed*, that is comparatively with their false teachers, for they lived in all filthiness, yet counterfeited an holy life, but lastly they did *indeed* leave the outward acts of wickedness, as the sow washed is *indeed* clean, but yet she is not turned into a Sheep; so these truly and *indeed* had altered their manners, amended their outward lives, but were Swine, were Dogs still. So that we Affirm the Apostle to speak of men not indeed regenerated, but yet changed in their lives from their former wickedness, and having no inward change, therefore it is that they fall, and falling their latter end is worse than their beginning, partly because they sin with more knowledge and understanding, and partly because they sin with greater ingratitude and unthankfulness for further mercies; and partly because they stand not at a stay till they fall into some foul wayes of doctrine or conversation: And thus much for the sense of the words.

Observ. *That a great change made in a mans life by forsaking those gross actual sins he once lived in, doth not presently argue such a mans conversion, or that he is indeed in a state of grace.*

A Christian may be a Swine, and yet washed. Thou that wert once a drunkard, a whoremunger, a swearer, mayest have forsaken these sins, and yet this alteration be in externals only, not internals. Though thou hast *escaped the pollutions of the world*, yet not those of thy heart, and therfore thou art still in the state of gall and wormwood. This is cleared in the foolish Virgins, who are called Virgins, because

becaule they kept themſelves from the idolatry and pollutions of the world; yet fooliſh, becauſe they had not oyl. Thus you have the Iſraelites ſeveral times throwing away their Idols, by which they had provoked God againſt them, and yet returning again to them: We may ſay, the Iſraelites did clean eſcape thoſe Idolatrous pollutions, and they did it ſeriouſly, they were not groſs diſſemblers; but becauſe their hearts were not changed, and they ſtedfaſt in this reformation, they were ſwine waſhed returning to the mire. *Judas* throweth away his unjuſt gain, with great terrour and ſorrow of heart, but he is a Goat, not a Sheep in Chriſts flock. I confeſſe this ſign ſeemeth to carry much probability with it; and commonly ſuch men, who have ſuperſeded their luſts, find a great deal of comfort: They rejoyce to ſee thoſe fetters and chains of their leggs, which once luſt and the Devil had put on them, taken off. They were ſins priſoners, and went up and down in their ſhackles, but now they are out of this dungeon,

Conſiderations concerning the point.

To open the Doctrine conſider theſe particulars.

First, *It cannot be denied but that the Scripture doth frequently comprehend the duty of repentance, and converſion to God, under theſe words, of forſaking our ſins, caſting away our tranſgreſſions, turning away from our evil wayes,* &c. Inſomuch that whereſoever there is ſuch a forſaking, ſuch a turning, there ſeemeth preſently to be the whole nature of converſion to God. Hence *James* calls it, *Pure religion and undefiled, to keep our ſelves unſpotted from the world.* But all thoſe expreſſions do but contain part of the duty; for every forſaking, every turning from ſin, is not preſently, a gracious turning to God, as is to be ſhewed; Therefore think it not enough, That thou waſt once indeed ſuch a prophaner, ſuch a vain perſon, but now thou haſt left all ſuch courſes: Do not thou ſay, *Behold a true Iſraelite in whom there is no guile*: Behold a true child of God on whom are the ſure works of grace: For though thus outwardly waſhed, yet inwardly the filth may abound; though the outſide be fair, yet the coar may be rotten within. I.

The reaſon why the Scripture deſcribeth converſion by external leaving of ſin, is becauſe hereby our hatred and loathing of it is made more manifeſt, and none can ſay, *They cleanſe their hearts, who do not alſo cleanſe their lives*: It followeth neceſſarily. That if the heart be waſhed, the outward converſation will alſo be waſhed, but not on the contrary, that if the converſation be unpolluted, the heart is.

Secondly *An outward reformation of life, and forſaking of ſin, may be from ſeverall principles.* 2.

1. From the grace of ſanctification, which doth wholly alter, and change the nature of a man, putting new and ſpiritual affections, and inclinations in him, whereby he is carried out againſt ſin from the pure love of God, and delight in grace; and forſaking ſin from this ground, is only comfortable. Outward reformation may proceed from ſeveral principles.

2. Another leaving of ſin, is from the reſtraining power, and providence of God, whereby bits and bridles are put into mans jaws, that they ruſh not out ſo madly into ſin as their impetuous luſts would carry them; and ſuch a forſaking of ſin, though it be outwardly for the glory of God, his name is not ſo much blaſphemed, others are not ſo much ſcandalized; yet it affords no true ſolid joy to him, that upon theſe terms only parts with his ſins. II.

3. There is a repreſſing of ſin by the dictates of Nature, and the power of Moral precepts inſtilled into a man. Thus there is a famous ſtory of an Heathen, who was a debauched and prophane man, that went to hear *Socrates* read his lectures of Morality, with purpoſe to deride and ſcoff him; but he was ſo potently wrought upon by *Socrates* his precepts, that he went away changed, and never was ſuch a debauched man any more; & no queſtion it was from theſe natural dictates, with the common help, and aſſiſtance of God, that many Heathens lived ſuch pure & unblamable lives. So then, if upon theſe three ſeveral ſtocks, the outward emendation of a mans life may grow, it behoves every man, who hopes he is III.

now turned a penitent and a convert, to enquire from which of all these his change is made upon him.

3. Thirdly, *Mens lusts and sins are for the most part so dear and sweet to them, that it must be some great work either of grace Sanctifying, or grace restraining, that will make a man leave them.* We see the Israelites would give all the wealth they had, yea, the very fruit of their womb to Oblations, rather than leave their accustomed sins: This makes our Saviour compare them to *a right eye*, and *a right hand*, as those things which are most intimate, and dear unto us: And what is the ground of all that malice, and hatred against the word of God, and soul-searching truth, but only mens inordinate love and affection to their sins? Insomuch that when you see any wicked man leave his accustomed sins, you may with wonder cry out, *What aileth this Jordan to turn backward, and this Iron to swim? How cometh this Blackamore to a white skin?* Though therefore it be no sure sign, yet it is a great duty: we may go out to see it as a great wonder in a parish, Behold! once a Swearer, once a Blasphemer, but now he doth so no more;

4. Yet outward reformation is a mercy.

Fourthly, *Though this outward alteration argue no grace in the heart, yet it is to be acknowledged as a merciful work of God.* When the word of God, though it doth not work to conversion from sin, yet it doth to repression of sin: So that men, though they cease not to be wicked, from holy principles, yet they do from a strong aw and fear which Gods word bringeth upon their consciences: So in that *Herod* feared *John*, and was thereby restrained from many sins, though not from all, it was very laudable. Thus King *Joshua*, that kept from several wicked wayes, as long as *Jehoiadab* the Priest was alive, it was a mercy.

I. 1. *For hereby* several good issues flow, as God is hereby less dishonoured: A Christian prophane in his life, blasphemes the name of God; thy Oaths, Lusts are a kinde of blasphemy against God; where therefore there is a forbearance of these, God is less dishonoured, let the grounds be what they will be.

II. 2. *Again*, hereby Gods wrath is not provoked so quickly against a people, to destroy them with temporal judgements: *Be not overmuch wicked* (saith *Ecclesiastes*) *Why shouldest thou die before thy time?* and thus for Oaths, Injustice, and Oppression, the land mourneth: Hence gross sins are called *crying sins*, because they make a noise in Gods ear importuning for vengeance: Now it is a mercy to a place when no such crying sins are committed, when God is not importuned to consume a place.

III. 3. *It is good*, because hereby godliness hath a repute, and an esteem, and wickedness hath a discouragement and brand upon it. The Scripture speaks *of an whores fore-head, and a face that could not be ashamed*: Now it is well when Gods Ministry hath brought sin into such an *Odium*, and matter of shame, that none of any ingenuity, any care, dareth commit any vile sin: And Oh that in all our congregations, if there were not such sanctifying grace, yet such ingenuous dispositions wrought in men by the light of the Word, that men would say, *I am taught better, I know better, I scorn and am ashamed to serve any lust, or commit any known sin*: *Those that are drunk* (saith the Apostle) *are drunk in the night*, and those that steal, *steal in the night*. Thus let *Ashkelon* and *Gath*, let *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, who are in the night and dark, have wickedness committed amongst them; but let not *Jerusalem* or *Sion*, who is in the light, thus stumble in the day and fall. How much is it to be deplored, that where the Gospel is received, and the word of God read, and preached, every prophane person should not be as much ashamed to shew his head, as a thief when he is taken?

IV. 4. Here is this good comes by forsaking of sin, though not upon right principles, that others are not encouraged to imitate & do the like Sins in the Text are called pollutions, contagions they have a pestilential infection with them; & because so, how good is it when this arrow doth not walk abroad that would destroy at mid-day! Certainly if we praise God heartily for the abating of the plague, or

sword

ſword, which have ſuch open mouths to devour, may we not much rather bleſs God for freedome from groſs ſins in the place where thou liveſt? If thou loveſt thy ſelf, thy family, thy relations, thou canſt not but rejoyce to live, where they ſhall learn from others to do that, which is according to God and his Law.

5. It is a mercy, becauſe where ſuch great impieties are reſtrained, there is leſs grief and trouble to the godly. *Eſai* cryeth out, *Wo be to me, becauſe I live among men of polluted lips*: and *David*, *Wo be to me, becauſe I live in the wilderneſs of Meſhech*: And the ſame good man bewailed his exile among thoſe that knew not God. *Lot* was tormented as in hell, with ſeeing and hearing the ungodly practices of the *Sodomites*: So that where God doth not work to regeneration, if yet he doth to reſtraining and binding up of mens corruptions, that their wickedneſs doth not make the place an hell to live in, the godly do much praiſe him for it. V.

Laſtly, Though leaving of ſin do not alway argue an intereſt in Chriſt, and an evidence for heaven, yet ſuch men ſhall have leſs torments in hell; their judgement will be eaſier. Thus *Auſtin* ſaid, *Camillus* will be leſs puniſhed in hell than *Cataline*; and ſo a wicked man forſaking his dear luſts and ſins, though not upon Sanctified principles, ſhall have more Temporal bleſſings here and leſs puniſhment hereafter, than thoſe that wilfully perſevere in them. VI.

Let us in the next place conſider, Why a meer forſaking of ſin, or a reformation in externals, is not enough: And this will be manifeſt from ſeveral demonſtrations.

First, *Becauſe* (*as was intimated*) *ſin may be left from forced principles without, not ſanctified grace within.* Forced principles are terrors of conſcience, grievous judgements of God, whereby a man is taken off from his ſins, as a maſtive is pulled off from worrying a ſheep, and ſucking its ſweet blood, by putting a red hot iron in his mouth. Nothing but a flaming fiery ſword can keep him off from ſin, which he accounted paradiſe: But that which is comfortable reforming of a mans life, is when a ſupernatural principle is infuſed within, whereby we are made new creatures; and ſo from the love of God, and his holineſs, ariſeth all our hatred or loathing of ſin. Thus the Apoſtle abhors that which is evil, cleaves to that which is good, *Rom.* 12. When our hating of ſin like hell, ariſeth from a ſweet intimate cleaving to good as glue, (for ſo the word implies) this is matter of rejoycing. We ſee in nature, operations follow the nature and eſſence of a thing; therefore departing from evil is not kindly, till it come from a pure and ſanctified nature. 1. Why an outward forſaking of ſin is no true ſign of grace.

Secondly, *A meer leaving of ſin, is not perfectly a touchſtone of grace, becauſe it may be done unwillingly, with great grief that we cannot keep our luſts ſtill*: And this is a conſequent from the former particular; for when we leave ſin from forced principles, there is a great deal of reluctancy: Thus *Pharaoh* and the Iſraelites under Gods judgements, they go from ſin as *Phaltiel* was taken from his wife, *They run crying after them to have them again.* Oh, this is the wretched temper of too many; they have an heart to do thus, to live thus, and they are grieved their luſts cannot be accompliſhed, but other things keep them they dare not; as *Paul* ſaid, *The evill he would not do, yet he did it, but ſtill he delighted in the Law of God in the inner man.* So theſe, the good they would not do, yet they are compelled to do; and therefore ſtill they delight in the law of ſin, and with their minds they ſerve it: Do not many caſt away their ſins, as the Mariners did *Jonah*, out of the ſhip into the Sea? They uſed firſt all the means they could to keep him in, and when that could no be, *then with great trouble of ſpirit they threw him away.* Thus many uſe all means ſecretly, publickly to keep their ſins, plead for the lawfulneſſe of them, excuſe the committing of them, till a tempeſt of Gods wrath is ſo violent upon them, that they cannot hold them any longer: Oh, therefore if thou were once ſo and ſo, but now waſhed, now no ſuch Ulcers and ſores are upon thee, conſider with what willingneſs, delight, and joy in God this is done, if otherwiſe, ſay not, *Grace is in thee.* 2.

Thirdly,

3. Thirdly, *Therefore may not leaving of actual ſin, be a good teſtimony, becauſe this is not accompanied with mortifying ſin in the root, and in the body of it*; For that only is the true forſaking of ſin, which goeth to the very bottom of all, which layeth the Ax to the root of the tree, which endeavours to kill the dam with the young ones, which would deſtroy ſin as they did *Jericho*, never to be built again. Thus *David* repenting of thoſe groſs actual ſins, goeth to the Fountain, his polluted nature and unclean, bitterly bewailing that: Hence alſo the Apoſtle calleth for *crucifying of the fleſh*, as well *as the luſts of ſin*. The Scripture ſpeaks of *the body of ſin, as well as members thereof*, and exhorts *to the mortifying of one as well as another*: And *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. In that great combat and conflict, he fights not with ſmall ſins or great, but the King, *Original pollution*. *Sampſon* did but cut his hair, and when that grew, all his ſtrength grew up again; if it had been polluted by the root, then he had recovered his ſtrength no more, ſo it is here. If actual ſins be only circumciſed, pared off, and not a pulling them up by the roots, they all encreaſe to their former prevalency again. Know then, it is not enough to dry up the ſtreams, unleſs the fountian alſo be: See how the root and ſeed-plot of all luſt and ſin, in thy heart is conſumed, and then there is hopes thou biddeſt thy ſins be gone upon right terms; otherwiſe this falling *out of lovers, will be the renewing of love*; or as water caſt upon the iron, makes it burn the more vehemently, ſo will this forbearance awhile from ſin afterward inflame thee ſeven times the hotter: And certainly here ought our ſorrow and hatred to be moſt vigorous, becauſe here ſin is in its ſtrength and power.

4. Fourthly, *Therefore may we not take comfort from meer external reformation, becauſe it may be nothing but the change of groſs ſins, into a channel of Spiritual, and more refined ſins*. Now this is only to change ſuch Tyrant ſins, but not the Tyranny of ſin. The Phariſees they carefully avoided all groſs Publican ſins: They thank God, *they are no drunkards, Publicans, adulterers*; but what then? *they are proud, covetous, ſuperſtitious*, they avoid groſs ſin corporally, but they greatly defile themſelves with other ſin ſpiritually. A man diſeaſed with diſtillation of humours, if the Phyſitian do not remove the humour, but divert it to ſome other part, that is more vital and dangerous, he doth not cure but kill his patient; and thus it is here, that flux of blood, that noiſome ſore of ſin, which did run out in a bodily way, is turned now into a mental way of pride, ſelf-confidence, ſelf-righteouſneſs; & thus as many times the drying up of ſores and iſſues, ſtrikes preſently to the heart and kills immediately, ſo doth the forſaking of groſs ſins fill thy heart with ſelf love, ſelf-delight, and hereby thy eſtate is more dangerous than ever.

5. Fifthly, *Take not comfort preſently from thy leaving of ſin, for it may be only a partial and limited leaving, not an abſolute and univerſal*. There is many a man hath made a wonderful change in his life, and hath caſt away all his viſible ſins, that others obſerve in him; but yet ſome ſecret, pleaſant, profitable luſt he keeps, by which means he is ſtill under the dominion of ſin, and in Satans ſnares. Thus *Herod*, he did many things, but one thing he would not do: *Now I know thou loveſt me* (ſaith God) *when thou haſt parted with thy only ſon Iſaak*, and then God knoweth thou truly loveſt him, when thou leaveſt thy own perſonal iniquites; when thou canſt ſay, *Lord, I have willingly parted with that which I was moſt addicted to, which I have been long accuſtomed to, which I would have deſired of all to have ſpared*: Thou mayeſt with *Saul* kill many a petty ſin, but wilt thou kill *Agag*? Wilt thou part with the fat cattle as well as the lean? be impartial in this point.

6. Sixthly, *Eſcaping of worldly pollutions, is not alwayes an argument of a renewed nature, becauſe ſin may drive out ſin*, even as Divines ſay about Popiſh exorciſmes, when the prieſt caſts out devils from men poſſeſſed, it is by colluſion: the devil recedes not, becauſe thoſe exorciſmes are of divine efficacy, but becauſe hereby he would confirm people more in believing a lye. Thus a man that hath propounded to himſelf any great worldly end of profit, pleaſure, or advancement, he

must

must for a while be a Saint, that he may be a Devil. Thus divers Hereticks have been men of unblamable, and excellent lives, that their seeming Sanctity may stamp the greater reputation upon their Heresies. It is *Machiavels* counsel to his great ones, *That by all means they should get the name and repute of virtue, though the thing it self be a burthen*; see then whether thy reformation of life be not subordinate to carnal designs; if so, thou art but a Serpent with a glistering colour, but a body full of poyson.

Lastly, This amendment of life is not satisfactory, because the means by which it is wrought, is not durable, rooted, and firm: It is said in the Text, *by the knowledge of Christ*: Howsoever some would lay much upon the word ἐπίγνωσις, yet that is many times no more than a bare γνῶσις, an historical knowledge of Divine things, with some light impression upon the heart. Our Saviour differenceth the foolish and the wise builder, by the depth of the foundation they lay, and its the knowing of the truths as they are in Jesus, that makes a man put off the old man with all its lusts: Therefore examine, by what means art thou perswaded thus to reform? How cometh it about that thou darest not do as thou hast done? If it be only general, historical faith of matters contained in the Scripture, this is too weak and languishing; it is one thing to leave sin from meer illumination in the head, and another from a powerful inflammation, and renovation of the heart; thou must with thy heart, and soul, and strength, love God, and leave sin, as well as with thy mind.

Use of Instruction, How manifestly and evidently they have no hopes of heaven, or grace, who live in the constant, common practice of gross sins; yet even such men would judge it hard to be told, *That they are of their Father the Devil*, that they are in a state of darkness and bitterness; yet what is more clear? You need not have one from heaven come and tell you, your estate is damnable, neither one from hell, with hell flames upon him, crying out, for such sins as you dayly commit, *Behold, I lie roaring and yelling to all eternity*: If therefore any that is called a Christian, a believer, be thus a prophane, an ungodly person, let him see the wrath of God written against him so evidently, that though he runneth, he may read it. What is a Swine, though washed, under the sad doom of Gods wrath? What then is the Swine wallowing in its mire, and tumbling in its dirt? And such an one art thou, who committest gross sins with greediness. *Use* 1.

Use of Exhortation, Not only to leave your sins, but upon such right grounds as will be of everlasting comfort: *Cast away your iniquities*, saith the Prophet; That implieth willingness, readiness, vehement detestation, never to receive them any more; but thy sins are pulled from thee, thy heart is the same, thy love is the same, unless God hedgeth thy way with thorns, that thou canst not follow thy lusts. Hast thou therefore left off all those evil wayes thou once livedst in upon Scripture-ends, with such a love of godliness, that though sin come like *Josephs* Mistress, in all her loveliness, pleasure, and importunate temptation, saying, *Come and lie with me*: yet thou leavest garment and all, saying, *How can I do this and sin against God?* Take heed thou art not like that man out of whom devils were cast, but he cometh with seven worse afterwards, and finds it garnished and swept, prepared for him; a Sheep washed, loves not to go into the mire again, though a Sow doth. *Use* 2.

SERMON XXXIII.

The Difficulty, and in some sense impossibility of Salvation notwithstanding the easiness which men fancy to themselves thereof.

MAT. 19. 20.

When the Disciples heard this, they were astonished, saying, Who then can be saved?

HAving in several instances discovered the weakness of those *props*, which most lean upon in reference to Salvation, I shall conclude this matter with a discourse upon the Disciples pathetical exclamation in the Text, *Who then can be saved?*

In the verse precedent, we have mention made of one, who had good wishes and desires for heaven, but being put by our Saviour upon an exploratory duty, it proved like jealousie water to him, discovering his rottenness; he was a spurious brood of the Eagle, for he was not able to endure these pure Sun-beams, *He went away sorrowful, for he had many possessions.* It doth not say, for he loved them, but he had them, it being very difficult to have these things, and not immoderately love them: they were κτήματα indeed, because they possessed him, rather than he possessed them. He had much wealth, as we say, a man hath a fever, when that hath him, destroying and wasting his health. Upon this we have our Saviour uttering a strange and paradoxal speech to flesh and blood, Christs words were miracles as well as his works, *It is hard for a rich man to enter into the Kingdome of Heaven*: Compare this with *Mark* 10 and there are several aggravations; first, our Saviour saith, *its hard*; *Mark* saith, he spake it with admiration, *How hard is it?* Then this he affirmeth with a vehement asseveration, *verily*, yea *Mark* saith, He looked about him, to signifie he had some extraordinary thing to say, and therefore would have them attentive, yea the Evangelist saith, *he sighed* also, when he spake this further he spake this to his Disciples, though not rich, as appeareth by that compellation in *Mark*, *Sonne, how hard is it?* &c. As a tender Father he bids them beware.

In the next place Christ doth not only shew the difficulty, but at last the impossibility by a proverbial speech, *It is as impossible for a rich man to be saved, as a Camel to go thorough the eye of a needle*, a Proverb in the Eastern parts to expresse an impossibility. Those that would understand it of a *Cable-rope*, as they mistake about the Greek word, so they consider not the greater impossibility is implied in the phrase the more significant it is. Now this speech of our Saviours is an hard speech, but thou art not to expostulate or contend with Gods Ministers about it, for truth it self hath said it: Only by rich men, *Mark* expounds those

those

those who trust in them, but *Matthew* speaks it absolutely, because of the difficulty not to trust in them, when we have them. Upon this speech of our Saviours, we see a notable operation on the Disciples, expressed first in their outward disposition, and then in their speech. In their disposition ἐξεπλήσσοντο, they were stricken with amazement, it was with them as if they had had some astonishing blow given them; and then you have their admiration, *Who then can be saved?* This implieth that they thought before they heard this a very possible, if not an easie thing to be saved, but now they despair of it: But why do they say, who then can be saved in the general, and not rather what rich man? for of them our Saviour spake, such poor men as the Disciples might be saved for all this. It is answered thus, though all men are not rich, yet all men have a desire and appetite after riches, and so they are thereby stopped in their course to heaven. Or thus, though all men are not rich, yet as rich men have their wealth which they immoderately rely on: So there is no man but he hath some creature or other, he doth inordinatly affect, and that makes him a Camel with too big a bunch to go in the strait way to heaven.

Observ. Salvation difficult and in some sense impossible.

That howsoever men may suggest to themselves many probable and easie grounds for their salvation, yet upon Scripture-consideration it will appear a great difficulty, yea in some sense an impossibility.

Thus the Disciples while they happily attended only to Christ his gracious invitations and manifold promises of his love, they thought it a very easy matter to get to heaven; They found nothing but honey come out of his mouth. Now when they hear our Saviour speak of the exact qualification of him that shall be saved, they are affected with fear as the *Israelites* were, who thought it impossible to possesse *Canaan*, because of the tall *Anakims* that must first be conquered.

For the clearing of the Doctrine, let these three things be premised; Three things premised for clearing the Doctrine.

First, that when we say it is such a difficult and impossible thing to be saved, we do not relate to that natural impossibility which is in every man; for so not only rich men, but even infants new born, it is as impossible for them to be saved, as a Camel to go through the eye of a needle; for seeing all are by nature dead in sin; we can no more put spiritual life in our selves, than *Adam* could at first have made himself of a lump of earth, a living soul. We do not then fetch this impossibility of Salvation so much from the weakness of nature, as from the exactness of the way of grace, for our Saviour in the Text layeth not this impossibility upon the impotency and inability of a man in respect of original defilement, though this stream will by long windings at last empty it self into that fountain, but upon the curious bounds that grace prescribes our affections even to lawfull things; so that although we may love and desire, and use these creature-comforts, yet if we go but one step beyond those limits, we have presently transgressed; and so when our Saviour saith upon this to comfort the Disciples with some hopes, *with God all things are possible.* Though it be universally true, yet it is more peculiarly to be limited to the matter in hand, God can level this Camels bunch, he can command the waters of our affections to stand still, and not to overflow. 1.

Secondly, This therefore may be extended not only to a natural man in his unregenerate estate, but even to a regenerated person, so that we may cry out, What godly man can be saved? The work of grace is so exact, temptations are so great, corruptions are so strong, that we may say, Who of the godly can be saved? For though Gods grace will give them to persevere, as Christs presence in the ship did, or might assure them they could not perish, yet when they saw their danger, and were in tempests and storms, they cried out, *Master save us we perish*; so even a godly man, though while he look to the Covenant of grace, he may anchor his soul securely; yet at the same time beholding his temptations and infirmities, he may frequently cry out, O Lord support me, I am falling 2.

into hell; we will therefore suppose a man in the state of grace, yet, were it not *that with God all things are possible*, this godly man would make shipwrack of his soul a thousand times over, ere he could get into that glorious haven. Thus *Peter* 1 Pet. 4. 18. *The righteous is scarcely saved*, which though it be principally meant of temporal deliverance, yet spiritual salvation is by necessary consequence included.

3. Thirdly, Although this be true, yet it must be acknowledged, that if we do respect the grace of Christ, and his fulness, it is a very easie thing to be saved; for let sin abound in the guilt and power of it, yet grace in the justifying and sanctifying effects of it, doth much more abound. Hence Gods mercy in pardoning is compared to the heavens, and our sins are but like the earth, a *punctum* in comparison, *Isa.* 55. 9. or as a drop of water to the Sun-beams, which is quickly dried up. In the fift of the *Romans* you have an excellent opposition between the second and first *Adam*, shewing how much more potent Christ is to save, and grace to give life, than *Adam* was to destroy, and sin to curse and condemn; in which respect Christ is said to give life, and that more abundantly; now this is to be marked by the dejected, tempted heart, which seldom looks up to grace, but to all the difficulties that are in heavens way. They cry out, O never godly, never believing, never coming up to Scripture-principles; but they do not joyn Gods power and their infirmity, Gods grace, and their guilt together; They do not say, O Lord, because this is impossible to me, Is it also to thee? Because I have sinned away my own grace, Have I also sinned away Christs fulness?

Therefore mind the strict qualifications to make thee walk humbly in fear and trembling, mind the gracious fulness of Gods love and power to make thee full of hope and comfort. Put the Camels bunch and Gods power together.

What makes salvation so easie to a mans natural thoughts.

These things premised, let us consider what are those considerations that make salvation so easie to a mans natural thoughts.

1. And the first is, *A representation of God altogether pitiful and merciful, without taking any notice of his purity & his justice, that he is a God who will not acquit the guilty* This half representation of God unto a mans heart, makes him thus confident. Men argue, How can we think God, who saith, *He would not the death of a sinner*, who saith, *Woy will ye die, O house of Israel*; Who hath put pity into mens hearts, shall not much more be a fountain when streams are so plentiful? This hath been aggravated so much, that it hath been an opinion of some, that at last all men, yea, and devils also shall be saved: But the Scripture speaks of Gods sting as well as his honey, of his fury as well as his pity; The Scripture speaketh of his rejoycing in the destruction of the wicked, as well as pitying them: Do not thou therefore deceive thy own soul, by minding Gods mercy meerly. Gods justice is to find out those, who have abused mercy, and he is a fire to consume as well as to give light.

2. A second ground which makes salvation so easie, *is the general offer and tender of Gods grace by his Word, Whereby none seem to be exempted:* Now if to this be added, a doctrinal opinion also, which doth abound in these dayes, *viz.* universal Grace, and universal Redemption, they now publickly perswade themselves the way to heaven is a broad way; but this Doctrine doth quite overthrow the Doctrine of a particular election of some only to salvation, which yet the Scripture manifestly declareth, and it puts the whole discriminating event of a mans self from others, into the hands of free-will: For if *Judas* have as much of the grace of God, and as much by the death of Christ, as *Peter*; the only reason why *Peter* doth repent and *Judas* not, is meerly, because the one improveth his power well, and the other doth not. Therefore although general tenders of grace are enough to encourage those that are hungry and thirsty after it, and such as are burdened by sin; yet they lay no foundation at all for such an universality of

of grace as they pretend to; neither do we lay a foundation of despair in this, for we say, this grace doth truly belong to every one *that believeth and repenteth*; And the Arminian cannot go further, he dare not say, This grace belongs to you whether you believe or not, repent or not: So that we are as universal in pouring of oil into wounded souls, as they are.

Thirdly, Salvation is thought easie, *Because of a mistake about faith: Oh say they, if a man do but believe, then heaven is his, Christ is his: As to him that believeth not condemnation belongeth.* Now all natural men think it a very easie thing to believe, What, to trust in Christ with all thy heart? How ready is every unregenerate man to say, he doth it? And upon this it is, that the Papists charge us as making it such an easie pleasing way to go to heaven; It is but believing (say they) and then all is well. But all this is a mistake about faith; he that saith, Faith is easie, never knew what it is to believe: To presume is easie, to be secure and self-flattering is easie; but out of the true sense of sin and deep humiliation for it to rely on Gods grace; this the godly heart finds not to be done without many conflicts and spiritual agonies; faith therefore is made the work of Gods Spirit, and it is that which the devil doth most oppose, because that doth most withstand him. 3.

Lastly, *Therefore men make it easie to go to Heaven, They may seek that in the last place, Live in all jollity, and then to cry, Lord have mercy on me at the last gasp, is enough, because they wholly mistake what true Godliness and Repentance is.* What godliness is they understand not, they think not of being born again, of the pangs and travail the soul commonly is in, before it is thus formed: They consider not the way to Heaven is a *strait way, and few that enter therein*; if they did, could they be so silly, as to think such vicious lives as they live, such formality and morality they continue in, were the way to Heaven? Certainly if this be so, then the Scripture speaks falsly, *Strait is the way*, Mat. 7. 13. 14. No, broad is the way, large are the paths, and few miss them; You therefore think it easie to be saved, because you take copper for gold, counterfeits for pearls; and thus a man may think himself very poor. Again, they mistake about repentance, for they think all kinde of sorrow for sin, every Lord have mercy upon them, especially if this be with tears, a true Repentance; but if this be so, we may cry out contrary to the Disciples, *Who will not be saved?* Then blessed *Ahab*, godly *Pharoah*, holy *Judas*, for all these more or less acknowledged their sin, and begged for pardon; But if thou examine Scripture, and see how much goeth to godly sorrow, what principle it must come from, what motives must produce it, what effects flow from it; Thou wilt be amazed, & say, O Lord, I doubt I never truly repented, my tears are too salt to come from a contrite heart in a gracious manner. Now do but observe all those men who are secure and confident about their salvation, you may as soon perswade them a Blackmore is white, as they begin to have the least doubt and suspicion about themselves; and you shall see its one of these pillars they lean upon, if this their foundation were razed all their hopes were gone. Could you drive them out of this refuge, then they would cry out, *Men and Brethren, What shall we do to be saved?* 4.

Let us therefore in the next place consider, why upon Scripture-grounds, it will appear such an Impossibility without Gods wonderful grace, for a man, yea, a godly man to be saved; So that of all miracles it will be the greatest, to see a godly man passing all the Rocks here, and safely lodged in Heaven. Why it is impossible without Gods wonderful grace for any man to be saved.

And first it appeareth a wonder, *If you consider that grace in a mans heart is not in its natural soyl.* It is like an Herb transplamted and put into some ground it doth not agree with. Now it is a wonder this herb of Grace doth not wither, alas the soil helps nothing to it. God gave command at first to 1.

the earth to bring forth graſs; but alas our hearts cannot do ſo: Grace in our hearts is like a ſtranger in a ſtrange land, like a ſpark of fire in the deep ocean, like a candle in a boiſterous windy night, it's a wonder if it do not go out: And certainly if *Adam* ſo quickly loſt his grace, when yet it was connatural to him, his heart was a fit ſoil; were it not for the Covenant of Grace, which fails not, a godly man would fall ſeven times a day wholly from God, as well as the Scripture ſaith he doth ſo often in temporal calamities. Oh then wonder how any grace comes to be alive in thy heart, that thoſe coals are not ſmothered up, that every night thou doſt not as that mother lie upon thy child, and through ſecurity and negligence kill this poor infant of grace.

2. The impoſſibility of it appeareth *in the ſeveral manifold works of Gods grace,* 2. *which are abſolutely neceſſary after we are regenerated:* So that ſuppoſe a man be converted, yet if grace do not afterwards help, and that ſeveral wayes, this man would die in the wilderneſs and never get to *Canaan*, now Gods grace is various, *There is a preventing grace*, whereby man is kept from thoſe many ſins and temptations which if plunged into would utterly undo him. Thus *David* was kept from murdering *Nabal*; and as *Paul* ſaid, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *By the grace of God I am what I am*; ſo he might have ſaid (ſaith *Auſtin*) *By the grace of God I am not what I am not.* Yea Divines ſay, *Plures ſunt gratiæ privativæ quam poſitivæ*, Gods preventing mercies are more than his poſitive mercies. Oh therefore, think if the grace of God did not keep off this ſin, this luſt this temptation, how had it ſwallowed thee up as the Whale did *Jonah*! Again, There is *protecting grace*, and that is, when thou art in the midſt of all temptations, yet grace defends thee, and thou ſinneſt not; we wonder at Gods miraculous deliverance to *Daniel* who was kept alive in the midſt of roaring Lions. Alas God doth no leſs for thee every day. There are devils like ſo many roaring Lions, ſeeking to devour thy ſoul, and its grace hath a covering over thee. Its a remarkable expreſſion of the *Pſalmiſt*, *mercy doth compaſs the godly*, *Pſal.* 32. 10. Its a Court of guard againſt all thoſe aſſaults that our ſpiritual enemies would make upon us. There is alſo *quickening grace* whereby the principles of holineſs are dayly blown up and enlivened; now if this bellows were not alwayes blowing, if this were not alwayes filling our ſails, we ſhould lie like ſo many dry bones; this wind muſt ariſe ere they can come together. *David* found the neceſſity of this, when he ſo often prayed, *That God would quicken him.* Thy very graces would lie and ruſt away, were there not this exciting grace; do not the people of God fall into divers lethargies and hurtful ſleeps, becauſe of the want of this? Again, there is *cooperating grace*, which goeth along with us to do, as well as to purpoſe in our heart: Its Gods grace that *worketh in us not only to will but to do*, *Phil.* 2. 13. When we have deſires and affections to duties how many times are we diverted and through lazineſs or diſtractions interupted, but grace carrieth us out to the work it ſelf. There is alſo *corroborating grace*, whereby the principles of holineſs being weak and unſteady, are confirmed and ſtrengthned more and more; for grace though it keeps us from ſin, yet carrieth us on to holineſs weakly and faintly. Thus he prayed, *I believe, help my unbelief*, Mat. 9. 24. *Thus the fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh*, that many times they do the things they would not, *Gal.* 5. 17. *Paul* calls this to be *ſtrong in the might of the Lord*; *and I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me.* *Paul* hath a kind of omnipotency, and to him all *things are poſſible*, becauſe poſſible to grace which enableth him. Laſtly, There is *perſevering grace*; for let a man be furniſhed with all the former fruits of grace, yet if this of perſeverance be not added, their works are not crowned; when we do things *ὡς τὰ πολλὰ*, then they are *ὡς τὸ πολὺ*, as they are often put one for another. Its not of the eſſence of grace to continue alwayes in the ſubject where it is, for then *Adam* and the Angels could not have fallen. It is therefore a diſtinct work of grace to give perſeverance from the firſt infuſion of it.

3. 3. *The impoſſibility of it is ſeen in thoſe ſlie inſinuating motions of luſt, that do ſtill abide*

abide in the heart of the most holy men. Insomuch that it is a wonder all the sweet fruit of thy soul is not quite eaten up with these worms that breed in them, all godly men consumed by those motions and sparks of sin, that are not yet extinct. *James* doth excellently describe the subtil working of original corruption, *Jam.* 1.14. it doth δελεάζειν entice a man away, with a sweet or profitable bait hiding the hook, and it doth ἐξέλκειν draw the heart aside from considering all those arguments and motives, that would make him forbear sin, ; now that this spawn of sin which would quickly prove Serpents and Cockatrices, is not destroyed appeareth by *Paul, Rom.*7. how strong and unruly doth he finde those remainders of sin in him, that were it not for Gods grace ready at hand to heal him, *Pauls* soul would quickly become as noisome through spiritual sores, as *Jobs* body through bodily ulcers. Its a wonder that every man is not a *Cain*, a *Judas*, considering what fuel there is in every mans heart.

4. *The impossibility of salvation without grace, appeareth in the temptations that are in lawful things*; Insomuch that when outward gross sins could not damn, the immoderate love of lawful things hath been like a millstone about the neck to drown in perdition; when the *Philistims* could not undo *Samson*, a *Dalilah* in his bosom can, Thy wife, thy children, thy houses, thy trade, these kill thee by secret poison, whereas gross sins destroy by open sword. One of the Ancients in a vision saw the world full of snares, and so it is; a shop is a snare, wife, children, are snares. Our Saviour on purpose sheweth this in that Parable, where those invited to the feast, say not I am a drunkard, a swearer, and cannot or will not come, *but I have bought, and I have married, and therefore cannot come*, Luk. 14.20. Seeing then every thing we touch is like pitch, every thing we meddle in is ready to entangle us, who can be godly, and so *who can be saved?* This wrought to an extremity upon some, that thought unless they gave over all worldly imployments, and spent their dayes in cels and caves with continual devotion, they could not be saved: But this was too much. 4.

5. *This will further be clear if you consider all the enmity, subtilty and power of the devil against a man, especially if godly*, Ephes.6. It is with principalities and dignities in high places, and *Satan hath desired to winnow you.* He chooseth out the godly in a more special way to undo them, *Luk.* 22.31. There is two things in sifting or winnowing, the one is concussion and tumbling of the corn and chaff, or refuse together; the other is the separation of the good from the bad; now the devil he desired the first only, to mingle grace and corruption, to bring them all into a confusion and so overcome them. Now did not Christ powerfully intercede, our faith would quickly fail in such extremities. That same Parable of a man going to Jericho, and meeting with theeves, was sorely wounded being left half dead, if it may be applied to a mans spiritual estate, is not meant of him before conversion, or in his natural estate, for he is wholly dead, but after his conversion many times foiled by Satan, and therefore needs oil and balm continually. 5.

6. *The impossiblity of it appeareth in the manifold duties and ordinances which God hath appointed us to be frequented in*; All which suppose the fire would quickly go out; he hath appointed frequent preaching, administration of Sacraments, daily prayer, and why is all this? that these warm cloaths, and continual rubbing of thee may keep life in thee. God knew how fading our graces were; hence he hath commanded this continual dropping and watering, else thy soul of a Paradise would quickly become a barren wilderness. And to this head may we bring those continual afflictions and [illegible] which God doth exercise his children with; and why are these, but as so much sope to refine us, to much fire to get out dross? They are like the beating of the garment to get out the dust and moths; now then if there should not be such a continual [illegible]ing, preaching, purifying, *who could be saved?* What godly man would not become like a standing pool full of mud and filth? So that salvation is a prize hardly obtained. 6.

7. *The impossibility appeareth, in that there is requisite a presence of all graces, and a* pro- 7.

proportionable cooperation of them. Now without God how impossible is this, *Adde to your faith temperance, &c.* 2 *Pet.* 1.6. If any one of these be lacking, it is a monster, not the Image of God. Hence so many have come near godlinss, been very like it, but have proved apes only, not really good; as there must be a presence, so a cooperation also. The Scripture commands the putting forth of such graces that to meer nature are inconsistent, they never act one but they prejudice the other. Thus we are to come with bold assurance to the throne of grace, and yet we must be in holy fear and trembling; so we must have repentance and faith, godly sorrow and godly joy together, we must have prudence and zeal accompanying one another; now who is godly if these things be so?

8. 8. *This will appear in the miscarriages of so many, who have put fair for heaven, and yet fell short.* Oh if grace and salvation had been an easie heaven, men could easily have got into it! Why have so many suffered shipwrack in the havens mouth? What was *Judas*, what was *Jehu*, what the foolish Virgins, what the second and third kinde of hearers? Did they not do much and suffer much, and yet at last proved blazing comets ending in slime, not fixed stars? Oh me thinks you should all stand and tremble to see them wallowing in their souls blood, as they did at *Asabel* in his bodies blood.

9. 9. *The strict and accurate endeavours of the godly, argue they concluded on this principle, that it was difficult to get to heaven. I made a Covenant with mine eyes,* saith *Job*, *Job* 31.1. *I set a watch before my tongue,* said *David*, *Psal.* 141.3. *I keep down my body,* saith *Paul, lest I become a reprobate,* 1 *Cor.* 9.27. Think of this and tremble, whose affections and thoughts on good things are by the by only. Its hard for the poor man to get wealth, for a languishing sick man to get health, but above all for a man to get grace, and when he hath it to keep it.

SECT.

SECT. IIII.

Wherein is handled the Nature of ſanctifying Grace under the Title of Regeneration with the counterfeit thereof.

SERMON XXXIV.

Shewing what the New-Birth or Regeneration is.

JOHN 3.3.

Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, Verily, Verily, unleſſe a man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of Heaven.

OUr work formerly hath been to ſhew the poſſibility of knowing our ſelves to be in the ſtate of grace, as alſo the lawfullneſs of proceeding by ſigns: We have alſo diſcovered what are true ſigns, and what inſufficient. The next thing therefore in order is to handle the nature of the ſtate of grace, which becauſe the Scripture expreſſeth in ſeverall words, all which have a peculiar notion with them, we ſhall take them in order:

And firſt I ſhall begin with the expreſſion of *regeneration* or *new-birth*, out of theſe words, which are part of a remarkable Hiſtory, *viz.* a Dialogue between Chriſt and *Nicodemus*; wherein is in a moſt lively manner repreſented the ignorance and ſtupidity even of the moſt learned and knowing men about the work of regeneration; and certainly it is of infinite conſequence that the holy Ghoſt hath left a full teſtimony of the ſtupidity of thoſe in this matter who were reputed the Maſters of *Iſrael*.

In the Text you have a Proportion, *unleſs a man be born again*, &c. then the aſſeveration, *verily, verily*. It's obſerved that whereas other Evangeliſts uſe this aſſeveration ſeldom, or if ſo, ſingly only; the Evangeliſt *John* for the moſt part doubleth it: ſome aſſign one cauſe, ſome another, but it may be attributed to the peculiar diſpoſition of *John*, for the Spirit of God uſeth their peculiar abilities to his work.

In the next place there is the occasion of these words, implied in that *Jesus answered*, for it doth not appear to what words of *Nicodemus* Christ doth answer, and therefore the ground of this speech seemeth very difficult to finde out. In the New Testament to answer is sometimes no more than to begin to speak, not denoting any relation to a discourse going before: but here it may well be connected to the words before: Either thus, as some, Thou think st, *Nicodemus*, I am a meer Prophet only, Thou lookest upon me only as a man sent from God, verily thou canst not perceive or discern any more, unless thou art regenerated. Others think more probably that *Nicodemus* after that honourable compellation given our Saviour, did then enquire how he might be made partaker of the Kingdom of heaven, only the Evangelist did not relate it, because our Saviours answer did sufficiently manifest it.

We come then to the Proposition, where is considerable, 1. the subject, then the attribute: The subject, *unless a man be born again*, wherein mark the universality, *unless a man*, he doth not say, Unless thou, including hereby every one: And be *born again*; he doth not say, be healed, or cured, or restored to health, but born again; The greek word ἄνωθεν some make from above, as it is used afterwards in the Chapter: but it's plain that it signifieth as much as πάλιν, by the reply of *Nicodemus*, *how can a man be born the second time:* The attribute is, he cannot see the Kingdom of God, that is, possesse it, as the Latinists say, *cernere hæreditatem*, by this is meant, not the present dispensation of grace, but future glory in heaven.

Observ. No salvation without regeneration.

Without regeneration there is no salvation.

It is not enough to be born once naturally, but we must be also a second time spiritually. The main thing to clear this doctrine, will be to shew what regeneration is, and I shall do that first negatively, then positively:

What regeneration is not. 1.

What it is not.

And first, *It is not as Nicodemus grosly conceived, a second entring into the womb*; It's a wonder that *Nicodemus* a learned man, not in *Aristotle*, or humane arts, but in the Law of God, in the Scriptures, where he had read of a new heart, & taking away the heart of stone, *Ezek.* 36.26. yet should apprehend no better: but though a man could in a naturall way be born a thousand times over, yet such is that abominable defilement & pestilential contagion in every one, that this natural being can be no more made glorious in heaven than a black coal a glorious starre: Thus our Saviour afterwards shewing the ground of regeneration, saith, *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.* What a folly then is it to glory in a mans birth, a Prince, a Nobleman, a Gentleman by birth! for though these have priviledges among men, yet they do not exempt from curses before God: Oh that those who glory in their bloud could discover well the works of Gods Spirit in them, and this is universally true, even of those who have excellent, ingenious, good natures, such as *Bonaventure* of whom by an *hyperbole* it was said, *In hoc homine non peccavit Adam*: This good nature, this kinde, this ingenious nature must be born from above; It must not only have external culture and dressing, but internall alteration, and without that it burneth in hell as well as others.

2. Secondly, *Its not, in another extremity, to have a new physical being*, As not to lose the essentials we had of a soul and the faculties thereof: some have confusedly talked of a transubstantiation into the being of God, & tels us of a strange deification, or being made God with God. These men have affected uncouth & obsolete expressions, as the Paracelsians do in Physick: No, though born of God, yet not made God, only we have the image of God in us, & that which is by way of substance in him is only by accident in us. It is true, the Scripture calleth it a divine nature, 1 *Pet.* 1.4. a new creature, 2 *Cor.* 5.17. the inward man, & this made *Illyricus* with his flowers at least in words to erre, (for some excuse his sense) when he said, The substance of a man is corrupted, and so his substance must be changed. It's true the Scripture useth such expressions to shew how reall, intimate, and fixed the work of grace is; It's not a notion, it's not a fancy; No more

more than to be a man, to live, to move, to ſpeak, to eat is. Thus grace where it is, makes a wonderfull alteration, though not in the eſſence, yet in the qualities and operations of a man, ſo that in a Theologicall ſenſe he is wholly a new man, he is not the ſame he was: and this is diſcovered as really and powerfully in him, as when *Adam* out of nothing was made a man: Take heed then of being in the number of thoſe who account all the change wrought by Gods Spirit in a man, to be only a melancholy fancy, and attribute all to ſuch cloudy imaginations, or elſe ſpeak of it, as a particular conſtitution and temperament of the body: No, The Scripture would never call grace by ſuch reall powerfull names, if it had not alſo as reall and powerfull effects: ſo that regeneration is a reall, ſupernaturall change in a man, as when of dead a man is made alive, of fooliſh, wiſe; not a relative change, as when a man is made an husband or Magiſtrate, wherein his principles and heart are not altered.

Thirdly, *It's more than an outward acceptation and acknowledgement of the wayes of Chriſt.* For though this ſeem to be a great converſion, dead men begin to live, yet our Saviour extendeth his ſenſe further: ſo univerſall and generall as corruption hath been, ſo extenſive muſt the reſtauration of the ſoul be. The Jews called their Proſelytes *recens natos*, new-borne; but to be a Proſelyte externally, not inwardly changed in our natures, is not this regeneration in the text: Therefore this new-birth is the greateſt riddle in the world, even to thoſe who may outwardly very readily ſubmit to the wayes of Chriſt: why then do men reſt ſatisfied in this externall profeſſion, as if nothing elſe were more required? May not Chriſt look upon thee as he did on the fig-tree, ſee leaves but no fruit, and ſo eternally curſe thee? Thou, though turned from Paganiſm or Popery; yet are not new-born, till God hath changed that Tygers nature of thine into a Lambs; ſay then, O Lord, I do not only deſire new eyes; new ears, new hands, but a new heart, and a new nature. 3.

Fourthly, *This is not that morall and civill deportment of a mans ſelf, which may be attained by humane precepts and helps of Philoſophy.* Although Heathens have called the new moulding of our lives, a new-birth: and *Nobis ad arbitrium noſtrum naſci licet*, ſaid *Seneca*, we may be born what we will; yet this is farre ſhort of that heavenly and ſpiritual birth the Scripture diſcovers, ſo that as our Saviour of all ſubjects thought this moſt neceſſary to inſiſt upon with *Nicodemus*: the like ought the Miniſters of Gods Word to do: for ſeeing all people generally are ſo full of ſelf-righteouſneſs, pleaſe themſelves in a morall, ingenious carriage, this ought again and again to ſound in their ears, *Unleſſe a man be born again he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Now though this be ſo confeſſedly neceſſary by Scripture grounds, yet who ſearcheth deeper into his heart, and who looketh further into his own ſoul, than a meer externall righteouſneſſe? if this were ſo, regeneration might be found in *Ariſtotles* and *Plato's* School, as well as Chriſts, but its the property of Gods word only to beget this new nature in us: Our Saviour meaneth not, unleſſe a prophane man only be born again, but alſo unleſs a meer civill man, and outward vertuous man be born again, he cannot be ſaved. 4

Fifthly, *Neither are thoſe common gifts and graces which ſometimes are beſtowed upon reprobates, this regeneration: Judas* was not born again, though he had power to work miracles, & was enabled to preach the Goſpel of Chriſt. It is not with man as trees, every leaf and bloſſome argueth ſome life in the tree; but not in man, every ability to preach, to pray, though with great approbation, doth not manifeſt ſupernatural life. Theſe indeed come from Chriſts inabling us & aſſiſting us, but not dwelling in us: ſuch as theſe are abortives or monſters, they are in a probable way of being born again, but prove unſhapen, ſometimes by deficiency, ſometimes by redundancy, and ſometimes theſe have pains & pangs of heart, their ſouls are in travell, as if Chriſt would be formed in them, but at laſt there is nothing but winde and emptineſſe, the iſſue of them, ſo that if you con- 5.

der what this regeneration is not, you will finde excluded from this number, moſt of thoſe who yet externally account themſelves in Chriſts flock, and children in his houſe: do not therefore judge ſpirituall parts and head-abilities any ſuch great matter, for if theſe come not from a new heart within, if they are not ſtreams flowing from this fountain, they will vaniſh like vapours, and be but as the garlands of flowers that were upon the beaſts that were near ſacrificing: O but how is this work of regeneration and gracious mercy of God now neglected? Who attendeth to it? Who in the midſt of theſe ſeverall opinions that fly abroad in the world, mindeth this neceſſary thing?

Wherein regeneration lieth,

In the next place, let us conſider wherein this lyeth: and that in the general we may ſay is *the reſtauration in ſome meaſure of that image of God, in which we were created: Adam* was made after Gods image and likeneſs, *Gen.* 1.27. holy as he was *Eph.* 4.24. called therefore the Son of God, *Luke* 3.38. This conſiſted in an univerſall rectitude of the whole man, in an holy frame of all the parts, faculties, & affections in a man: now when *Adam* fell, this curious workmanſhip was broken to pieces; no part, no affections could do their duty: grace therefore regenerating is to reſtore and repair theſe breaches again: The blinded underſtanding is inlightened, The contumacious will obedient, The ſtony heart ſoftned, The unruly affections crucified, ſo that this grace of regeneration makes the moſt excellent alteration and wonderfull change that can be. It's far more than raiſing the bodies out of the grave, and making them incorruptible and glorious, and certainly if the people ſo wondred to ſee a lame cripple walk, a blinde man ſee, how ought we to admire the greatneſs of Gods power in this ſupernaturall change? Now this Image of God had theſe remarkable things in it; There was an univerſall harmony and proportion of all graces; for it is not the Image of a man if there be only the head or the hands, there muſt be the proportion of the whole body; ſo in this work of regeneration there muſt be an univerſall alteration: Every part muſt be born again, as well as every part is corrupted, & every part ſhall be glorified. Then again in this Image there is likeneſs & reſemblance, for ſo, to be an image, is a relative thing, & therefore by this we are ſaid to be born of God, to be children of God, becauſe we have an heavenly diſpoſition, love what he loveth, delight in what he delighteth, hate what he hateth. Even as wicked men are ſaid to be of their Father the devil, *Joh.* 8.44. becauſe they do his works, they lie, are malicious to the godly, reſiſt & oppoſe the means of grace, as Satan: Thus the godly are of God their Father, becauſe his works they do, are holy as he is, merciſull as he is, righteous as he is, though with a vaſt diſproportion. Laſtly, There was connaturallity & ſutableneſs of this image with mans nature, inſomuch that Divines call that righteouſneſs naturall, not in reſpect of the principles from whence it came, for ſo it was ſupernaturall, but the ſubject unto whom it was a due perfection, ſuppoſing Gods will to create man for the enjoying of himſelf, even as his ſoul alſo may be ſaid to be due to him; Now although this regeneration be to us ſupernatural and wholly of meer grace, yet when it is infuſed, it makes ſuch a change, that the wayes of God are a delight to him, I delight in the Law of God in the inward man: There is a ſweet proportion between the heart that is made an holy ſubject, and the Law of God which is an holy object.

But more particularly let us conſider the nature of it.

1. Firſt, *This new birth makes grace to be in us by way of an infuſed life*, and ſupernaturall principle, fixed, and permanent; It giveth a man *eſſe ſupernaturale*, a ſupernaturall being: Therefore it is called *the hidden man, the inward man*, 1 Pet. 3.4. *The new creature, the divine nature.* It's compared to a root, to a fountain, to a foundation; and now for want of this, we ſee ſo much inconſtancy and unſetledneſs in the matters of religion and piety: Men have not a new nature, they have only new notions, or new motions, not new natures. When grace becomes thus a rooted principle in us, then though the windes and ſtorms blow, a

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man will continue firm: *Ariſtotle* obſerved ſome men had a diſpoſition to moral virtues, but not an habit, now this diſpoſition he made eaſily ſeparable from the ſubject, whereas the other made a man like a ſquare ſtone, which wayes ſoever it falleth, it will ſtand ſure: You have ſome bruit creatures that act many things like men, but becauſe they have not an humane nature, they are ſtill bruitiſh, ſo many things may be done in the way of holineſs, which yet come not from that inward principle of renovation, & therefore is but copper & not gold. Oh let us not then conſider ſo much the outward actions, the outward duties of religion, as that root from whence they grow, that principle from whence they come, are they fixed, ſetled ones by way of life in thee? then art thou born of God.

2. Secondly, *By this means a man doth participate of God*; and whereas we cannot be like God in his greatneſſ, infiniteneſs, omnipotency, we are like him in this, *Be ye holy, for I am holy*: Lev. 11.44. As therefore in God, the Angels, of all Gods attributes do eſpecially celebrate that, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, Iſa. 6.3. ſo of all conſiderations in man this is his greateſt glory: it's not wealth but holineſs, it's not honour but holineſs, it's not prudence & wiſedom, but holineſs. This new nature is a participation of God (ſo far as creatures can partake) in that glorious attribute of his: Magiſtrates they are called Gods, becauſe of that externall authority God hath ſtamped on them, and becauſe they reſemble him herein, but the people of God reſemble him in a more excellent and admirable way. The Apoſtle cals it bearing the image of the heavenly, 1 *Cor.* 15.48. Hence come thoſe expreſſions of ſetting our affections on things above, and ſitting with Chriſt in heavenly places. This is a wonderfull elevation and lifting up of the nature of man. As the humane nature of Chriſt was infinitely glorified to be hypoſtatically united unto the divine nature, ſo it is a great honour for man to be graciouſly united to Chriſt, whereby as the branch receiving juyce from the Vine, brings forth fruit ſuteable to the nature of the Vine, ſo the ſoul ingrafted into Chriſt produceth operations ſutable thereunto.

3. Thirdly, *Hereby the work of grace is manifeſted to be a reall, active, working thing in a man*: for why is it compared to life, to a new birth, to a fountain, but only to ſhew that theſe things are not imaginations or dreams, but carry along with them reall operations? As a man cannot have fire in his boſome, but he will quickly finde it ſcorching and heating there, ſo a man cannot have this new nature infuſed into him, but it will incline and move the ſoul, not ſuffering it to lie ſtill: ſee what a fire this kindled in *Davids*, and *Pauls* hearts, therefore the ſpirit of regeneration, *Iſa.* 4. is compared to the ſpirit of burning, which like fire conſumeth the droſs, a godly man is ſaid to have *rivers of water running out of his belly*. It's true the people of God are ſometimes in deſolations, in deſertions, they feel no life, they apprehend no power of grace upon their ſouls, and then they look upon themſelves as dry bones, withered branches: but this is for a while only, this is a temptation, and afterwards the ſap of grace will manifeſt it ſelf more: The Tree, though it hath life in it, yet in the winter buds not, bloſſomes not, ſo neither may that principle of grace diſcover it ſelfe in its good effects, and then it doth not hold, that a good tree may be known by his good fruit: Thus *Auſtin* in his confeſſions doth acknowledge theſe reall and powerfull motions of God upon his ſoul.

4. Fourthly, *Becauſe his nature is new, his actions alſo are new*: All *Old things are paſſed away*, 2. *Cor.* 5.18. *Paul* that once perſecuted, behold he prayeth, and *ſuch were ſome of you* (ſaith *Paul*) *but ye are waſhed, but ye are cleanſed*; As every man is (ſaith *Ariſtotle*) ſo is he affected, ſo he ſpeaks, and ſo he lives; When therefore thy life is ſupernaturall, ſo thy affections, thy words, thy converſation is alſo: *The life that I now live, is by faith, in the ſon of God*, ſaith *Paul*, Gal. 2.20. Oh this is a ſad ſymptom, that few are acquainted with regeneration, becauſe all things elſe are not made new in them: They have the old converſation, the old affections, the old diſcourſe, the old paſſions they uſed to have: This argueth

gueth thee to be in the ſtate of bitterneſs ſtill. There cannot from a ſweet fountain come onely bitter ſtreams, ſo neither can there come from a refined Spirit only corrupted actions. As the thorn cannot ſend forth grapes, ſo neither do grapes ſend forth thorne; why then if thou art born of God, doſt thou diſcover ſo much of the old man in thee? why is the *Egyptian* in *Canaan*? this is as the Father ſaid, for *cœlum pluere gehennam*, in another caſe: did grace and Chriſt dwell in my ſoul, were it poſſible that thy heart ſhould be a den of luſts, and a cage of unclean imaginations? ſhake off therefore all negligence and lukewarmneſs, obſerve how thou art changed, whether it be otherwiſe with thee than what thou haſt by nature.

5. Fifthly, *As the actions of this new-born man are new, ſo are his deſires, comforts, contentments*: Whereas before he could with the Prodigall be content with huſks, now nothing will ſatisfie him but his fathers manſion, and his fathers feaſts. Take every naturall man, while unregenerated, as he knoweth no other good, ſo he deſireth no other than that of the creature, as Moles love the earth, and the Swine draught. Thus while we are corrupted in our eſtates, we minde only earthly things, but when this great change is made, then theſe cockel-ſhels are growne away; then the favour of God, the light of his countenance, ſociety with him, and enjoying of him, are the only deſires of his ſoul; Thus *David* his heart, his fleſh, and all breathe after the living God, *Pſa.* 84. 2. Thou wilt not judge it ſuch an happy thing to be wealthy, great and honoured in the world, but to have the light of Gods favour ſhine round about thee. Examine therefore thy ſelf. Doſt thou ſee the glory of the world, and thou falleſt down to worſhip it? Doſt thou in the encreaſe of worldly comforts ſay *It is good for us to be here*. Then fear thy ſelf, ſay, When I was a childe, it's no wonder, I thought, ſpake as a childe; but when a man, other apprehenſions came in: When thou waſt unregenerated thou ſpakeſt like a naturall man, thou thoughteſt like him, but now God hath made thee a ſpirituall man.

6. Sixthly, *Being thus new born, he is carried out with a filiall affection in his obedience to God*: All his ſervice is ſweetned with a great deale of love, delight and joy. What he doth for God; he doth it not ſlaviſhly, ſervily, as heretofore, enforced thereunto, but from an Evangelicall and kindely principle within. Thus thoſe that are new creatures are ſaid not to be under the *Law*, but under *Grace*. The Law is a rule to them, ſo they are under it, but the Law is not only a whip and a ſcourge to them, ſo that they ſhould pray, hear, do things out of conſtraint: yet this filiall confidence and love is alſo accompanyed with a reverentiall fear, and holy awe of God, ſo that from the one he is encouraged, from the other he walketh humbly. Now from this ſpirit of Adoption all our duties ſhould ariſe: Prayer is but a bitter crab, or a wilde grape, unleſs the Spirit of Adoption ſweeten it, and ſo of all other duties; if then we be born of God, his preſence, his favour is dear to us, our approaches unto the Throne of grace are with holy aſſurance, we call God *Abba Father*, by ingemination, to ſhew partly the efficacy and intention of this ſpirit upon us, and partly the oppoſition that is made by the guilt and blackneſs which is upon our own ſouls.

7. Seventhly, *Where there is this new-birth, there a man is not only above ſin; to eſchew and hate that, but alſo above the world, and all immoderate affections therennto*, *Eph.* 3. It's called *the life of God*, not only becauſe he works it, but becauſe it imitates his life. Hence in the Scripture not only tranſgreſſions are made contrary to this life, but alſo the Love of father, mother, or any thing that is dear unto us *Mat.* 10. 37. ſo that it is a poor thing for a man thus regenerated to ſay, he loveth God more than ſin, more than the luſts of the fleſh; he doth alſo embrace him more than outward comforts in the world; Thou therefore who hopeſt thou art a childe of God, why is thy ſoul thus bowed down to the creatures? why art thou ſo diſparaging & debaſing that heavenly nature of thine? thou art not made a worm to crawl on the earth, not a ſerpent to lick the duſt of the ground,

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but thou art made like unto God, to love what he loveth, to delight what he delighteth in: Do not then labour after an impossibility, which is to serve god & Mammon, to bring heaven & earth together; no if this new nature be infused into thee, it makes thee above trade, wealth, friends, honour, life, it filleth thy heart with such heavenly inclinations, that as a stone cannot hang in the empty air, but hasteneth to its center, so the regenerated heart cannot abide in any thing on this side God; *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and whom in earth but thee?*

Eighthly, *This birth is inexpressible:* He that is thus born again, cannot declare how, so our Saviour afterwards, *The spirit or winde bloweth where it listeth, and thou knowest not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth* As a man understandeth not how fearfully and wonderfully he is made in his mothers womb; so neither how admirably God doth put these inclinations and dispositions into his soul: How is it that he who was backward, yea, an enemy to what was good, yet now with all delight follows it? *motum scimus, modum nescimus;* we finde these great changes made upon us, but cannot declare how: From this also it cometh about that we cannot express it to another, only experimentally feel it in our selves: As a man cannot express to another what it is to live, only he feels the motions of his life in himself: Thus also he cannot tell to another what that new life, that new birth is, what that power of God is which he hath felt in his soul: but saith as the blinde man to the Pharisees concerning Christ, *I know not how he made mee whole, only this I know, I that was once blinde, do now see,* Joh. 9. and so here, I know not how it cometh about that *I* am thus altered, I cannot tell how I am changed, only this I know, I that was not afraid to sinne, now I am; I that did not delight in God now do. 8.

Ninthly, *In that the Scripture calls this regeneration, a birth again,* It's a metaphor, and so would give us to conceive some resemblance between the natural and the spiritual birth, I shall touch upon some most evident. 9. A resemblance betwcen the naturall and spiritual birth.

First, *Here is in this new birth God a Father,* Therefore often said *to be born of God,* & *children of God.* This as it denoteth our impotency, for if we cannot make our naturall selves, much lesse can we make our supernatural selves; so it also manifesteth the great power & efficacy of Gods grace, which saith to us as unto dead *Lazarus, Come forth* out of the grave of sin: Every godly man is an *Isaac,* a childe of the promise, for he is born only by the meer power and grace of God: Mans free-will is *Sarahs* dead womb; It is *Philo*'s allegory upon that of *Jacob* to *Rachel,* Am I a God (saith he) that I can give children? so saith he, God only puts grace & vertue into the womb of the soul; We may say to Pelagians & Arminians Are we Gods that we can raise the dead, give life where there is none? This is good to be observed, for there is scarce any doctrine more pernicious to the glory of God than this, whereby we shall be Creators of the new creatures. We cannot make a fly, and yet we think we can make our selves godly. Oh therefore look up to heaven, and say, O Lord new make me, new create me. I.

Secondly, *The seed or means by which this new birth is accomplished, is the Word of God preached:* Thus often, he hath begotten by his word, *Jam.* 1.18. and it is that whereby we are quickned; Take all humane eloquence, all Philosophicall precepts, they do no more than the Prophets servant to the dead childe, though laid upon him, yet it would not bring life into him, his master must come ere there can be life. Alas to instruct men with arguments from reason about a good life, such as the heathens are very busie to perswade men by; they turn not, or alter the heart. The Word of God is that two-edged sword, is that fire, that hammer, that seed, that manna, which serveth to subdue sin, & to quicken up to grace. Oh therefore how carefull should people be both to get & to live under the preaching of Gods Word! This is the winde that must make dry bones live: This is the voice of a trump, that must make the dead come out of the grave. How mean, impotent, contemptible men may esteem it, yet God hath appointed no other mean to convey supernaturall life, but after this manner. Therefore where no vision is, II.

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the people perish, where no preaching is there cannot but be a worse judgement than that of *Egypt*, where there was one dead in every family; Alas there all must needs be dead in every family. This new life comes by preaching.

III. Thirdly, *As the naturall birth is with many pangs and troubles; In sorrow they shall bring forth,* Thus also is this new man wrought in us with much agony and trouble, many a heart-ach, many a violent trouble of soul, ere Christ be formed in us. Hence as when Christ was born all *Jerusalem* was troubled, so when this new life was infused into a man, much commotion, much division of heart. The devil when he was cast out of the possessed person, did more tear, torment, and vex the possessed person, when he was going out: so grace expelling Satan from those holds and dominions he had over thee, puts thee to great fears, raiseth more terrours in the heart. Besides that Christ and the way of grace may be more welcome and precious, Gods spirit is for a while a spirit of bondage, to make every thing a burden, sin a burden, our lives a burden, our shops burdens, our fields burdens, that so there may be the greater joy for this manchild that is born. A woman cannot bring forth in her sleep, or in a dream, without feeling pain, so neither can the heart of a man be thus new changed, and molded without severall pangs, yet we do not limit this to such degrees, nor to every person in such a sensible manner.

IV. Fourthly, *As this naturall life at first infused is the root of all vital actions,* and if any thing proceed not from this, it is dead; so this supernatural life is the foundation of all vital actions in grace, and whatsoever is not from this root, cannot be called a living action. If a man prayeth, if he heareth, and this not flow from the principle of regeneration, it is not accounted in the number of spiritual actions. When therefore thou settest upon the exercise of religious duties, still consider from what life this proceedeth; for thy hearing, thy praying thy family-duties may come from education, custom, formal devotion, but not from this divine life. Therefore this is the only necessary thing, if thou hast lived to threescore years, and this new principle not infused into thee, thou hast not yet done one acceptable duty. As the Apostle speaks of a dead faith, *Jam.* 2. 26. so there are dead duties, dead performances, and our auditory may most consist of dead men. You see Clocks and other artificial instruments have their motions, but they are not motions of life, because not from a principle of life within, and on such motions may all the religious exercise of thy soul be; and hereby men perform holy duties, as *Caiaphas* prophesied, not knowing what he said. So that regeneration in holy duties is like the soul in the body, which giveth life and acceptance, and all to it.

Obstructions hindring men from the knowledge of the necessity of this, and desire after it.

Now there are two obstructions which hinder men both from the knowledge of the necessity of this, and an earnest desire to obtain it.

I. The first is, *Ignorance of that woefull depravation and defilement which is upon us through sin.* As long as men know not themselves to be beggers, they will never cry out, *unclean, unclean:* As long as *Nicodemus* knoweth not that he is altogether flesh and in his sins, the whole doctrine of regeneration is a mystery. Men therefore that would be edified into this high building, must begin with this deep and low foundation. He that doth not groan and sigh under all those sores and ulcers that are upon him by nature, will never seek after this glorious change. Therefore thou that buildest duty upon duty, exercise upon exercise, and hast not first begun here, though thy building be as glorious as that of the Temple at *Jerusalem* was, yet the time will come, when a stone will not be left upon a stone. And it is much to be feared that generally people are in a wrong way to heaven, they think the flesh and bloud they were born in will bring them to heaven, and therefore, when you may hear many talk of repentance, of serving of God, of amendment of our lives, yet not one among many speak of regeneration, and the necessity thereof, and the first rise of this calamity is because they are ignorant of Originall sinne.

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The second obstruction is, *A self-fulness, an heart puffed up with humane excellencies*, which indeed are but as the grasse and the flower of the field; for so Peter having spoken of this incorruptible nature we attain unto, he maketh it more excellent than any humane power, prudence, or righteousnes, 1 *Pet.* 1.24. because all this fadeth, but the word of God which, begets this new nature, abideth for ever; and therefore of all the things in the world, which *John Baptist* was especially to proclaim aloud, as to make way for Christ, that was, *All flesh is grasse*, which the Prophet understandeth not so much of our mortality, & vain lives, as of our righteousnes, humane excellency, and whatsoever hath repute in this world: upon this ground it was, that the Pharisees were so ignorant about this, that if we read among the School-men, men of great parts and strong abilities, we shall finde very little, or nothing at all of Regeneration; yea, if we read the Popish Authors whether Doctrinal, or Devotional, we shall not finde any thing at all about this new-Birth; and whence is this? Because some of them are busied with high & sublime Disputations, some in the externall Rights and Ceremonies of Religion, and these puffing up the heart in a fleshly manner, they are no fit Disciples to receive this great Truth about Regeneration.

Use 1. Is there such a necessity of Regeneration, then let young men and old men, rich men and poor, prophane and civill, have their eares tingle, or rather their hearts wounded at this: It may be thou art an old man ready to fall in the Grave, and art not thou acquainted with this new-Birth? It may be thou art a Doctor and Master in *Israel*, and art thou not convinced of this? Oh blinde souls! how near are you destruction, and you are not aware of it! Thou canst in time of sickness, in fears of death, to thy prayers, to thy tears, to the Sacrament it may be; thou call'st for a good Book to be read to thee, a good Minister to come to thee, but ah Miserable soul, all the work is still to do within; say once therefore this Text unto thy soul, *Unless I be borne again I cannot enter into heaven*. Born again, O Lord what is that! Was ever such a thing done upon me! Oh I fear the contrary; if I were born of God, I could not grovell thus on the earth, I could not wallow thus in filth. You Parents, you labour to have your Children born to great Estates, to large Revenues; oh, but how shall these Children of yours curse the wombe that bare them, and the breasts that gave them suck, if they have not their new Birth? *Use* 1.

Use 2. Is the Word preached thus the means of this new Birth; then let us lament the miscarriage of the Ministery in these latter dayes. Who are born again by it? What hath God no more people to be saved in *England*? hath God no more in *London* to come to eternal life, that no more are by the word begotten anew? Few Ministers can say with *Isaiah*, *Behold I and the Children whom the Lord hath given mee*, few people can say, *You are our Fathers who have begotten us in the Lord*, you may say, *We have many instructors, but few Fathers*, as the Apostle in another case. *Use* 2.

This is the reproach and grief of the Ministry, but it's no Argument (as some would enforce) of the nullity, or unlawfullnesse of it; or if it be, it will prove their Ministry who use this Argument as unlawfull as any. This is the great end of the Ministry, and as the *Sun* shineth in vain to blinde men, the Clouds drop in vain upon hard rocks, so is the Word preached in vain, and people hear in vain, where this great alteration followeth not: The prophanenes, ignorance and universal unsavourines in mens spirits, do sufficiently proclaime to all the world, that the Lord hath given us dry breasts, and miscarrying wombs.

SERMON XXXV.

Shewing how ignorant men of great Learning and outward Righteouſneſs in the world, may be of Regeneration.

JOHN 3.10.

Art thou a Maſter of Iſrael, and knoweſt not theſe things?

WE have already defined the nature of Regeneration, & before we come to the diſcovery of the counterfeits thereof, there are other obſervable things in this colloquie with *Nicodemus*, that ſhould not be pretermitted: I ſhall therefore in the next place, diſcourſe of the ignorance and ſtupidity of *Nicodemus* about this great work of God, which our Saviour with much ſeverity doth reprove him for in my Text. *Nicodemus* doth ſeveral times manifeſt his groſſe blindneſs in this point, while he diſcourſeth with our Saviour.

Firſt, He underſtands our Saviour of a natural birth again, by going the ſecond time into the mothers womb: our Saviour therefore confirmed his aſſertion the ſecond time, and withall explicates the gronnd of this regeneration, becauſe all are naturally corrupted, yet for all this, *Nicodemus* marvelleth at it.

Laſtly, Our Saviour doth by a familiar example from the winde, ſhew the work of regeneration, and for all this, *Nicodemus* is not ſatisfied.

But a Third time, *verſe* 9. he cryeth out, *How can theſe things be?* Whereupon our Saviour upbraideth him with his ignorance, not by way of contumelious inſultation, but to humble this Phariſee, who being puft up with the opinion of his learning and righteouſneſſe, could not at all diſcern of this grace: now our Saviours reprehenſion is very emphatical, *Art thou a Maſter?* not a Diſciple, not one of the vulgar ſort, but a Maſter? And as ſome conſider the Article, Art thou the Maſter? Or that Maſter? As if this *Nicodemus* among all the Teachers in Iſrael had the greateſt repute: Then, Art thou a Maſter of Iſrael; A people that were eſpecially called by God, and taught by him; the moſt knowing people of the world in reſpect of Gods Law? Further, a Maſter of Iſrael; all Iſrael was his ſcholar: not a Maſter of ſome Diſciple, but of Iſrael: And laſtly, knoweſt not theſe things. He doth not ſay, Not practice it, not feel the power of it on thy own heart: but thou haſt ſo much as the bare hiſtorical knowledge of it: So that this ſpeech of our Saviours is a ſad rebuke, and reproach to all the carnal wiſedom, and ſelf-righteouſneſs of men, which is like the Bat or Owl to the Sun when it cometh to theſe ſpiritual things. I have obſerved that men in diſcourſe, will meerly apply this to ordinary matters: Art thou a Maſter in Iſrael, and knoweſt not theſe things? They will ſay ſo of any news, or cuſtoms diſcourſed of: but the truth is, this Text ſhould be matter of fear and trembling, for it doth diſcover the horrible oppoſition and enmity that is in men to any heavenly work of God; as your bats and owls can ſee well enough in the night, but not in the day, ſo natural men have parts, abilities,

bilities, wiſedom, quick apprehenſions in the things of darkneſs, matters of ſin, and the world; but in the things of God, they are ſtark blind: Therefore ſaith our Saviour, *If I tell you earthly things, and ye believe not, how ſhall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly?* The ſenſe is, if when I ſpeak of regeneration by earthly ſimilitudes, and expreſſions obvious to the ſenſe, you are not able to apprehend them, How then if I ſhould ſpeak to you of heavenly things, in an heavenly manner, without ſuch ſenſible repreſentations at all?

Obſervation, *That men of great Learning, and outward Righteouſneſs in the World, may yet be groſs ignorant about this great work of Regeneration.* *Obſerv.*

Before we lay down the grounds of this ignorance in every natural man, we may take notice of ſome particulars, as Introductory to the point: as,

Firſt, *That it is a moſt requiſite, yea, neceſſary thing for every Miniſter, that is to be a Teacher, and guid of others, to underſtand well, and be inwardly acquainted with this Doctrine of a new birth.* When our Saviour ſaith, *Art thou a Teacher, a Maſter of the people, and knoweſt not theſe things?* He ſuppoſeth it was a great ſhame and reproach to him; And indeed, ſeeing the one principal end of the Miniſtry is to beget men anew unto God, how can he be skilful in that office, which is wholly unacquainted with the end of it? It is true that opinion of the *Donatiſts, That an ungodly Miniſter is never uſed inſtrumentally to the regeneration of others,* is rejected as falſe. *Judas,* and thoſe who preached Chriſt out of envie, might be ſerviceable to bring others to Chriſt, elſe *Paul* would not *have rejoyced in it,* Phil. 1. 19. Although this it may be is very rare; and as God in the Old Teſtament would have no Miniſter with any bodily deformity, ſo in the New, without any ſoul deformity; he muſt be unblamable: We do not diſpute of the poſſibility, but it is very rare for dead men, to beget living men; for Miniſters unexperienced in the life of grace, to revive others: Although this be ſo, yet it is the auditors duty, as our Saviour informeth about the Scribes and Phariſees, *To hear them as long as they ſit in Moſes chair*; but not to do what they do: For a man to neglect good Doctrine, becauſe of the bad practice of the Teacher, is as *Auguſtine* well ſaith, *As if a traveller that ſeeth the poſt in the high way, that hath an hand to direct him on his journey, ſhould not go forward, becauſe the poſt that directeth him doth not go forward.* But though theſe things are ſo; yet it is a wonderful uncomfortable and deading thing to live under that preaching, which is not diſcovering of a work of regeneration within: When a Miniſter ſpeaketh of this great work, as ſome bragging men of the remoteſt part of the world, which he hath only by hear-ſay, or by books, not by experience in his travels. The Miniſter muſt ſpeak from the heart, elſe he cannot ſpeak to the heart; as they could not give any account of the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, which had not ſo much as heard whether there was an Holy Ghoſt or no; ſo thoſe Miniſters are never able to give direction, conſolation to the godly in their temptations about this, that know not the power of it in their own hearts. The Scripture calls it, *The tongue of the learned,* to be able to ſpeak *a word in ſeaſon, to the broken and contrite in heart,* *Iſa.* 50. 4. This is neceſſary learning, more than all humane knowledge, though that alſo be requiſite. 1. Introductory particulars. A Miniſter ſhould be inwardly acquainted with this Doctrine.

Secondly, *There is a twofold knowledge of regeneration, the one is meerly ſpeculative, and Theoretical, the other is Practical and Experimental.* A Speculative knowledge, is when a man is convinced in judgement by ſeveral arguments and reaſons, that there is a neceſſity of regeneration; but this knowledge is not like *Aarons* oil, that deſcends from the head to the other parts, but it only lodgeth in the brain: Now *Nicodemus* had not ſo much as the ſpeculative knowledge, he had not ſo much as an hiſtorical aſſent with his mind, of the neceſſity of ſuch a ſpiritual change; whereas it was a great wonder, that he who had read thoſe promiſes of the taking away *the heart of ſtone,* and giving *an heart of fleſh, of creating a new heart in,* &c. could not eaſily be convinced in this. But *Nicodemus* doth not only 2. A twofold knowledge of regeneration.

ly question the necessity of it, but the possibility also of it: He doth not only think there is no such thing, but there can be no such thing: Whereas, he that knew God breathed a natural life into *Adam*, when a lump of earth, might easily believe God able to infuse a supernatural life: Besides the Sacrament of Circumcision, and that legal custome of Purification of Women, did teach as original pollution, so a necessity of cleansing and washing. But besides this speculative, there is also a practical knowledge, when a man findeth the sweet and lively power of this upon his own heart. You have many a learned man that is very orthodox in his judgement, who by considering the reasons and disputes on all sides, is convinced of a necessity of regeneration, and hereby he can preach for it, write for it, and dispute for it: But yet this man doth no more, than as he that should say honey is sweet, when he never tasted of it: And so as *Moses* saw the land of *Canaan*, but never entered into it, so these discern afar off this work of grace, but are never possessors of it: When therefore both these kinds of knowledge concur together, speculative and experimental, when he can feel it in heart, as well as read it in books, this makes a man a fit teacher to others.

3. Thirdly *As this knowledge is requisite in the Doctor, so also in the Disciple, otherwise the choicest and chiefest matter in all religion, is preached in vain.* The Apostle saith, *He had rather speak five words with understanding, than five hundred in an unknown tongue:* And it is the Ministers desire to speak a little of those Mysteries of Grace to men that can go along with them, than much to those that can understand nothing at all. Had not our Saviour been meek and humble, he would not have born the indociblenes of *Nicodemus*: The Apostle complaineth, *He could not speak unto the Corinthians as spiritual, but as carnal*, 1 Cor. 3. 1. To preach to dead men, to throw pearls to swine, how unsutable is it? There are many Auditors, that if you preach about controversal matter, or the times, or any moral matter, they are quick and intelligent; but if you explain and insist upon this work of regeneration, there they lose you. As they themselves never felt the power of it, so they do not at all attend to the Doctrine of it: *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*; no man hath an hearing ear, or a seeing eye, or an understanding heart, till this supernatural life be infused.

The grounds of this ignorance. These things being laid down we proceed to shew the grounds of this ignorance and gross mistake in matters of godlines: and

First, *They do not understand it, because they are ignorant of that universal and deep pollution, which sin hath plunged them into.* Hence was the ground of *Nicodemus* his mistake: Therefore our Saviour discovers the foundation when he saith, *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.* As *Nicodemus* was thus ignorant, so *Paul* also was as much out of the way: For he was a long time ere he was perswaded of that inward latent venom that was in him, and thereupon must needs see no necessity of a new birth. Wouldest thou therefore come to have thine eyes opened? Thy heart wakened, so as to prize an inward Renovation, or a new change of thy heart? Study more, meditate more upon that Native uncleanness; Say, How can this flesh and blood inherit heaven? How can this uncleanness put on glory? Is there any suitableness between thy depraved heart, and eternal happiness in Heaven? Can that mind of thine think glorious things of God? Can that heart of thine rejoyce in the goodness of God? If not, then say, *O Lord, make me all new.*

And certainly, if the Apostle to those whom he supposeth regenerated, saith, *Put off the old man, and put on the new, because of those reliques and remainders of corruptions which are within us*, Ephes. 4. How much rather is this to be pressed upon those wholly wallowing in their natural blood: *Put off the old man*, saith the Apostle: *Austin* makes it an allusion to the snake that puts of her old skin; but that is not enough, the inward poysonous nature, as well as the skin must be put off. Marvel not therefore if ye see men no more solicitous about this new birth, if their hearts, desires, and earnest prayers are no more after it; for as long as men

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are blind in this point, *viz.* Original ſin, they will alſo be blind to the other, *viz.* Regeneration. Upon this account it is, that of all men, moral men, civil vertuous men are very remote from, yea oppoſite unto this great change: For they of all men, are leſt affected with their blots, and ſpotted nature: They having no actual groſs ſins to humble themſelves, do not ſee that heart-filthineſs, and foul deformity which is upon them. Oh, therefore entreat God to give the ſpirit of illumination to ſee thy ſelf, that the hidden corners of darkneſs within thee, may be manifeſted unto thy ſelf.

2. *A Second ground of this groſs blindneſs, is ſelf-righteouſneſs, and ſelf-fulneſs.* Nicodemus was puffed up with that external legal righteouſneſs, which he conſtantly performed, and therefore thought nothing more was requiſite to him. Thus the Phariſees being full of their prayers, alms-deeds, and religious faſts, ſetled their hopes upon theſe; and therefore our Saviour preacheth very ſutable, though ſtrange Doctrine, when he bids them make all clean within, *and the tree muſt be good, before the fruit can be good*: What is that, but to ſay, their perſons muſt be regenerated, before they can do any holy action? This ſelf-fulneſs doth not only croſs the grace of juſtification, as the *Jews*, who would eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, *ſubmitted not to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt*, but alſo *the grace of regeneration*; for that which is accounted already whole, already ſound, what need it go to the Phyſitian to be healed? Thus *Laodicea*, becauſe ſhe thought her ſelf *rich, full, and lacking of nothing, therefore ſhe was the more miſerable and wretched*, Rev. 3. 15. The heart affected with ſelf-love and ſelf-righteouſneſs, promiſeth nothing but mercy, and happineſs to it ſelf, will not endure to be found a ſinner or to have iniquity diſcovered; now this ſelf-righteouſneſs is that which beareth up the heart of every unregenerate man, otherwiſe it were impoſſible that under the ſpiritual diſcovery of all his filth and poverty, he ſhould ever be able to ſit ſtill, to eat, or ſleep, becauſe of the wrath of God compaſſing him round about. Take therefore away this rubbiſh, and then a good building may quickly be reared; otherwiſe here is *Læſum principium*, the very principles of a man are corrupted; & what good can we then expect? Chriſt caſt out *all the Timbrels and Muſitians*, e're *he would raiſe the dead*, and thus muſt all thy carnal hopes and carnal joyes in thy ſelf-righteouſneſs, or in any other creature be thrown out, e're he will raiſe thee from this ſpiritual death. Oh do not then be prejudiced againſt this truth, by thinking in thy heart, If I yield my ſelf to be thus a ſinner, if I abhor, and throw away all my righteouſneſs, I ſhall then deſpair, I ſhall be like one in the ſea, without the leaſt plank or board to preſerve my ſelf: Do not fear this, for thou muſt feel thy ſelf dead e're thou beeſt made alive thou muſt look on thy ſelf as undone, before thou canſt be ſaved. Is not the veſſel broken into pieces and melted, e're it can be new moulded? Muſt not the old houſe be pulled down, e're the new one be raiſed up? As the Apoſtle ſaith in matter of reſurrection, *we are loth to put off this corruptible body*; we would fain be cloathed upon, we would have heaven without dying; ſo we would be new born without pangs or ſorrow.

3. Thirdly, *Another ground of ignorance in the work of regeneration, is not attending to the ſpiritual exactneſs and obligation of the Law; for that doth not only require us to do thoſe things that are good, but to do them from ſuch an inward principle of rectitude, and a divine original, that our hearts and affections may be holy therein, as well as our converſation.* Therefore the heart if good, *is called the good treaſure, out of which all good things are to proceed*: God is not holy only in his providence, and outward adminiſtrations, but in his nature alſo: As when any ſin is forbidden in the commandement, the root and cauſe of it is much more forbidden; ſo where an holy duty is required, the root and cauſe of it is much more commanded; God therefore commands thee to love him, but how? From a renewed heart to be ſorrowful for ſin, but how? From a changed heart; to pray, to hear, but ſtill from a regenerated heart. Now men do not attend to this; the Law is ſpiritual, it reacheth to the root, as well as the branch, it looks more than to good fruit, it will al-

ſo have a good tree. Oh if men did drive the matter to this head, happily they would crie out, *O us, hitherto in a wrong way?* We muſt begin all again; we have prayed in vain, heard in vain, profeſſed in vain: We wanted a true foundation; we did not dig deep enough, and therefore our houſe will fall. You have *Paul* excellently diſourſing upon this matter, experimentally in himſelf; and what wonderful alterations he then found, when once he began to underſtand the ſpiritual latitude of the Law, *Rom.* 7.

4. Fourthly, *Therefore do not men believe this, becauſe they do not underſtand the true nature of the Sacrament of Baptiſm, which if rightly underſtood, would make every man ſee the neceſſity of regeneration.* If the Phariſees had known the end and uſe of the Sacrament of Circumciſion, that would have led them into the knowledge of their natural defilement, and the neceſſity of cutting it off. Hence God promiſeth *to circumciſe their hearts*, Deut. 30. 6. and circumciſion was properly that of the ſpirit in the inward man, *Rom.* 2. But the Jews they reſted wholly upon the external ſign, and never regarded the thing ſignified. Now Baptiſm in the New Teſtament, doth alſo proclaim the neceſſity of this new birth, called therefore *the laver of regeneration*, *Tit.* 3. 5. as ſome expound it. And altho ugh it be much diſputed, whether that expreſſion of our Saviour to *Nicodemus*, *Unleſs a man be born of the water and the ſpirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven*, be meant of Baptiſm, and the outward element in that Ordinance: Yet the very water which is commanded to be uſed by us in that adminiſtration, doth evidently ſignifie the pollution of our natures, and ſo a neceſſity of waſhing: For children that have no actual ſins are waſhed, becauſe they have original filthineſs, ſo that regeneration is neceſſary to a young infant. Who art thou, that becauſe thou keepeſt free from groſs ſins, abſtaineſt from the evils of the world, and therefore ſeeſt not ſuch a neceſſity of regeneration? For if thou wert as clean as the infant new born, if thou hadſt no more ſins than that hath; yet this ſpirit of regeneration muſt new mould thee, e're thou canſt be a polliſhed ſtone in that heavenly Jeruſalem? But as it was with the Jews, ſo it is with us Chriſtians: We rely on Baptiſm, reſt on the Sacrament adminiſtred, never conſidering whether we are made partakers of that inward nature-waſhing or not.

5. Fifthly, *Therefore men are ſtupid about this doctrine, becauſe they conſider not Gods gracious promiſe which is made for this great work.* Doth not the Prophet *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* ſpeak often of giving *a new heart*, of *writing his Law in our inward parts*: *Ezek.* 18. *Jer.* 31. And do not other Scriptures ſpeak of circumciſing their hearts, and turning their hearts? It was therefore much that *Nicodemus*, who no doubt had read thoſe places over and over again, did yet no better underſtand it. But do not men ſo ſtill; Read thoſe Chapters, yea, hear thoſe ſermons that are made on purpoſe about it, and for all this go away, not knowing what it meaneth? Gods Evangelical promiſe, is not to give new eyes, or new hands only, but a new heart alſo: And truly herein is the omnipotency of Gods grace ſeen, that it reacheth to the ſpirits of men. It makes them know, will, love, and delight in thoſe things which their hearts were oppoſite unto; and hence muſt we fetch our ground to wreſtle with God in prayer for it. O Lord, is it not thy promiſe to give a new heart? Haſt thou not ſaid, *Thou wilt take away this heart of ſtone?* Now, O Lord, my heart is too ſtrong for me, I do but waſh a Blackmore, that makes him blacker; by all my endeavour and natural ſtrength, the more I ſtrive, the faſter I ſtick in this pit of ſin: O therefore this promiſe of thine I own, I look to have it fulfilled: O Lord, it reacheth to my life, to make that clean, my converſation, to make that unſpotted; but Oh, let it reach to the inward parts, to make them pure.

6. Sixthly, *Another ground of mens ignorance, is corrupt errours in the judgement, inſomuch that many mens profeſſed Doctrines and Tenents, which they hold, do expreſly deſtroy the truth of regeneration.* As thoſe opinions which deny Original ſin; for if there be no ſuch inward depravation, then there needeth no ſuch inward renova-

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tion: Thus alſo thoſe that extol the power of free-will by nature, they muſt thus far at leaſt deny any regeneration, or healing power of Grace upon the will: yea, all opinions of Popery, Socinianiſm, Arminianiſm, do either in whole or part deſtroy this new creature: for ſo far as a man hath power to prevent Gods grace, or determine it, ſo far it works by an innate power, and virtue of its own: Thus alſo thoſe that hold grace only for the more eaſie doing of that which is good, or that compare a man in his regeneration to a captive priſoner, that cannot walk becauſe of fetters and clogs upon him: but let them be loſed, then he is able to walk by his own inward power; but ſuch a man in that caſe is improperly ſaid to be born again. Take heed therefore of thoſe corrupt opinions about Original ſin, and free-will, for theſe make regeneration not neceſſary; and men blinded in their judgements with ſuch doctrines, can never pant and breath after that great work upon their own ſouls.

Seventhly, *The buſying of mens ſelves about ſuperſtitious invented worſhip by men, doth alſo make a man altogether ignorant, or not attentive to this.* We may ſay to Monks, Fryers, Superſtitious perſons, Are you, or would you be acounted *Maſter* in Iſrael, and know nothing of this? look on all the popiſh devotional books, their heaps of external ceremonies, and in all theſe things, not a word or manifeſtation of any regeneration. Thus it was alſo with the Jews, and with the Phariſees; they placed all religion in external addreſſes to God, but never acquainted themſelves with the knowledge of the inward efficacious work of grace. The heart of a man is finite; it is not a ſpring that can fill two channels, if therefore all the intention of it run out upon invented worſhip, it neglecteth what is more neceſſary. Hence it is that none are greater enemies and ſcorners of this work of God, than thoſe that are moſt pertinacious in traditional worſhip. He that is buſie where he ſhould not, is alwayes negligent where he ought not to be: who hath required theſe things at your hands? ſaith Chriſt; but where things were required, there they did nothing at all. 7.

Eighthly, *Therefore are men ignorant of this doctrine, becauſe they ſet themſelves to to know unprofitable things, ſooner than profitable.* It is a great corruption in our underſtanding, that we ſeek to finde out thoſe things that do not advantage us, or benefit us; but the things of uſe and edification, thoſe are laid aſide. The Apoſtle blamed this in the *Corinthians*, therefore he ſheweth, *That knowledge puffeth up:* and he that is proud about his knowledge, he knoweth nothing as he ought to know: Oh, what an unhappy inſtance are our dayes of this wilde immature knowledge? How many diſputes about this & the other controverſie? Into what parties & ſects are we divided by the pride of knowledge? Whereas now if we did deſire to ſtudy, diſcourſe, confer, and meditate on thoſe things that tend to regeneration, to mortification, to make us new creatures, this would be to ſome purpoſe: You ſee the Apoſtle *Paul* mattered not Jew or Gentile, Circumciſion or uncircumciſion but a new creature, *Gal.* 6. 1. Thus ſhould we be affected: lead not me into labyrinths of diſputes; elevate not my underſtanding with ſublimated notions, but inſtruct me how to be a new creature: what will Philoſophical knowledge avail to underſtand the nature of hearbs, and plants, when thou knoweſt not this divine nature? What will skill in Phyſick advantage thee, to be able to make ſound bodies, and recover out of mortal diſeaſes, if thy ſoul be not healed of its diſeaſes? What to underſtand the law of man, and to direct about Purchaſes, and Evidences and Aſſurances of Eſtates, but knoweſt no aſſurance of a ſpiritual eſtate? Yea, in Divinity points, to diſpute about predeſtination, univerſal Grace, Church-Government, and all the controverſies of the times, when thou knoweſt not this Doctrine of regeneration? *Bernard* ſaid, *He loved not to read Tully, or an humane Author, becauſe he did not finde the name of Jeſus there:* So do not thou love thoſe diſputes, thoſe controverſies, thoſe books, where there is not ſomething to minde thee of regeneration: this is to be ſought in the firſt place. 8.

Now

The grounds of this ignorance.

Now the excellency of an experimental knowledge of regeneration, will appear in these particulars.

1. Firſt, *A man ſo qualified, hath a good and ſure bottom laid to all his duties, and ſpiritual performances.* Where this new life is, there is an excellent root for all the branches of ſpiritual duties to thrive and proſper: In nature the heart is the firſt liver; and therefore nature (as ſome ſay) begins with that part firſt, as the fountain of all life: But now the Painter that draweth only a ſhadow, he begins with the lineaments and outward proportions firſt. Thus hypocriſie, that beginneth to change in outward actions firſt; but true grace, that beginneth at the heart and vitals firſt: give me a man regenerated, and he is a man of ſome ſubſtance, ſome foundation, you know where to have him; but a man of meer parts, abilities, and notional fancies, yea, or fervent duties without this foundation, he is but a bubble and a vapor. He is toſſed up and down like a ſtraw with the wind, whereas if he had weight, and ſolidity in him, he would ſtand like a rock: Oh therefore know, it is a wiſe mans courſe to look to firſt principles, to be diligent about what foundations he layeth.

2. Secondly, *Where there is this experimental knowledge of regeneration, there is an endeavour to beget others like them.* As God bids every creature encreaſe in its kinde, ſo do theſe new-born children of God deſire to multiply. When they were once regenerated, then Oh that my Parent were, Oh that my children were, Oh that my kindred, Oh that all under my charge were! It is much to conſider what great expreſſions *Paul* uſeth even about ſome women, calling them *Fellow-labourers, and great promoters of the Goſpel*: Why is all this? But that ſpiritual life in them makes them fervent to bring home others. *Come and ſee*, ſaith *Andrew* to *Philip*: And what an high expreſſion hath *Paul* concerning the ſalvation of his kinſfolks after the fleſh: and if in publick relation as Miniſters, as Maſters, as Fathers, Oh how are their bowels ſtraitned within them, how grieved and broken where they ſee God doth not give ſuch a ſupernatural life! Whereas now, a man meerly civil, he deſireth his children may be civil men, no Prodigals; but to deſire them to be godly and holy, that he is far from.

3. Thirdly, *Where this experimental knowledge is of regeneration, there is a great ſympathy and agreement between others that are regenerated.* As face anſwereth face, ſo doth the heart of one regenerated man to another. The ſame temptations, the ſame conſolations, the ſame operations, they dwell in one anothers hearts: and where this new life is moſt active and efficacious, there they bend their greateſt deſires & love. But now take a man that knoweth of regeneration by the book, by hear-ſay; though he may plead for it in the general, yet the particular practiſe he cannot abide: A miniſter may preach to a people to get this new birth, and yet ſcoff and oppoſe thoſe that have it, and all this is for want of experimental power of it upon the ſoul: but we have already ſpoken in the general, to theſe things heretofore. Let this ſuffice to quicken us up to the right underſtanding of this myſtery; be not in the number of thoſe to whom this work is a riddle. Thou mayſt not ſay, this is for Scholars, and learned men to know: no it is for every one to be acquainted with it.

Uſe. *Uſe of Inſtruction*, To bewail the common ignorance of this main principle, even the Doctrine of regeneration. Art thou a learned man, and doeſt not know it? Art thou a rich man, and ignorant of it? What is it to be accounted a man of parts and abilities in other things, but in this great matter a meer Bat and Owl: *Some have not the knowledge of God*, ſaith *Paul*, *I ſpeak it to your ſhame*: We may ſay, ſome, yea moſt have not the knowledge of regeneration, we ſpeak it to their ſhame, and it ought to be their grief. Art thou an old man, and knoweſt not this. Haſt thou read ſo long in the Bible, heard ſo many Sermons, and canſt not tell what the meaning of this is? What a miſerable thing is thy natural birth without this? how much better to have been born Toads, Serpents, and the moſt loathſom Creatures in the world, than not to be new born?

Do

Doe not think this was one mans case to be ignorant of it, and it might be easily in those times, but for us Christians we all are taught of God; for if he did not know it, how shouldst thou come to know it?

SERMON XXXVI.

The ground of the necessity of Regeneration is the corruption of mens Nature.

JOHN 3. 6.

That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.

WE have already observed the nature of Regeneration out of this famous Dialogue, as also the ignorance & mistake that the wisest have about it. the third thing observable in this History, is the ground and reason of the necessity of this new Birth, and that is contained in my Text. *Nicodemus* he dreamed of a carnall Birth a second time, whereas if he had been born an hundred times this way, it would not have advantaged him, yea he would have been an hundred times thereby the child of wrath. Our Saviour therefore would instruct *Nicodemus* by opening the fountain, & discovering the root of this necessity; as if he had said, The reason why thou art so grosly ignorant in this matter (O *Nicodemus*) is, because thou knowest not what corruption doth cleave to every man, how contrary is this to the Kingdome of Heaven; if thou wert rectified in this, thou wouldst quickly see the necessity of the other. Know therefore, *That whatsoever is born of the flesh, is flesh*, and so not capable of everlasting glory.

The words then are a Proposition containing a Reason, why there must be a Regeneration before there can be any entrance into the Kingdome of Heaven; wherein you have the subject described, *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh. Flesh* is sometimes used in Scripture for the bodily part of a man, as corruptible, in which sense it is said, *All flesh is grasse*; sometime it is used for man as he is sinfull and unregenerate, *In my flesh dwelleth no good thing*, saith *Paul*. The first sense denoteth our fragility and meanenes, the second our guilt and sinfullnes; both aggravate our misery and baseness; and this expression is universall, *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh*. This extendeth to wise men, to great men, noble men, Kings and Emperors; they are flesh of flesh. Secondly, there is the predicate, *Is flesh*. The expression is in the abstract, to shew, how totally, deeply and universally he is fleshly. Thus the Apostle, *Rom.* 8. calls *being in the flesh*, as surrounded and compassed about with it.

So that our Saviours reason lyeth in this, Every thing expresseth the nature of that kinde in which it is, that which comes of a Wolf hath a Wolvish nature, that which comes of a Sheep hath a Sheepish nature, and that which comes of a corrupt uncleah kind must also be clean: So that our Saviours expression is like

that of *Jobs, Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* Lambs come not from Beares, nor Figs from Thorns.

Obſerv. *The great Corruption of mans Nature is the ground of the neceſſity of Regeneration.*

Whence the neceſſity of Regeneration proceeds.

Men apply themſelves to more than Morality and Civility, till they are perſwaded that the greateſt part of their vileneſſe and loathſomneſſe lyeth in their inward parts. We are moſt ſinfull and deformed there where the natural eye perceiveth nothing at all: Men never provide a plaiſter any further than they think the wound reacheth; now if men perceive no wound in the inward frame of their heart, they never look at any change there.

The nature of original defilement, and Regeneration anſwered thereunto.

In the opening of this point, let us conſider the nature of this originall defilement, and ſo the work of Regeneration anſwerable thereunto: for whereas in ſin there are two things, the guilt of it, and the filth of it; There is a two-fold grace anſwering this, The grace of juſtification, which blots out the guilt; and the grace of Sanctification, which removeth the filth: ſo that ſinne is like leproſie, & grace regenerating makes all to come freſh and beautifull upon the ſoul, which before was loathſome; whereupon it is, that a man is by Regeneration really changed in the qualities of his ſoul: As originall ſin comes in the place of originall righteouſneſs, ſo this grace of Regeneration cometh by degrees in the place of originall ſinne; ſo that if we ſeek after this work, we are not ſo much to look for it in our actions and converſations, though it will be ſeen there, as in our inward frame and diſpoſition of heart. The Kings daughter is all glorious within, as before her converſation ſhe was all loathſome, and noiſome within.

Hereby it comes to paſſe, that as mens thoughts are great or leſſer about originall ſin, ſo they are alſo about Regeneration.

1. Firſt therefore, *This native Corruption is deep and radicated in us, got into our very bowels*; That as Toads and Serpents have venome in their natures, and the one cannot be divided from the other, ſo it is with us, we may as well put off the nature of a man, as put ſinne out of it. This made the Father compare it to the Ivy in the wall, or in the tree, that getteth into the very heart, and cannot be recovered, unleſſe the Wall it ſelf be pulled down; and that is the reaſon why the Scripture calls it our fleſh and members, not that it is our naturall ſubſtance, but inevitably cleaving to it, and the innateneſſe of it is herein ſeen, that although we have this work of Regeneration, yet it is not quite expelled, all this droſs is not got off. *Paul* complained bitterly of the reliques and remainders of it in his ſoul: Now the grace of Regeneration, that goeth as deep into the heart, that enters as powerfully into the ſoul; therefore it's called writing of the Law in the
Jer. 31. inward parts; not upon the eyes, or hands, or feet, but in the inward parts. There is many a man hath Gods Law written upon his tongue only, or upon his outward converſation, but not in his inward parts: So that as the Scripture hath notable expreſſions to deſcribe how inward and rooted our filth is, we may apply ſuch things to grace wrought in the godly, only there is this difference, ſinne makes us all over ſinfull, ſo that there is no good at all abiding in a naturall man; but grace doth not ſo perfectly heal to expell all ſin. As in naturall men, the imaginations of their thoughts are evill, not only actions but thoughts, not only thoughts but imagination of thoughts, or that very ſhop of the ſoul, whereby all apprehenſions and affections are minted and framed, though not perfectly: the imaginations of the thoughts of a Regenerate man are good and ſpirituall: The heart of a natural man is a Den of Thieves, a Cage of unclean Birds: The heart of a Regenerate man is the temple of the Lord.

By this you ſee, that all externall Reformation, all outward freedome of ſinne, doth not at all amount to this new-Birth: the onely thing to be conſidered, is how far this oyle hath entred into thy wounds, whether it be as deeply rooted as ſinne in thee; Oh this will diſcover what a rare thing Regeneration is.

Secondly,

Secondly, *This Original Defilement doth first and more immediately corrupt the nature of a man, and then mediately his person, Prius corrumpit naturam, deinde personam.* Hence it is, that our Children have their defilement, whereas our personall sinnes are not communicated to them. Hence also it is, that an Infant new born, before there be any sinfull motions, or expressions of it, yet is corrupted in its Nature; though it speake no evill, thinke no evill, loveth no evill, yet it is dead in sin, and a child of wrath. Now the grace of Regeneration doth more immediately tend to heal this naturall corruption, and then secondarily personall corruptions. Not as if a Regenerated Father could beget a Regenerated Child alwayes, for so grace is personall, but because it doth first renew and sanctifie that principle and inward root of all affections and actions in us. It is disputed in the Schools, whether grace be first immediately subjected in the very Essence of the soul, or whether in the faculties and powers of it. But we need not be so Metaphysicall and nice: This is enough to conclude, that grace doth first heal and renew the soul, as it is the principle of all our actions; and then when this Fountain is clean, the streams also are clean, when this root is sweet, the fruit also is. This is the good tree, and the good treasure that our Saviour speaks of. We see in the works of Gods Creation and Providence, first he gives Creatures their Nature, their kind and being; then he commands them to encrease and multiply. So its here, first God gives a supernaturall life, renewed principles, and then our conversation is answerable. Now this can never be enough pressed upon men; they think by spirituall and godly actions to get spiritual nature; they think it Divinity as *Aristotle* teacheth in Morality, by doing vertuous actions, to acquire at last the habits of vertue; but the Scripture is otherwise, we must first be born again, wherein we are altogether passive, and thereby be inabled to walk holily. Oh therefore that men would consider these things, then would auditors be spirituall, when they once are lifted up to this inward supernaturall life: you are but Weeds and Brambles, what Blossoms soever you have, till you thus be renewed. 2.

Thirdly, *This corruption is the seed-plot, & root of all the actual impieties that are committed by man.* Out of this evill treasure came *Cains* murther, *Judas* his Treachery, & whatsoever crimes are at any time committed by the Sons of men; *David* bewailing his Adultery & Murther, presently thinketh of this, as the cause of all. Thus the work of regeneration is the seed-plot of all holy actions. Though the scripture say, *By faith Abraham and Noah, &c. did such worthy Acts*; yet a principle of Regeneration was the root of all, therefore it's called Gods law written in our hearts, his whole Law; so that whatsoever God commands outwardly by his Word, his Spirit doth graciously incline us to obey. It is here as it is in originall sin, though there be the cause of all wickednesse in him, yet by reason of complexion or other temptations, he may incline to one sin more than another; and there are some sins which a man cannot at first commit, till he be hardened and made obdurate in his wickednesse; so there are many graces of a more Heroical and Noble nature, at least the actions of them, that a man newly Regenerated cannot presently perform. But as your green Timber is not presently fit to be made Pillars to bear the weight of an house till it hath lain awhile, and the moisture of it be excocted; so neither are new Converts fit for those graces of Patience and Victory over the world by suffering, which yet by degrees they obtain at last: And this might support the people of God, who in their temptations are ready to think, that though such sins, and such difficulties may be overcome; yet there are others again which they altogether despair of ever conflicting with; They are to know that as the Acorn is the seed of an Oak, & hath virtually in it all the strength and substance an Oak hath, thus the infused principle of grace hath virtually in it all the excellent expressions of grace, which are so apparently above them: & this also may comfort the people of God, who sometimes though perswaded such and such graces are in them, yet they are extreamly afraid there are other graces 3.

again that they never had. For as a natural man, though he abound in Covetouſneſs, yet hath the root of Prodigality in him; ſo a godly man abounding chiefly in ſuch & ſuch graces, yet hath thoſe other alſo in his heart, though not viſibly.

Again, this may alſo ſupport the Godly heart, that laboureth and tremble under the weakneſſe of his graces, a weak faith, weak patience, for he hath the root of all grace, he hath the Mine and the Treaſury, though there be not that gradu-all expreſſion of it.

4. Fourthly, *Becauſe Originall ſin is the root of all ſin, hence it is, that the ſtrength of ſin lyeth there*; And the greateſt part of our wickedneſs is in thoſe ſinfull inclinations. The noyſomneſs of a Toad lyeth not in the venting of poiſon at this or that time, but that it hath a nature to do thus alwayes; & this if duly conſidered, would deeply wound the heart of all Hypocrites, Moraliſts, and Formaliſts: The greateſt part of their vileneſſe and loathſomneſſe lyeth within doors, is hid as it were under ground: Thy ungodly actions are nothing to thy ungodly nature. Thus alſo in grace regenerating; the ſtrength of godlineſſe lyeth in the inward work of it, grace is more excellently grace, and ſtrongly grace, as it is in the heart, than as it is in actions: God is a Father of the ſpirits, and doth delight
Prov. 4. 23. moſt in ſpirit-holineſſe, and the graces of the ſpirit; *My ſonne give me thy heart, and above all things keep thy heart, for out of it are the iſſues of life and death:* As any wicked man is far worſe inwardly than outwardly, ſo any godly man is farre better inwardly than outwardly, ſo far as grace worketh at any time in him. The Waters are purer in the Fountain than in the Stream: Now how neceſſary is it for the people of God to think of this? they many times are carefull about duties, ſee they omit none of them (and that is very neceſſary; for as Cloaths keep the body warm, and help the inward heat, ſo the vigorous exerciſe of holy duties redouble the ſtrength of grace within,) yet the main care of a Chriſtian ſhould be to get grace more and more rooted in his heart; any holy duty done from grace in the heart differs from what is done without this, as the living from the dead: As a man that doth any wicked thing, yet if this have not got into his heart, it is not ſo dangerous; ſo any good action done, if the love of this be not in the heart, it is not comfortable nor acceptable.

5. Fifthly, *This Corruption doth ſo plunge a man into ſinne, that there is a connaturality and agreement between his heart and ſin.* As the Swine delights in mire and filth, becauſe of its loathſome nature; as the Beetle-flye delights in Horſe dung, and is killed by ſweet Herbs, ſo a man naturally is carried out to act thoſe things which are ſutable to his corrupt heart, though never ſo offenſive to God. The contrary is in Regeneration, for grace infuſed makes us to delight in the Law of God, to love holineſſe for holineſſe ſake. Thus *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. ſpeaks of his delight in the Law of God in the inner man; and *David* preferreth it before all deſirable things, gold and honey, and his neceſſary food. A natural man is ſaid *to ſwallow down iniquity like water*, *Job.* 15. 16. The Feavouriſh man findes a great deal of ſweetneſſe, and deſire after water, and thinketh he never hath enough. Thus *David*, he ſwalloweth down Gods Word like honey, he thirſteth, he never hath enough of God, or godlineſſe; when a man is Regenerated, he hath a Fountain within him, not a Ciſtern that muſt be filled with earthly motives to do what is godly.

6. Sixthly, *This corruption is univerſall in the extention of it.* This leproſie is of the whole man; this ſore is over all the ſoul, the minde darkned, the will rebellious the affections unmortified, and the whole heart in great confuſion and diſorder; ſo that the Conſcience of a man, which we would think might be beſt, like *Jobs* Meſſenger, at leaſt to bring the ſad news of all that hath befaln us, that alſo is unpure and unclean. Anſwerable to his generall infection, the Apoſtle prayeth for the *Theſſalonians*, *That they may be renewed thorowout, in ſoul, ſpirit and body.* There is a body-filthineſſe, and a ſoul-filthineſſe, and there muſt be a body-cleanſing, and a ſoul-cleanſing, and in this men wofully miſtake: They take ſome illumina-

illumination in the minde, accompanied with gifts and abilities in holy duties for the thorow and universall sanctification of the whole man; our present age is a Theatre upon which you may see many such sad spectacles: But this will not serve; as originall corruption is not sin only in the minde, or sinne only in the will, but sinne all over; so the grace of Regeneration is not only faith, or love, or patience, but all graces.

Seventhly, *The Apostle* Rom. 8. *doth describe this fleshly being in two things*; contrary to which is our spirituall being; First, that the fleshly mind of a man is not subject to God, nor indeed can be: Herein this Originall corruption doth manifestly discover it self, that it makes a man full of enmity, & hostility against God and his Image whersoever it shineth; there is no agreement between this darkness & that light. This wretched frame is therefore called a stone, because of its contumacy, no impression is easily received, but it continued obstinate against all remedies whatsoever: on the other side, this work of grace is cal'd an heart of flesh, Eze. 36. in a far different sense than the word flesh is used in the text; for there it signifieth pliableness, flexibleness, & a tender impression made upon the soul, whereby he doth willingly subject his minde to *Scripture*-Truths, & his will to Scripture-Commands. Hence those that are Regenerated are said to be taught of God, & the people of God in the day of his power are said to be willingnesses; & herein the work of Regeneration is admirable, that it turneth the heart of a man to the love and practice of those duties which are against his pleasure, profit, and all outward advantage whatsoever; grace toucheth these mountains, & it makes them like wax to receive any form or fashion: Now the heart renewed would be subject to none but God, and his will; no longer subject to the lusts and desires of the flesh, to the temptations of the world, to disdain obedience to any thing but God, or for God. For the soul now to prefer the Creature before God in the love of it, is as grosse as for the body to be prostitute before an image, and to worship that. The second thing which the Apostle makes the fruit of being in the flesh, is, that it cannot please God. To be carnally minded is death, so that whatsoever the unregenerate man doth is bitter fruit and sour grapes. It is an abomination to the Lord, he is all the day long damning himself, and doing abominable things in the eyes of the Lord; if he eats, if he drinks, if he buyeth or selleth, all these are cursed to him. Whithersoever he goeth, the mark on Gods displeasure is upon him. Now where the person is regenerated, there the curse and loathsomnes of a mans person is removed by the grace of justification, and his duties are well pleasing to God by sanctification: for although in the court of justification, it is no blasphemy to Gods spirit to say, that the gracious works done by us are a menstruous cloth, dung and drosse, yet if he look upon them in the sphere of sanctification, so they are graces and holy actions, and well pleasing to God, their imperfection being done away through Christ; and thus as God smelt a sweet savour in *Noah's* Sacrifice, so he doth also in all the gracious duties the people of God perform, though the Incense that sweetens all be the blood of Christ. Therefore the Church of God is compared to a Garden, and every godly soul to a Lilly and Flower, and their graces to sweet Spices; yea she is made altogether lovely; which although it hath its ground from justification, yet if the Church of God had had no inherent grace in her, we cannot say God would use such expressions to her; whereas therefore before thou didst pray, hear, God could not abide thee, thou wast a beast that made every thing unclean thou didst touch; now God accepts of thy holy duties, thy prayer, fasting, almes-deeds; as he said to the Centurian. Thus you see how that in every particular, wherein Corruption hath made any defilement or breach, there grace doth make some glorious reparations; and as sinne hath abounded in the filth of it, so grace abounds in the purity and glory of it. 7 Psal. 110.

In the next place let us consider, why regeneration is thus necessary to salvation, because of this corruption in us. And first:

Why Corruption of our nature proves a neceſſity of Regeneration, before we can be ſaved.

The happineſs of heaven is cheifly in enjoying of God; and having communion with him: now how can man that is thus corrupt and wretched by nature, ſuch an irreconcileable enemy to him, be brought to this fellowſhip with God, as the greateſt bleſſedneſs? If ſo be to Duties and ordinances God requireth ſuch ſanctity and ſanctification in thoſe that draw near, how much rather to the enjoyment of himſelf? If the pure eye that ſeeth the Sun, the Bat and Owl is offended at the glorious beams therefore; God therefore and his glorious preſence would be a burden and a torment to a wicked man: They That bid God depart from them, becauſe of his holy Lawes and his holy Ordinances, how much rather would they bid God depart from them becauſe of his holy preſence.

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2. Secondly, *The imployment and work that God calls for in heaven is altogether inconſiſtent with a wicked and ungodly heart.* To praiſe God and rejoyce in him for ever; to love him, and to delight in him, forgetting all Creatures, and be ſwallowed up in him as the Ocean of all happineſs how, can the heart of a natural man be thus affected? We ſee in this life how odious and troubleſome holy duties are to the godly heart; and therefore much more would heaven be an hell to an ungodly man; It is true, wicked men as *Balaam* may deſire happineſſe, but then they look to it only as it is a preſervation from evill, and a preventing of torment; they do not conſider the poſitive part in happineſs, which is to glorifie God and to delight in him. It was much that the blinde Philoſophers could ſtumble on this, to conclude that bleſſedneſſe conſiſted in vertuous actions, that the greateſt delight and happineſs that could be was to do juſtly; ſo that an ungodly man could not have *Ariſtotles* happineſſe, and do we think he can have *Pauls*?

3. Thirdly, *There is a neceſſity of the ſouls regeneration, ere it can be glorified, becauſe it would not be for the honour and glory of God to beſtow happineſſe upon ſinfull men.* As it is Gods glory to be holy, ſo it's his Childrens glory to be like him in holineſſe: It is true, God needeth not our holineſſe, neither doth he want our righteouſneſſe, neither doth our goodnſſe extend to him; yet the outward manifeſtation of his glory is ſeen in thoſe that are holy: The place in the Temple that did repreſent Heaven was called the *Holy of Holies*; and if no prophane or unclean thing might enter the Temple, much leſſe into that more ſacred place. The Papiſts calumniate us, as if we were enemies to holineſſe, becauſe we make it not meritorious of heaven; but we plead the neceſſity of it, and God hath made an inſeparable connexion between holineſſe and happineſſe. As therefore this body of ours cannot be glorified in heaven as long as it is thus vile and corruptible, it muſt be raiſed out of the duſt, and all the imperfections of it muſt be done away; ſo the ſoul muſt alſo have a reſurrection from its ſpirituall death and loathſomneſſe, ere it can be made happy.

Theſe things haply may be acknowledged as true by all, but who takes the right way to be happy? Regeneration is the writing of Gods *Law*; now is Drunkenneſſe, Prophaneneſſe, Pride, Worldlineſſe, Gods Law? Men might quickly ſee they are out of the right way to glory, if they would meditate on theſe things.

Uſe 1. *Uſe* 1. How vain and empty a thing it is, to glory in our naturall birth! Are we born great, noble, rich in inheritances? yet remember, we are alſo born children of wrath; we are *fleſh of fleſh*, what debaſement ſhould here be for us! Look upon any Toad or Serpent, their naturall propagation is more happy than thine; Oh we never lay our ſelves low in the ſenſe of our poverty and ſhame, till we come to be affected with his naturall depravation. The ſcripture many times would humble us, becauſe we are Duſt and Aſhes, but this is only a naturall baſeneſſe; we ought much rather to ly down in confuſion, becauſe we are born ſo full of ſinne; how little do we believe theſe things? Why art thou puffed up in thy ſelf, and boaſt: ſt of external riches or honours: To be a ſinfull man is ſhame and terror enough. The Heathen would have a Boy to ſpeak in

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his ear in the midst of all his pomp and glory, *Memento te hominem esse, Remember thou art a man.* But do thou in the midst of all thy outward comforts say to thy soul, *Memento te peccatorem esse;* Yea, not so much a sinner as sinne it self.

Use 2. Of Instruction. What is the reason, men that are of ingenious, fair and just conversation, have so much quietnesse, peace and confidence, as if all were well? The first rise of their mistake, is their insensiblenesse and ignorance about originall defilement, did they know how all that they account good and excellent, is indeed abominable and filthy; how would they stand aloof off, crying out, they are unclean, unclean; and certainly if men regenerated speak of their good actions, which have indeed some true good; that they are menstruous cloaths, dung, and drosse; what ought not you to think of an external righteousnesse? Oh consider, that Regeneration is not only necessary, because a man liveth in such and such grosse impieties, but because he hath a defiled nature; and therefore unlesse you civill men, good natur'd men, be born again as well as Publicans and Harlots, ye cannot enter into the Kingdome of heaven, Do not then look upon some prophane and horrid wretches, saying, I wonder this Sermon doth not work upon them, I wonder they do not become new men, it is strange how they can hear these things and be as they are; but rather wonder at thy own self, and smite on thy own thigh, and be amazed to consider, why thou dost not think of becoming new *Use* 2.

Use 3. Of Exhortation. Is Corruption the ground of the necessity of Regeneration, then see this latter extend as far as the former; corruption is in thy mind, thy judgement, thy intentions, as well as in bodily actions, therefore let Regeneration be also extended thither; we must not only have a new life, and a new conversation, but also a new heart and spirit. The very spirit must be sanctified as well as the soul; the choisest intellectual part of a man, as well as his sensitive part. The Scripture calls flesh not only the bodily sinnes of a man, but the actions of his soul *puffed up in his fleshly minde*, speaking of false worship: so Idolatry, and Heresies are made the fruit of the flesh as well as externall impiety. This is to be considered by those who judge grosse & abominable opinions no great crime or fault; No, the Apostle saith of all those enumerated vices, *Gal.* 5. 19. where intellectuall sinnes are among others, *They that do such things shall not inherit the Kingdome of Heaven.* Therefore we may say an Heritick needs conversion as well as a prophane person: And a man may discover he is a fleshly unregenerated man as well by some Opinions and Doctrines, as by some corrupt conversations. *Use* 3.

SERMON

SERMON XXXVII

Of the unexpreſsibleneſs of this new life.

JOHN 3. 8.

The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth, &c.

OUr Saviour in theſe words doth further clear the Myſtery of regeneration unto *Nicodemus*, that ſo at laſt the ſcales may fall from his eyes; becauſe this ſpiritual nativity was not viſible, as that of the body is, *Nicodemus* would not believe any ſuch thing. Now our Saviour inſtanceth in a very fit ſimilitude, *The winde bloweth where it liſteth, thou heareſt the ſound of it, but thou ſeeſt it not with thy eyes, neither art thou able to tell from whence it cometh:* So that this ſpeech of our Saviour doth denote the difficulty of underſtanding this ſpiritual birth, not only to the corrupt underſtanding, but alſo to the renewed: for this, in the Text ariſeth not from the imbecillity of the power or faculty to perceive, but the ſubtile and pure nature of the object to be underſtood: It is therefore the intent of our Saviour to expreſs this ſpiritual birth, by a plain ſimilitude. *Some* there are that take the greek word πνεῦμα, for the ſpirit of God: upon this rule, whereſoever it is with the greek article, there the ſpirit of God is underſtood; but that is not univerſal, and then it would be moſt improper: for it could be no illuſtration to manifeſt a thing by it ſelf, which our Saviour ſhould do if we take it ſo. *Maldonate* takes ſpirit, or breath, for the ſoul of a man, and makes the ſenſe thus; As we do not know the nature of the ſoul, how it is infuſed, whence it cometh, or whither it goeth, only we perceive the ſtrong operations of it; ſo it is in the work of Grace. But there is no juſt reaſon to recede from our Tranſlation in making it to ſignifie the wind, and ſo every thing will excellently agree.

Firſt, The Air is neceſſary, ſo that there is no living, or breathing without it: This work of Gods *S*pirit, is wholly neceſſary for this new birth.

Secondly, Thou heareſt the voice of this only, but thou ſeeſt not the winde it ſelf: ſo the godly hear the voice of Gods ſpirit ſpeaking to them to live, and as to *Lazarus*, to come forth *out of the grave*; ſo do the Children of God.

Thirdly, As we cannot tell the beginning of the winds, for although the Philoſophers diſpute much, ſome making it the flux of the Air, others exhalations from the earth, yet there is no certainty; ſo it is in this work of grace. The world ſeeth men by the word of God new changed, new enlivened; they wonder and admire to ſee this alteration: men are divided in their thoughts about it: ſome ſay, *they are of God*, others *of the devil*, even as they differed in their thoughts about Chriſt.

And then here is the liberty of Gods *S*pirit in Regenerating, He *bloweth where he*

he list: To whom he will he manifests himself, so that all is to be ascribed to the power of Gods spirit, not to mans ability.

Obj. *The work and Grace of Regeneration, is rather felt and perceived by him that hath it, than that which can be expressed, or made known to a mans self or others, it being a wonderfull hidden, and secret life.* Obj.

The winde we feel and perceive in the motions of it; but the Originals of it, we are not able exactly to describe: so it is in this great work: What the wiseman speaks about the framing of the child, *We are not able to describe how the bones, and all other parts of the infant are composed*, Eccles. 11. 5. which made *David* say, *He was fearfully, and wonderfully made.* The like doth God do about our new birth, We are fearfully and wonderfully made again; so that the difficulty to perceive aright of this work, may arise partly from that corruption which is inbred in every one, and partly the unsearchableness of the thing it self, and to this latter Christ relateth: so that he only who hath the inward power of it upon his own soul, can best discern of it: and we may say of this grace, as well as that of the Gospel, *Eye hath not seen, or ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, to conceive what the work of God is herein.*

For the better discovery of this, consider these things. Principles to clear this.

First, *That the understanding of a man is not only corrupted with sin, but naturally weakned, so that it is not able to finde out natural truths, much less supernatural.* The forms of things are hidden to us: *Vitrum lambimus, pultem non attingimus*; the fire, the water, a stone, none can have essential definitions of them: we cannot tell wherein the form or essence almost of any thing consists, only we describe things by their effects, properties, and common accidents, and we have but the shell, not the kernel. If then the work of God in nature be so abstruse to us, and we know not what to say of it, How much rather the work of God in grace? *Basil* saith, *Divers questions may be made about a very fly, which no Philosopher is ever able to answer*. How much rather then in the hidden operations of Gods spirit? So that although it was *Nicodemus* his sin, that he did not know, or believe the necessity of this new birth, yet it was a natural impotency, rather than a moral, that he could not tell how this wind did blow upon him. 1.

Secondly, *Men who have not the inward sence of this work upon their hearts, may yet be able to give the description of it*: This they have either by learning, or reading of books, or hear-say; so that if you ask many, What regeneration is? They can tell you it is a change of the whole man from that state of corruption we are born in to the state of holiness: or it is the renewing of the image of God in us by degrees, which we have lost: This account they are able to give; yea, a man may be able by way of dispute and scholership to say more, and dispute more about it, than that man who is regenerated; so that many an Orthodox man is able to prove the necessity of regeneration, and to clear it in its nature, better than one not so perfect; but there is a Theological knowledge, and a practical experimental knowledge; no question but an unregenerate man, may in a Theological way maintain Divine truths better than a regenerate man, that hath not such abilities: a Godly man doth believe, when he is not able to answer all those doubts and objections that are made about any definition of faith, that is usually given: and it is observed that many times those that have the greatest learning and parts, do most disdain the practical plain things of regeneration: *Surgunt indocti, & rapiunt cœlum*, It was the old speech of *Austins, Idots and unlearned men take the kingdom of heaven by violence*, when learned men are shut out. *Bradwardin*, a great scholer called *Doctor Profundus*, the profound doctor, speaks of himself how offended he was at the reading of *Pauls* Epistles, because he had not *Metaphysicum ingenium*, a Metaphysical head: and we see by miserable experience, what affectations men have to speak, and hear sublime Ministers, & aerial notions, accounting those things that make for our spiritual edification, and inward renovation, to be but plain sim-

ſimplicities; but this will prove to be gold and ſilver, when the other will be only hay and ſtubble.

3. Thirdly, *Although this life be a ſecret hidden life, yet many things about it are to be demonſtrated.* Even as about the windes, although there be ſeveral opinions about the Original of them, and we may in the general ſay, they ariſe out of the Eaſt or Weſt, *&c.* But the punctual particular Original of them we cannot: ſo it is in the work of regeneration; The cauſe from whence it is, is God, *Unleſs a man be born of the ſpirit, &c.* So the Orthodox declare the manner in the general, that its irreſiſtably wrought in us by an inſuperable efficacy of Gods ſpirit, and although it be hard to ſhew the particular manner how the grace of God determineth the wil, and changeth the heart, yet that this is done is very apparent, and the Scripture makes it very clear; and the conſideration of this may bridle our underſtandings, & make us ſober, that we do not curiouſly pry into things; for if upon the utmoſt enquiry we cannot tell our natural conception and making, much leſs may we apprehend this ſpiritual making. We come therefore in the next place to ſhew where in this life is ſo unexpreſſible; for we conceive this aſſertion of our Saviours, like that, *Our life is hid with Chriſt in God*, Col 3. 3. The work of grace, though it be admirable and wonderful, yet it doth not incur into the ſenſes: and this is that which makes many ſo Atheiſtical, and ſcornfull about the work of Gods ſpirit in us. They either deny there is ſuch a thing, or they judge theſe things deluſions & fancies, or the complexion of mens bodies: but as we do believe we have a ſoul, though we cannot ſee it; that there is a wind, though our eyes perceive it not, that there is a God, though no man hath ſeen him at any time: ſo it may certainly be demonſtrated that there is ſuch a work of regeneration, though we perceive it not with our bodily eyes: and this is neceſſarily to be preſſed; for the more we are aſſured that there is ſuch a thing, and that every one who would be ſaved, muſt have it, then we ſhall make the greater enquiry into this, whether we have it or no. The ſecretneſs therefore of this new life is ſeen,

Wherein this new life is ſecret and unexpreſſible.

1. Firſt, *In thoſe travels, and agonies of ſoul which commonly it goeth through with e're grace be formed.* The ſpirit of God doth convince of ſin, and cauſeth bondage in the heart: we hear ſome crying out, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?* For although a man be in this work of regeneration altogether paſſive, yea, obſtinate and rebellious, therefore compared unto a ſtone, and a dead man; yet in other reſpects God works in us ſutably to reaſonable men, by enlightening our underſtanding, by opening our eyes to ſee our miſery that we are under; as *Dives* when his eyes was opened, ſaw he was in hell, which made him cry out for eaſe: So theſe perceive themſelves even dropping irrecoverably therein, and thereupon they cry out, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?* When there is this diſcovery in the heart, then there are commotions, and earth-quakes in the ſoul.

Now come to any natural man, ſpeak of theſe pangs and troubles of the ſoul, he knoweth not what they mean, he underſtands not the meaning of them: As *Job* ſaid to his miſerable comforters, *Would your ſouls were in my ſouls ſtead, then you would feel what that wormwood and bitterneſs is, which I do undergo*: So had thy ſoul been ever in thoſe depths of God, then thou wouldſt have known what it is to be in a ſpiritual travel. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the groans which Gods Spirit worketh in his children, he calls them *groans unutterable*, *Rom.* 8. ſo are theſe ſighs unutterable, bitterneſs, and pangs unutterable. It is true, theſe commotions of the ſoul are not ſo remarkable in ſome, as in others, neither are theſe things felt alike in all. But there is in every one a ſenſe and feeling of his undone eſtate, and hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs: Now in all theſe things he is a man in a myſtery to the natural man: Theſe things are tranſacted ſecretly in a mans heart: Examine therefore thy ſelf: Haſt thou ever been a man thus affected, thus exerciſed? Hath the Spirit of God convinced thee of ſin? Hath thy heart been loaded with ſin? Hath the Law diſcovered ſin? hath every thing been as if turned into blood? As *Stephen* ſaw heaven opening to receive him, ſo haſt thou as it were hell opened to devour thee, here

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are the beginnings of a new-birth; not as if regeneration lay in these, no. How many have felt sorrow, terror, yet have proved abortives? but in many of Gods children, this is introductory, and when happily compleated, these fears and troubles are mingled with much faith and confidence: God hath said to thy soul, as well as of the womans travels, *In sorrow shalt thou conceive and bring forth.*

Secondly, *As the groans after God and his favours are hidden, so the principles from whence they are enabled, are wholly invisible, and that not only to the bodily eye, but to the mental eye of a natural man.* 2. A carnal man cannot think that any man doth any thing in reference to God, but upon carnal and worldly self-principles: This the Pharisees, they charged Christ with vain glory, and his own kindred would have him do his miracles more publickly, that he might be externally advanced: they judged of Christ like themselves, *Joh.*7 3 4. Thy did all things from worldly principles, and so they conceived Christ. The Apostle calls this work of Grace, *The inner man.* The glory of a Christian is within; he prayeth outwardly, but his glory is within; he heareth with the outward ear, but his glory is within: It is the inner man, which is the root and the fountain of all his external actions. Now as the root of the tree is hidden, and the spring-head hard to be found out; so it is here, from what inward principle it is that thou art carried out to do the things God commandeth is wholy to be sought into. The Pharisees did against their own consciences blasphemously make it a doubt by what power he did those wonderful things: But we may upon good ground ask, By whom dost thou pray? Dost thou hear? Is it from Gods holy Spirit, acting and enabling of thee? Or is it from thy own corrupt principles & suggestions, and this is that which comforts a godly man against all those accusations of Hypocrisie which the world casts upon them.

Thirdly, *As their principles, so the scope and intention of the whole man in their conversation, is very hidden and secret, they being carried out towards God, because of his excellency, and glorious fulness.* 3. *David*, how often doth he profess his joy in, and love of God? How doth *Paul* profess his delight in the Law of God in the inward man, and that because it is spiritual? The Pharisees lose the acceptance of all their performances, because what they did, *they did to be seen of men.* It is true, Hypocrisie is hidden also, and the corrupt intentions of wicked men are also secret: There is the hidden darkness of wickedness in a mans heart? but these sincere intentions are secret and admirable in a further sence, because the heart of a natural man, cannot do any thing upon such pure grounds: his eye is dark, and therefore his whole body is dark also. As the earth cannot ascend upwards, because of its dense and heavy nature, so neither can the heart of a man ascend so high, as to do things for God, unless regenerated. Now until a man do things upon these pure motives, he can have no true demonstration of grace in his soul.

Fourthly, *The joyes and consolations which a regenerated man obtaineth in his course of a spiritual life, are such as a natural man also understands not. Thou hast put more gladness into my heart*, saith *David*, *than they have had when their wine and oyl encreaseth*, Psalm. 4. 4. It is called therefore *unspeakable joy.* Thus groanes are unutterable, and joy is unspeakable; a stranger intermedleth not with their joy: What an hidden and secret things is this, That they should take the spoyling of their goods joyfully, That they should in the midst of the most furious and violent deaths, triumph with joy! How unconceiveable are these things to flesh and blood? as therefore Christ said, *I have other meat to eat of, then ye know*; so they have other comfort and delight to take, than a natural man perceiveth of: were it not thus, How could it venture through all those discouragements that are in the way to heaven? How could it endure in the wilderness, if this Manna were not provided for him? As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things. The supply and provision which God treasureth up in his soul, is that which makes him wonderful. Oh therefore what enemies are all natural men unto their own peace and happiness? It is not a life of Grace to have riches, honours, or great success in this world, but to have the favour of God, and his love shed abroad in

their hearts: See what a glorious triumph *Paul* is lifted up into, challenging all oppoſition in the world or hell againſt him. And thus *Auſtin* did much bewail, *Sero te amavi Domine*, O Lord, it was very late e're I began to love thee. How long doth a man feed upon huſks, and is miſerable in the Creatures, till he come to eat of the fatted calf in Gods houſe? Say unto thy ſelf, *This is not all the ſweetneſs, joy, and comfort, that I might be made partaker of.*

5. Fifthly, *Their courſe and conſtant way of their life, is alſo hidden. The life that I now live, is by faith in the Son of God*, ſaith *Paul*, Gal. 2. 20. What is the matter, ſayeth *Chryſoſtom*? Doth not *Paul* live as other men? Doth he not live on food? Doth he not breath in the Air, as others do? It is true, but this is not *Pauls* life properly; but as the child in the womb lives an hidden life by ſucking nouriſhment from its mother, ſo doth *Paul* live an hidden life by deriving efficacy from Chriſt: we walk by faith, and not by ſenſe. Thus *Habakkuk* liv'd a Myſterious life, though the Figg tree did not bloſſom, though the Olive tree failed, yet he rejoyced in the ſalvation of the Lord, *Hab.* 3. 17. To live by faith is not a viſible known life to the world: The world hath no other oyl to ſupply their lamps with, but from the creatures, and when theſe decay, their hopes are at an end: But it is not thus with the Godly, *Their life is hid in Chriſt*, and therefore not to be taken away by any outward power: As the parents lay up the treaſures of their children, that they may not loſe them; ſo that faith liveth, while all other things dye.

6. Sixthly, *Their temptations and exerciſes are alſo ſecret.* Look upon *David* in his *Temptations*, How ſpiritual and hidden are they about the loſs of Gods favour, and the light of his countenance? *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? Still truſt in God*: There are *Temptations* which wicked men are obnoxious unto; and there are again ſpiritual exerciſes, which the godly are only acquainted with; ſo that the nature of our *Temptations* will as much diſcover our ſupernatural life, as any thing elſe. Every ſtate and condition hath its exerciſe ſuitable thereunto: The worldly man, worldly; the heavenly man, heavenly: and therefore it is neceſſary in a Maſter of Iſrael to know experimentally this kinde of life, otherwiſe as *Eli* charged mournfull *Hannah* with drunkenneſs, when it was a ſpiritual diſtreſs upon her; ſo will they charge poor tempted Chriſtians with madneſs and folly, if they know not the nature of theſe exerciſes: They will quickly break *the bruiſed reed and quench the ſmoaking flax*, being no wayes able to pour oyl into the wounded ſoul, till they have been thus wounded themſelves.

7. Seventhly, *Their priviledges are admirable, but unknown.* It doth not yet appear what we are: As Chriſt in reſpect of his outward humiliation did not appear the Son of God. The priviledges of Gods children are juſtification, adoption, free acceſs unto the Throne of Grace, and fellowſhip with the Father; now all theſe things are hidden. Who would judge, looking upon the afflictions, troubles, and miſeries of Gods Church, that they had ſuch priviledges? Should we not ſay, of them, as was of Chriſt? *They are forſaken and hated of God.* But though others do not know what they are heirs unto, yet they themſelves do. This juſtification is called a white ſtone, *which none knoweth but he that hath it*, Rev 2. 17. So that as the Tabernacle had a rough hairy covering without, but there was the pot of Manna within; Thus, though the people of God ly in an outward, rough, perſecuted, or afflicted eſtate, yet they have Manna within: And in the ſenſe and full perſwaſion of this, they encounter with all difficulties, they triumph in ſtraights; ſo that if a natural mans eye were open, they would ſee how much is for them, though much againſt them.

8. Eighthly, *Their increaſe and growth is alſo hidden, and that by a wonderfull meanes.* Our Saviour inſtanceth, in the ſeed ſown, that it groweth up, but the husbandman knoweth not how, only he knoweth and ſeeth it grown: Thus the Godly man cannot perceive the growth of his faith, and other graces, only he ſeeth that whereas he was a babe once, now he is a man: His light is clearer, his faith firm, his zeal hotter; ſo that as in natural growth of the body, a man doth not perceive

ccive he is growing, only he findes a difference in his ſtature at laſt. Thus it is here, only here is this difference, that the ſpiritual motions & encreaſe of grace are more imperceptible than thoſe of the body. Therefore a Chriſtian ſhould not be inordinately dejected under Temptations about its proficiency: Oh he is affraid he never groweth, he ſtill moveth on the ſame hinge: for if the rational workings of the heart be ſo hardly diſcernable, to feel that a man underſtands, and wills ſuch an object, much more the motions of the ſpirit: and as the growth it ſelf is hidden, ſo the manner of it; it encreaſeth by oppoſition, it gaineth by loſſes, it lives by death, it riſeth by falls, by ſins, by ſtumblings it gets ground.

Uſe 1. *Of inſtruction, Why wicked men are carried out to cenſure, and condemn Godlineſs.* It is becauſe they know not what it is: Hence alſo they think it ſtrange, that they run not into the ſame exceſs of riot with them The wicked are amazed to ſee why they are not as voluptuous, as exceſſive in all carnal delights, as well as they: and all is becauſe they know not this ſpiritual life. All life hath its proper motions and actions, as alſo delights which keep it up. Therefore this ſupernatural life hath its proper motions and joy: Therefore we may ſay as the Pſalmiſt, *Come and taſt how good it is:* Come and taſt what this regeneration is: feel the powerful life of it in your own ſouls, and then you will be otherwiſe affected than you are. The Phariſees ſpake evill of Chriſt, becauſe they did not believe God was in him, and with him: Thus thou harſhly judgeſt that for Melancholy and hypocriſie, which is the work of God, becauſe thou believeſt no ſuch thing as a new birth. As it is a great ſin to attribute that which commeth from the Devil, to the work of God; ſo it is a great ſin to make that which is of God, to come from the fleſh or Devil. *Uſe* 1.

Uſe 2. *How thankfull they ought to be unto God, who have had this winde blow upon them.* How many have lived and dyed in their natural condition? But God hath redeemed thee out of this ſtate of darkneſs. The pſalmiſt makes it a great mercy concerning the plague to a Godly man, *That many thouſands ſhould fall on the right hand and on the left, yet it ſhall not touch him:* but here is greater, many thouſands ſhall fall into hell on the right hand, and on the left, yet thou art preſerved. Our Saviour ſpeaks of two in a bed, *one taken, and another left:* O how great is Gods goodneſs? Two in a family, the one regenerated, the other not: two in a ſeat, the one borne a new, the other not. How merciſull is the Lord to thee? How was Chriſt affected in this diſpenſation? *Even ſo Father, for ſo it pleaſeth thee,* and the Son revealeth the Father to whom he will, *Mat.* 11. There are many great men, many rich men, many wiſe men, and it may be God paſſeth over them, and makes known this grace to thee. What? ſhall we ſo bleſs God for preſervation from natural death, that he recovereth from the grave, and not much rather from eternall death? *Uſe* 2.

SERMON XXXVIII.

Laying open the Counterfeits of a new-Birth.

JOHN 3.3.

Unleſs a man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of Heaven.

HAving in way of digreſſion obſerved ſome remarkable particulars in this excellent Dialogue between Chriſt and *Nicodemus*. I do now re-aſſume this Text, wherein a new-Birth is ſo vehemently and indiſpenſably aſſerted: And becauſe we have already demonſtrated the nature of it, the next thing to be inſiſted upon is the Counterfeit of it, that ſo no more any may deceive themſelves, as if they had it, when they had it not. For who is there who hath heard the nature of it laid open, and the neceſſity of it preſſed, doth not believe he hath it, although the work be ſo rare and ſupernatural? for a man would wonder, when Chriſt who is truth it ſelf, preſſeth this upon every man, let him be never ſo ſelf-righteous and ſelf-holy, what men think of themſelves, for certainly either they do not attend to, or believe theſe things or elſe they make no reflexion upon themſelves, ſaying, Am I ſuch a man; or elſe they vainly delude themſelves with hopes, concluding that to be the work of regeneration in them, which indeed is not.

Therefore to undeceive your ſouls herein, conſider this great work may be counterfeited in ſeveral reſpects. There may be much gliſtering which yet is not this true gold; and becauſe our Saviour expreſſeth his work metaphorically, as a new-Birth, we ſhall in alluſion to that, diſcover the falſe wayes thereof.

Counterfeits of Regeneration.

And firſt, *As in the new-Birth the ſoul*, as you heard, *brings forth in ſorrow, there are pangs and groans unutterable; ſo many men may be in great pain fear and trouble about ſinne*, As if ſome excellent and beautifull childe of grace were to be born, and yet at laſt after all thoſe pangs, there come forth ſome ugly Toad. Men after thoſe troubles and torments about ſinne, proving as loathſome, and as abominable as before, for men may be greatly afflicted in heart for ſinne, and the Miniſters of God may, as *Paul* in another caſe, *Rejoyce that they have made them ſorrowfull*; They cry out in the agonies of their ſoul, *We have ſinned grievouſly, what ſhall we do that we may be ſaved?* And yet for all this travail the ſoul brings forth nothing but winde and emptineſs.

The ground of this ſorrows fruitleſneſſe. 1. When Gods judgements are upon them, but when removed laid aſide.

For, 1. *Men may be in great troubles of ſoul about ſinne, while the apprehenſions of danger and Gods judgements are upon them, but when theſe are removed, they preſently ſettle on their lees again.* The *Iſraelites* are a pregnant inſtance for this, while Gods hand was heavy on them their ſins alſo were an heavy burden, *In their affliction they ſought God early, they humbled and mourned before him*, Hoſe. 7. 14. but their hearts were not ſtedfaſt, when they had eaſe, and were delivered, they

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ſoon forgat God, who helped them. Oh (Beloved) we have too many examples of ſuch troubles for ſinne in our dayes! Take ſome men in deſperate ſicknesſes, when death the King of terrors is ready to ſeize on them, or while they are under ſome publick miſeries which do ſo immediately burden them they know not what to do. In theſe extremities, what confeſſions, what reſolutions have you? Do they not ſeem to be new creatures? You never heard them ſpeak, purpoſe, pray to God ſo before; you never ſaw them ſo affected and wrought upon as they are for a ſeaſon; but upon recovery and eaſe they preſently forget all, and were they prophane, worldly, negligent, yea, oppoſite to God and his way? the ſame they prove again? Do not thou therefore deceive thy own ſoul, ſaying, I remember the time ſince my ſins have pained me at the very heart, ſince I roared on my bed becauſe of mine iniquities, I had no comfort in my life, ſinne made every thing ſo bitter: grant all this, but ask the Queſtion, How conceſt thou to be quiet again? How are thoſe *windes and waves come to be appeaſed?* Did *Chriſt rebuke them and bid them be ſtill*, or hath time wore them out? or hath the removal of the judgement removed alſo by trouble? Oh if this had been the true ſpiritual travel of thy ſoul, no outward comfort could have appeaſed thee! No freedom from external calamity could have pacified thee, till thou hadſt in a godly manner obtained the light of Gods countenance, and be reconciled with him. It was thus in *David* when wounded in heart for ſinne, though Gods outward judgements were over, yea, though *Nathan* told him, *His ſinne was forgiven*, yet for all that his heart runs out like a fountain of water before God, *Pſalm.* 51. And this, if rightly conſidered, doth breake the pillar of many mens hopes.

2. *Men may be in great trouble of heart, and ſo ſeem to others and to themſelves, as if they were in this new Birth, but all prove falſe, becauſe they labour to quiet and content themſelves with earthly advantages, and in a carnal manner labour to extinguiſh and to put out the ſorrow they feel.* Theſe differ from the former, becauſe they are like the Hart wounded, that labours to eat out the arrow: ſo theſe being troubled for their ſinne are fretted and diſcontented at it, and ſo uſe all the wayes they can to ſtupifie their conſcience, and they labour that their ſinne may not alwayes be before them. How great and terrible ſoever theſe mens eſtates may be, yet it will vaniſh like ſmoke. For where God doth graciouſly ſoften the heart, there is a tender melting, and a willing mourning for ſinne, as *Zech.* 12. like a mother for her only childe; but in theſe men their hearts rage, and fret at the wounds, which God makes upon them, and ſo they are like the devils and damned in hell, who are full of horrour and gnawings of heart for their ſin, but yet blaſpheme God, becauſe of their hatred againſt him; Such an one was *Cain*, who cryed ſtubbornly, *My ſins are greater than I can bear*; and therefore to eaſe himſelf, buildeth Cities, and uſeth all means to divert his fears. Conſider therefore, How haſt thou been under terrible apprehenſions of Gods wrath for ſin? Haſt thou deſired the ſanctification of them, that God would make a thorow and perfect change in thee? Or elſe haſt thou deſired to put out this fire, to bolt out this light? Haſt thou judged thoſe happy that live joyfully in their ſins, and finde no pangs upon them? All ſuch tears are but like the waters of ſtanding pools that breed Toads and other Vermine. Take heed therefore that thy ſorrow be not a *Cains* ſorrow.

2. When men labour by all means to extinguiſh the ſorrow they feel.

3. *Men may be in travel and bring forth nothing but winde, becauſe in theſe troubles they apply themſelves to falſe Prophets and falſe Teachers, who apply peace when there is no peace.* As it was with the *Iſraelites* outward condition. The falſe Prophets *ſleighily cured her wound, and cryed Peace, ſowing pillows under their elbows*, Ezek. 13. 18. Thus it is alſo with falſe teachers about the inward eſtate of their people, they ſooth up men in their evil waies; They bid them dy comfortably, believe ſtrongly, they bid them, *Go and proſper*, as he did to *Ahab*. This is *dau-*

3. When men hearken to thoſe that cure wounds ſlightly.

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bing with untempered morter, which when a froſt comes falls all to the ground again, and ſo when Gods terrible anger ſhall ariſe, all that falſe peace will tumble to the ground; both the falſe teacher, and he that receives the falſe peace and comfort will fall into the pit together. And hence it is an heavy judgement to live under ungodly and prophane Miniſters, who uſually pour oil into all wounds, tell every man that is ſick or dying, his condition is good; but what ſaith *Paul*, *If I ſhould pleaſe men, I were not the ſervant of Chriſt*, Gal. 1. 10. that is, pleaſe men in a ſinful way, give content to them in their ſins; ſo that as in any outward ſickneſs or loſs it is a grievous ſin to go to the Devil & to Wiſemen, as ye call them; The prophet ſeverely rebuked the King of *Iſrael*, and told him, his childe ſhould die, and ſaid, *Is it not becauſe there is no God in Iſrael?* Its to deny the true God, and to make the Devil your God; ſo in ſoul-troubles to go to thoſe looſe teachers, who will proclaim peace to you, is to make all your ſorrow, and all your travail for ſinne in vain. Chooſe therefore a godly and wiſe Phyſician for thy ſoul in ſuch caſe, and ſay, Give me one, not that will flatter me, but inform me impartially about my ſins.

4. When men are inordinately dejected.

4. *Men may be in trouble for ſinne, yet miſcarry, Becauſe of inordinate dejection and black deſpair.* This is not ſo ordinary, men being for the moſt part preſumptuous and there are few ſuch ſinners as the *inceſtuous perſon*, whom the *Miniſters and people of God muſt comfort, leſt they be overwhelmed with deſpair*; yet *Judas* was thus undon. As *Rachel* died in bringing forth of children; ſo theſe are damned in thoſe very ſorrows and fears they have about ſinne. God therefore who commands a ſoul to grieve for ſinne, and to come out of the pit of iniquity, doth alſo command the ſame ſoul to believe and ſeek for eaſe in Chriſt. We muſt indeed deſpair utterly in our ſelves, but not of Chriſt, and the ignorance of the acceptableneſs of faith unto God, and how wel-pleaſing it is for the humble ſoul to rely on Chriſt, keeps many of Gods children longer in the dark womb than they would. In ſo much that it is a mercy of mercies in thoſe ſpiritual agonies, to be directed into the way of believing. Thus you ſee that all pain and trouble wrought in the womb of the ſoul, doth not neceſſarily inferre, that there ought to be *joy*, *becauſe a man-childe* of Grace *is born in the heart*.

2. There may be Embryo's of preparitive workings without, &c.

A ſecond ſort, which miſcarry in this new-Birth, may be ſtiled *Embryoes*, *Such who have ſome initial and preparative workings upon their heart, but they die in the wilderneſſe ere they come to Canaan.* And they may be reduced to theſe heads.

1. When fear keeps men in awe.

First, *Thoſe who by fear are kept in their duty, and becauſe they are afraid of Gods judgement, therefore they forbear ſinne, and perform the duties required of them.* This *Rom.* 8. is called, *The ſpirit of bondage*. The ſpirit of God worketh ſuch a diſpoſition in them, though not the ſinfulneſs of it, that they are kept from ſin, as the Wolf or Lion are kept from their prey, who otherwiſe would greedily devour it. This is called by Divines *ſervile fear*, and although a man while he goeth no further is but an hypocrite, yet *Auſtine* compareth this fear to the *Needle that draweth in the threed*, it is introductory ſometimes by the bleſſing of God, of a more excellent way; and in this reſpect there is a neceſſity of the Magiſtrate and the ſword to repreſſe evil men, *If thou doſt ill, be afraid, for he beareth not the ſword in vain*, Rom. 13. for howſoever this external force doth not ſweeten and alter the nature, yet by outward reſtraining of them, they may at laſt become ſenſible of ſinne, and inſtead of leaving it for *fear*, afterwards forſake it for *love*; As *Paul rejoyced the Goſpel was preached, whether for love or out of envy*; So the Miniſters of God are to bleſſe God, men are reſtrained from outward wickedneſſe, whether it be from fear or love, although it will not be comfortable or ſoul-ſaving to thoſe who do it only from ſervile and ſlaviſh fear. Let not men therefore think they have a ſure ſign of this new-Birth within them, if they

they finde this external change wrought in them; they dare not *runne in the same excesse of riot*, as they have done; *they will set a watch before their mouths*, that they curse and swear no more; for if all this come not from a principle of love and delight within, in that which is good, here is no new Birth.

Secondly, *Those may be said to have some preparatory work, who have some resolutions & purposes to take up Christs yoke, who are not in flat opposition ad contradiction to his wayes; but shew much generall willingnesse to imbrace his way.* Of this sort was that *young man*, whom Christ is said to love, because he was not *far from the Kingdom of Heaven*. And there are many who declare good affections, shew a willing compliance with those things that are good, but they move alwaies upon this hinge. They never obtain any further degree in the waies of God; Oh what pity is it, that such persons, who come so near the haven should yet suffer shipwrack, that they should with *Moses* as it were see the Land of Promise, and yet not enter into it! We tell such they are not farre from true Repentance, they are not far from this new-Birth. Thy good affections and compliances with good men and good things, but going no further, make the Minister of God hope well of thee, and yet to be afraid of thee also. They hope well, trusting God will give thee more knowledge, work more inward power in thy heart, to break through all temptations, and to set upon the wayes of godlinesse whatsoever it cost thee, and yet they are afraid also, because where the fire of grace is, there it will burn sometimes or other; where this life of grace is, there it will be growing sometimes or other. Thy good affections are more than leaves upon the tree, they are buds, only they continue buds, they never blossome; we cannot say thou art dead, and yet we cannot say, thou art alive, we do not perceive the breath of the life of grace breathing from thee. Oh therefore that this Sermon might be like a fiery nail (as *Ecclesiastes* speaks) fastned by Christ in the hearts of such! If thy affections and dispositions be real for God, it's not enough to stay there, *Come out of Ægypt*, do not be as *Ephraim* is called, *A cake half baked*, the upper part towards heaven all dough, but the lower part baked. If God and *Heaven be to be sought for in the first place, if the Kingdom of Heaven must be got by violence*, know thy good inclinations and sweet affections will not be enough.

2. When men set upon good purpose, and resolutions, their practices remaining still the same.

Thirdly, *They are Embryo's, who by instruction and good education of others, are trained in a way of godlinesse, and in the constant practice of duties, but in time discover they never had the power of these things.* Thus we read of King *Jeboash*, all the while *Jehoiada* the Priest was alive, 2 *King.* 12. 2. who had the tuition and education of him *He walked in the wayes of God, but when he died, then he turned aside to do wickedly*; and many such there are also now adaies, who having godly parents are so accustomed unto the wayes of Religion, that they can pronounce *Shibboleth*, I mean, speak and exercise the whole form of piety; but this is not a new nature wrought in them by God; it is their old nature painted and varnished over with good education. It is true such instructions are a mercy; and the Wiseman saith, *The way a childe is trained up in, he will not leave.* As on the contrary it is a woful curse to be born of wicked parents from whom the children learn only to curse, swear, lie, and to be profane opposers of God and godlinesse; but yet this excellent education is but the external moulding of a man, not the internal renovation of his heart. It's like the midwises bowing or ordering the limbs, it's not giving the limbs themselves. Be not therefore deceived in this great work, Hath God moulded thy heart as well as parents thy life? Thy Father and Mother they have taught thus, and thou saweſt them live thus, but hath God also taught thee the power of these things in thy own soul.

3. When all the good that appeareth is from the force of education.

Lastly, *Those may be called Embryo's, who have many desires and wishes that they might be in this happy state of life, but then they have so many temptations, so many obstru-*

4. When good desires are overcome by temptation.

obſtructions and pull-backs in the way, that they preſently give over. *Balaam* (though we do not conceive of him, as in a preparatory way to grace; yet) he *wiſheth he might die the death of the righteous*; and thus ſome cryed to Chriſt, *Lord evermore give us of this bread* out of a confuſed appetite; theſe are like the ſluggard that deſireth, but yet pulleth not his hand out of his boſom, therefore his *deſire is ſaid to kill him.* In this rank alſo you may have many who have inward wiſhes and deſires, Oh that they were ſuch in whom God delighteth! Oh that they might not only *die the death*, but live the *life of a righteous man.* Thus they deſire, but ſometimes carnal friends, husbands, neighbours, they throw water on theſe little ſparks, and preſently put out all, or elſe their worldly imployments, and earthly buſineſſes freeze the heart, and make it ſenſleſſe, or elſe their own ſluggiſhneſſe and dulneſs choaketh that good ſeed in them. Therefore do not think all is ſure, becauſe thou ſayſt, though I be thus and thus, yet I deſire to do otherwiſe. Oh here may be a dangerous deluſion! Thy deſires may be thy ruine: for if thou only deſireſt and there is no further progreſſe, thou reſtſt in thy deſires, and theſe produce no reall operations, they will prove but cob webs to thee in time of danger. There is indeed a poſition of Divines, That the deſire of grace is Grace; as hunger and thirſt argue a man is alive, and the promiſe of being ſatisfied is made to the hungry and thirſty, but thoſe deſires are ſpirituall, ſtrong, conſtant, efficacious, and produce mighty operations; compared therefore to hunger, which will break ſtone walls to get ſome food. Do not therefore tumble in this pit of deſtruction, many have ſuffered ſhipwrack at this Rock, ſaying, They deſire to go to Heaven, They deſire to pleaſe God; but if thy deſire were earneſt and powerfull, it would put thee upon the uſe of all the means, that lead thee to ſuch a bleſſed end. Notwithſtanding the ſloggards deſire to eat, yet his field was growne over with thorns and thiſtles, and ſo though thou deſireſt Heaven, yet thy life is the broad way to Hell.

3. There may be abortives as to an appearing life of grace, never coming to maturity.

A third ſort of thoſe *who miſcarry in this new Birth, are Abortives, ſuch who come not to their maturity.* Now although it be true, That in the true life of Grace there cannot be properly any Abortive, and where the life of Grace hath once been, though in the leaſt degree, that is an immortall and incorruptible life, yet we may call them Abortives, becauſe ſeemingly in their own judgement, and to all others they had the life of Grace, but yet it comes to no true ripeneſs in them; Their Profeſſion, their Duties, are wilde Grapes. Theſe are denoted in the third kinde of hearers, in whom the ſeed came up, and there was Fruit, but ſaith the Text they did not τελεσφορεῖν *They did not bring that fruit to perfection, to ripeneſſe.* Thus Chriſt tels the Church, *He did not finde her works perfect*, Revel. 2. There was much outward appearing goodneſſe, but they were not ſolid, perfect works. Thy Duties are ripe when all that ſour juyce and bitterneſſe is excocted, when they are not done out of Formality, Cuſtomarineſſe, Hypocriſie, when they are done from right Principles, in an holy manner, and to holy ends. So that thy Profeſſion, thy Family-Duties and all thy externall Demonſtrations of Grace, do not prove any thing, unleſs they be ripe, and unleſſe Grace be predominant in them, though they cannot be done without all droſſe. But hath not God in his Providence ſhewed what our Humiliations, and Profeſſions have been to him, in the very fruit of the Trees, and the Corne of the Ground, nothing kindely ripes, but wateriſh, and ſo not making wholeſome or pleaſant food for the ſuſtenance of man. Truely even ſuch hath our Righteouſneſſe, our Reformation been, and that under his Judgements. Our Prayers, our Family-Duties, our ſolemne Aſſemblies have been full of corrupt bitterneſs within. As that Body cannot be ſound, though it may appear never ſo well that hath inward vitall Diſeaſes; ſo let thy outward

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Converſation be never ſo unblamable and pious, yet if there be not a ſound conſtitution within, it will not endure; Know then this conſideration goeth deeper than the former, this happily may ſhake the foundation of all thy Hopes and Comforts thou haſt had a long while.

The laſt way of Miſcarriage in this new Birth, is, *When it proves a Monſter*; For ſo the Soul that ſometimes hath been in great travail and trouble, at laſt brings out a Monſter in ſtead of a lovely child; and as *Septalius* the Phyſician on *Ariſtotle* obſerveth, That of all Creatures monſters in man-kinde are the moſt terrible and deformed, which he attributeth partly to Gods wrath and revenge upon men for their ſins, or to preſage ſome terrible Events in the world; ſo Monſters in Grace in this new Birth are the moſt terrible of all. 4. There may be Monſters brought forth.

Now as in Nature, ſo here in Grace, they come two wayes: This happeneth.

Firſt, *Through defect, when there is want of due matter*; and thus in Grace men grow monſtrous through defect, 1. From defect.

Firſt, *When there is only the outward Lineaments, and ſhape of Chriſtianity, but no inward ſupernatural life at all.* When men have the outward Expreſſion and Profeſſion of Religion, but in their lives there is nothing but ungodlineſſe. Thus a man that prayeth, cometh to Church, takes upon him Chriſtianity, and yet lives in prophane courſes, this man is a ſpiritual Monſter, and ought to breed horrour and terrour in all thoſe that behold his wayes. Or ſuppoſe his life be outwardly clean, and there be no inward change; this is a Monſter through defect, *Thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, but thou art dead*, ſaith Chriſt to the Church, *Rev.* 3. 1. *He is a Jew that is one inwardly, and Circumciſion is that of the Spirit.* As, 1. When there's only a ſhape of Chriſtianity. 2. When affections on the heart come to no perfection.

Secondly, A Miſcarriage through defect is, *When there are ſome inward Affections and Workings of God upon the heart, but they come to no Perfection.* Such a Monſter was *Agrippa*, *Thou haſt almoſt perſwaded me to be a Chriſtian*, Acts 26. 28. If therfore the Lord at any time cauſe trouble and fear to riſe in thy Soul about ſinne, pray that thou mayeſt not miſcarry: O Lord, ſay, I fear all this pain may give over again; we ſee nothing more ordinary than ſuch miſcarriages; What is become of thoſe Troubles, Reſolutions, and ſtrong Purpoſes that were once in thy heart? Are they not all vaniſhed? But this was touched upon before.

Thirdly, A third Miſcarriage is, *Want of Perſeverance, when men for a great while have gone on with much fervency and delight in Gods wayes*: Who ſeemed more Zealous than they, more Religious than they? But afterwards prove wretched Apoſtates, and return to their old vomit again: Oh theſe are terrible and dreadful Monſters! The Apoſtle chargeth ſome, *That began in the Spirit, but ended in the fleſh.* Is not this to make the Poets monſter, *Humano capiti*, &c. To adde a Serpents body to a mans head, &c. A godly man he *groweth up* further and further into *a full ſtature. Paul* thought himſelfe *not to have apprehended yet.* As a man on the bottome of an high hill, thinks if he were on the top, he were then able to touch the Heavens, but when he comes up he ſeeth himſelfe infinite ſhort ſtill. Thus it is in the way of Grace. A natural man thinketh, if he could do thus and thus, he then ſhould be compleat, but if once God change his heart, and he come to ſuch a ſtature, he ſeeth ſo farre into the way of Grace, and ſo much more is ſtill to be done, that he judgeth himſelf even at the higheſt, but to begin to be a Chriſtian.

Or ſecondly, *A Monſter may be by Exceſſe.* Now although it be true, That a man cannot exceed in Godlineſſe, and that of the Father be true, *Modus diligendi Deum eſt ſine modo*, The meaſure of loving God is without meaſure; yet as we ſay, Superſtition is an Exceſſe in Worſhip, becauſe it runneth

neth out in the practice of many external things God never commanded. So it is here. Thus many have been troubled for sin, found great burdens upon them, and what have they done? Betook themselves to some Monastery, afflicted themselves with many penitential Chastisements, lying on the Ground, feeding on Herbs, &c. This was to miscarry in the Excess; God hath not required such things, and we are to manifest our Humiliation, our Repentance only in such wayes, and after such a manner as God himself hath commanded.

Use. Use, *Of Exhortation unto all those who make any pretence to Religion, that they would take heed of such Soul-Miscarriages.* As they say of bodily miscarriages, they may endanger having a perfect child afterwards: So the soul that hath been often in pangs and trouble for sin, yet hath come out again, without any Reformation, and this done several times, it falleth out very rarely that ever such come to any maturity in Godliness; Consider whether thy Miscarriages are not in the *Defect*, for so the most are. Doth the Word, though it convince thy judgement, yet make thy conversation holy? Thou hast the name of a Christian, but the life of an Heathen or a Pagan; What a monstrous composition is this? If there should be a soul of a beast in the body of a man, to inform it, the outward lineaments of the body would not make him a man; for it is the soul that giveth the Specification, and Denomination. Thus it is here, Thou hast the body of a Christian when thy outward life is conformable to his Law, but the soul as it were of a Beast, when thy heart is fastened to any sin, and thy affections glewed to pleasures. Especially look to this, you who have at any time found great pangs and troubles of conscience for sin. Oh thy heart hath been in such fears, terrours, that thou needest Minister after Minister *to pour oyl in thy wounds!* Oh where are all these? What is become of them? Why *hast thou begun in the spirit, and ended in the flesh?* As thou art a Monster indeed, so thou shouldst be in thy own apprehension, and to thy own self. O Lord, I am ashamed to look on my self, to think on my self, I am so mis-shapen, I am so foul a Beast!

SERMON

SERMON XXXIX.

Declaring what both by Duty and Priviledge a Son of God is, which he becometh by the New birth.

JOHN 3.3.

Verily, Verily, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven.

THe true nature of Regeneration and the counterfeit thereof being already discovered, I shall only insist upon one corollary, which may be deduced from this Doctrinal point, and so dismiss it. From what therefore hath been delivered we may by use of Instruction gather, *That such who are Regenerated, or New born, are thereby become the sons of God.* Those who by natural propagation were children of wrath, by this Regeneration are children of Grace. This therefore shall be the conclusion I shall insist upon by way of inference, *viz. That those who are New born, are thereby made the Sons of God.* They have God for their Father, and are thereby put into a condition ful of *Priviledges*, as well as of *Duties*. So that in the handling of this new state of Sonship the regenerated persons are put into, we shall speak first of the qualification of their Duties, and then of their Priviledges: But before we do so, some few particulars are to be premised. As

Corollary from the Doctrine of Regeneration.

It makes a man a chide of God.

First, *In being sons to God there are two things considerable,*

1. *Their right to the glorious inheritance of heaven.*
2. *Their sanctified nature whereby they become like God, and imitate him in his holiness.*

Premised particulars.

1. In this Sonship are considerable,

For as children of men do partake of their nature, and commonly imitate and represent their Fathers in their manners and conversation; So those that are born of God, are said to be *Partakers of the Divine nature*, and thereby resemble God, (according to our capacity) *being holy, as he is holy.* Now in the Sons of God we are to make a great difference between their right to heaven, and their holy nature and conversation.

1. For the former is not grounded upon their Regeneration, for that is imperfect, and their holiness being imperfect, doth *Recipere magis* and *minus*, doth receive more or less; but this is founded upon their justification, and is commonly called *Their adoption.* Orthodox and learned Divines differ about the *Order of Adoption*; some make it a grace next to *Predestination*, and so before *Justification*; others make it not indeed the same with Justification, but immediatly dependant on it, and grounded thereupon: And none but Papists make this Adoption, as it doth invest us with a Title to eternal glory, to be built on *our regeneration.*

1. Right to the inheritance with its true ground.

2. Likeneſs to God, with its ground.

2. But then the other conſiderable property in our Sonſhip is, whereby we are made inwardly holy, and upon theſe principles act holily: This floweth from our Regeneration; and ſo becauſe of our new birth we are made ſons of God, and are *begotten anew by his word*, becauſe hereby we reſemble God our Father: For as on the contrary, wicked men are ſaid to be *of their Father the Devil, becauſe they do his works*; So the godly are of God their Father, becauſe they reſemble him: *He purifieth himſelf even as God is pure*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. So that theſe two carefully diſtinguiſhed, will keep us from proud preſumption on the one hand, and yet be a great incentive to godlineſs on the other hand.

2. The difference between Chriſts ſonſhip and ours.

Secondly, *Conſider that Chriſt is the only and true begotten of God by an eternal and natural generation; we are the Sons of God by a temporal, and free gracious generation*: So that it is a rule of Divines, *Quod Chriſtus naturâ, nos gratiâ, That which Chriſt hath by Nature, we have by Grace.* Chriſt is the ſon of God, not in that ſenſe as the *Socinians* and ſuch blaſphemous Hereticks ſay, *Non factus filius Dei*, but *Natus, Not the made Son of God*, but *the born Son of God*, and therefore *homoouſial*, of the ſame nature with God; and in this ſenſe the Phariſees and Jews underſtood him when they charged him with blaſphemy, *Making himſelf*, as they ſaid, *equal with God*. It is true that place of the Pſalmiſt, *Thou art my ſon, this day I have begotten thee*, Acts 13. 33. is applied to his reſurrection, and the manifeſtation, or declaration of his Sonſhip; but thoſe places which ſpeak of Chriſts ſubſiſtency, before he was incarnated, do evidently argue him ſo to be God, as that he was the ſame with God from all eternity: And the firſt Chapter of *Johns* Goſpel makes it irrefragably true, not withſtanding all the Hereticks endeavour to elude it. Well, as Chriſt is thus naturally, ſo thoſe that are regenerated are thus graciouſly, and ſo are ſaid to be co-heirs with Chriſt: Though therefore we are begotten of God, yet Chriſt is the firſt born, and hath the preheminency in all things.

3. We are ſons of God.

Thirdly, *Conſider that we may be ſaid to be the Sons of God in three reſpects.*

1. As his creatures.

1. *As we are creatures, having our being from him*: In which ſenſe *Paul* ſanctifieth that verſe of the Poet, τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν, *We are his off-ſpring*, Acts 17. 28. What the Poet ſaid of *Jupiter*, *Paul* applieth to the true God, thus God is a Father by Creation; and all men even wicked men are his children in this ſenſe; but this is no advantage, for though a man be *born of God* in this reſpect, yet if he be no more, *he ſhall never ſee the Kingdom of heaven. He that made them, will not ſave them*, ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 27. 11. Though ye are his creatures, yet haing fallen from him to take the Devils character, he will deal no more with you as with his own.

2. As in an external Covenant,

2. *There are Sons to God by an external Covenant, or adminiſtration of Grace.* Thus men receiving the outward ſeal of the Covenant of Grace, and ſubmitting externally to thoſe Laws God preſcribes, are called Sons. Thus the people of Iſrael are often called the ſons of God, becauſe of that external Adoption, (*Of whom is the Adoption*, ſaith *Paul*:) Even as in the New Teſtament believers are called Saints, becauſe of their external profeſſion, though they were not inwardly holy: *Out of Egypt have I called my Son*, which though principally applied to Chriſt, yet Typically, as learned men think, it was true of the Iſraelites called by God out of *Egypt*. Now this Sonſhip is alſo but Nominal and Titular: To have no more of Sons than theſe outward badges, is but an aggravation of hell, and eternal torments. Thus ſaith Chriſt, *The children of the Kingdom ſhall be caſt forth*, Mat. 8. 12. Oh the terrour of this: Many that are now called, and reputed ſo, the Sons of God, and the Children of the Kingdome of Grace, ſhall be thrown out from all thoſe hopes and expectations they had. Even as among the Iſraelites, though there came ſo many thouſands of them out of *Egypt*, and you would have thought that all thoſe who enjoyed ſuch miraculous mercies from heaven, ſhould have been made happy: Yet two only of all that number entred

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into Canaan: So of those many that are called, which have the name and external priviledges of the sons of God, even few of them will be saved.

3. Therefore there are sons *by real Sanctification, as well as federal relation*; and these are those whom our Saviour meaneth in the Text, and to whom the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven is promised. Baptism therefore, and the Sacraments do not make you sons of God, it is this inward work of a new Nature. 3. As truly sanctified.

These things presupposed, let us consider as I promised, *How the sons of God are qualified?*

1. *By Duty.* And then
2. *By priviledge.*

By Duty: First, *They have the Affections of a son in holy fear and reverence: If I be a Father, where is my honour*, saith God, *Mal.* 1.6. If we are to honour our earthly Parents, who give us only (and that but instrumentally neither) a bodily being, how much rather ought we with an holy fear to deport our selves before him, who is such an Omnipotent Father, and hath other chastisements even upon the soul and heart, which earthly Fathers have not. Now this filial fear is an excellent bridle & check to all that wantonness & insolency we many times run into, through our Fathers goodness & kindness to us: There is a servile mercinary fear, & there is a Filial ingennuos fear: the first is unworthy and unbeseeming the son of God, but the second is a requisite condition. Observe then thy self: If thou art a Son of God, What holy trembling and fear will be upon thee in all thy approaches to him? His word, his Ordinances will cause much inward reverence and lowliness of heart in thee: Earthly parents are not Omnipresent, and so cannot be every where with their sons, which imboldens them to do many things which they would never do, if their parents did behold them, nay they would not for a world their father ever should come to know them. *Jacobs* children when they had committed that horrible act on their brother *Joseph*, all their care was to hide it from their Father: but now God is a Father every where present; he is all Eye, *There is nothing done in secret, but thy Father seeth it.* There is no heart-pride, no heart-earthlyness, but thy Father seeth it. There is never a time thou prayest, heares the word, but thy Father seeth with what frame of Spirit it is. Oh therefore if thou art a Son of God, thou will discover it in thy whole carriage: a Son feareth the frowns of his Father; I dare not do this; my father will be offended; and I, Whither shall I go? Thus the Apostle *Peter*, *If ye call him Father, passe your sojourning here with fear*, 1 Pet. 1.17. 1. By duty, shewing like affections in holy fear.

Secondly, *The affections of Sons are seen in a patient submission to all his chastisments, for who may better afflict thee, than a Father? Whom I love, I chasten*, saith God: And the Apostle arguech strongly from the less to the greater, *If we suffer our earthly Parents after the flesh to chastise, how much rather the Father of spirits*, Heb. 12.9. He is a Father of our spirits, and so he my chastise us in them: fill us with darkness, sadness, trouble, and grief of soul. Now this consideration would greatly quiet the waves and winds which are ready to rise up in us. What is the ground of all our impatience, discontent, and trouble against Gods dispensations? Is it not because we look not upon him as so wise, and so potent a Father? Who can do it better? Can the Artificer know when his gold hath been enough in the furnace, and he will not let it stay a moment longer: and shall not God know when he hath chastised thee enough: If thou hadst a Child-like disposition, thou would say, although all I feel be bitter, yet he is a Father still, I have been an ill Child, and this makes him a Good Father in chastising. 2. In submission to chastisements.

Thirdly, *The affections of a Son are seen in being carried out in all our obedience to him from an inward sweet principle of love.* In this sense they are said, *Because they are the sons of God, they are not under the Law.* Not as if the Law were not a rule to them, but only they are carryed out to obey it from a fountain of love: even as a dutiful child will obey his Fathers commands, although he had no estate, 3. In obedience flowing from love.

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or great inheritance to give him. And thus it is here, Though there were no Heaven or glory to beſtow upon a regenerated perſon, yet he hath that principle of love which would perſwade him to obey God. Thus the Apoſtle, *As many as are led by the ſpirit, are the ſons of God*, Rom. 8. 14. Such who have the ſpirit of God renewing their natures, and ſo guiding them by the word to their duties, theſe are the ſons of God: Not that it is unlawfull for a childe of God to have an eye to the reward; for it is ſaid of *Moſes*, *He hath an eye to the recompence of reward*, Heb. 11. 26. The greek word ſignifieth a fixed intent eye: and every *amor mercedis*, is not *mercenarius*, every love of a reward is not mercenary, unleſſe it be wholly and totally for this, being joyned with no love to God at the ſame preſent.

4. Joy and delight in duties.

Fourthly, *His affections are ſeen in his joy and delight in all thoſe duties whereby he may have communion with him. John* 8. *He that is of God, heareth his word*: A Son delights to have letters from his Father, to have diſcourſe about him, eſpecially to enjoy his preſence. *Truly we have communion with the Father*, ſaith the Apoſtle *John*: Oh then, What a diſcovery is this of thy ſonſhip? How art thou affected in praying, in hearing, in all religious duties? They are a conſtant burthen and trouble to thee; this argueth thee to be no ſon of God. Let not therefore vain deluſions carry thee aſide: It is not thy coming to Church, thy ſtanding within Gods Court, that demonſtrates thee to be of God; but it is an heavenly and ſpiritual joy in theſe approaches. Doth faith work ſtrongly in God as a Father? Doth that improve with much ſweetneſs this relation, and hereupon thy ſoul be enlarged in much fervency of this ſpirit? This is to be the Son of God. Even as the Angels which in *Job* are called, *The Sons of God*, with much alacrity and joy delight in gods preſence.

5. In hatred of ſin.

Fifthly, *The Son of God manifeſts himſelf in his hatred and oppoſition unto all ſin*; For every creature acteth according to its kinde; the Lamb according to the nature of a Lamb: and thus becauſe he is born of God, he acteth according to a Divine principle, *That as God is a God of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*, Hab. 1. ſo he is of a purer heart than to love and delight in ſin. *He that is born of God ſinneth not, neither indeed can be, becauſe the ſeed abideth in him*, 1 *John* 5 18. All men are divided into theſe two ranks (ſaith *Auſtin*) they are either *Filii Dei*, or *Filii Diaboli*, The Sons of God, or the Sons of the Divel: Now their works will manifeſt them. Art thou a man afraid of ſin, carefully ſtudying to avoid it in thy whole life? Haſt thou no more accord with it, than light hath with darkneſs? And ſo for wicked men; Thou haſt no love to their company or councel; thou hateſt them with a perfect hatred; thou canſt with no more love and delight be with them, than the Dove among Jays, or the Lamb among the Wolves, then thou haſt a ſure ſign of a Son of God: But if on the contrary, thou art prophane in thy ſelf; thou loveſt thoſe that live diſſolutely; men that damn, ſwear, and prophane the Sabbath; thou art ſo far from having *thy righteous ſoul tormented with hearing and ſeeing ſuch things*, as *Lots* was, as that rather thou rejoyceſt in them, and makeſt much of ſuch: What can be a greater demonſtration that thou art of the Divel than this? If the Divel were to act viſibly in the world, would he not live ſuch a life as this is? Men therefore need not think it ſuch an hard matter to know what they are: They need not ſay, *Who will aſcend into heaven to let us know how it is with us*? For thy outward life and way doth proclaim to all the world that thou art of the devil: And although it would make thy heart ſwell with rage to be called a childe of the Devil, yet know aſſuredly by the Scripture rules, we can give thee no other name: Oh that a multitude of thoſe who call themſelves Chriſtians, ſhould not be aſtoniſhed at theſe things: What, to be children of the Devil, to be limbs of Satan? Yet by their works they demonſtrate themſelves to be ſo.

6. In imitation of his goodneſs to all.

Sixthly, *The Sons of God they imitate God their Father in his love and goodneſſe to all.* Our Saviour amplifieth this excellent propriety of God, *That he cauſeth the Sun to ſhine upon the good and bad*, and hence concludeth, *Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*, Mat. 5. 48. If we conſider the matter precedent, we ſhould have

have judged the natural conſequence to be, Be ye patient as your heavenly Father is patient; but becauſe goodneſs even to bad men, to enemies, is the higheſt degree of graces, and as it were the perfection of all, and without which, *let a man ſpeak with the tongue of Angels, and work all kinde of Miracles*, yea, be eminent in all matter of godlineſs, yet be without this, he is not a perfect Chriſtian. Therefore under all the injuries, oppreſſions, and deſperate perſecutions, *although revenge*, as the Heathen ſaid, *be ſweeter than hony it ſelf*: Yet conſider what God thy Father doth: How do wicked men provoke him every day, yet for all that he doth not make the earth to gape preſently to devour them! He hath not put out the glorious light of the Sun: He doth not diſſolve the work of the creation, and blaſt every thing into duſt. What an excellent pattern is this, for thee to write after? Eſpecially conſidering vengeance is Gods, and doth properly belong to him: And as you have God, ſo Chriſt alſo for an admirable pattern. *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*: Though he could have prayed *for legions of Angels to deliver him*, and deſtroy his adverſaries, yet he ſubmitteth to Gods will. The Scripture giveth many ſigns of grace, yet none is ſo remarkable and commendable as this, *Mat.*5. And howſoever ſome Papiſts think to love our enemies is a meer counſel for perfect men, not a duty to all Chriſtians, yet it is plain our Saviour preſſeth it upon all who would be the children of God: And howſoever this be not ſo much preſſed and preached, we Chriſtians do not among other ſymptomes of grace look after this, yet it is plain the Scripture makes this one of the chiefeſt, and is a ſign grace hath great dominion over thee, when thou art enabled to do this. Some malicious Heathens once met with a Chriſtian, and beat him even unto death almoſt, asking him, *What great matter ever Chriſt did?* Even this great thing, replieth the Chriſtian, *That I can forgive you, though you uſe me thus cruelly.* I confeſs many who yet live in their ſins, and diſcover no power of grace, will yet proclaim their love to their enemies, and that they forgive them with all their hearts: But this is eaſilier ſaid than done; and although we read of Heathens who have been admirable in this way, yet they not doing of it by the ſpirit of Chriſt, but from an humane generoſity, obtained thus much only, That they ſhall be leſs puniſhed than malitious revengeful perſons.

Seventhly, *The Sons of God, being born of him, have a more noble and heavenly ſpirit than men of the world.* There are men ſo plunged into earthly affairs, that you would think that were true of their ſouls, which the Scriptures ſaith of their bodies, *Duſt thou art, and to duſt thou ſhalt return.* Theſe are worms (I do not ſay and no men) but no Sons of God. Thou who art born of God, ſhouldeſt do things like God. *Fortes creantur fortibus*, and thus that new birth of thine will not only liſt thee up above ſin, and all ſuch baſe defilements, but even above all earthly temptations. And thy body is not made more upright towards Heaven, than thy ſoul is made that way by grace. Hence we are ſaid, *To ſit with Chriſt in heavenly places*: And as pearls and precious ſtones, though for the matter of them they be of inferiour ſubſtance, yet in their colour, luſtre, and glory they reſemble the Heavens, from whom comes the greateſt influence to make them: Or as the Clouds, though generated from Vapours and exhalations ariſing from the earth, yet in their motions are wholly carried up and down according to the heavens; So theſe men though they have earthly bodies, live on the ſame food, breath in the ſame air as others do, yet are formed into the glorious likeneſs of God: and being ſons of God, diſdain to ignoble and debaſe themſelves by any filthy luſts: As *Jacob's* ſon, becauſe he was loved had a coat of divers colours beſtowed on him, ſo God beſtoweth ſeveral graces upon his people. *The Queens daughter is in curious needle work*, and for her to go and tumble in the mire, is more beſeeming aſwine than a Queens daughter. Oh then that men who by birth or education being above others, judge it baſeneſs to do ſervile work, would much more abhor ſin as the greateſt vileneſs of all. It is ſin only makes a man like a Beaſt, or a Devil: When therefore thou art ſollicited, or tempted to any ſin, ſay

7. In being of a noble and heavenly ſpirit.

Remember this is not becoming the ſon of God: Though wicked men, and ungodly ones will do thus and thus, yet the children of God are better bred.

By Priuiledges. *In the next place let us conſider their qualification by way of Priviledges*, and they are wonderful, inſomuch that *John* by way of admiration, calls upon all to be aſtoniſhed at it, *Behold what manner of love he hath ſhewn, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God*, 1 John 3. 1. Let his condition be never ſo poor and miſerable in the world, yet if a Son of God, we may ſay, Behold Gods love to ſuch an one! Now their priviledges, Are

1. Conformity to Chriſt in his ſufferings. Firſt, *To be made conformable unto Chriſt in his ſufferings.* This is a ſtrange priviledge, yet the Scripture commends it as one, *viz.* When for his ſake we are oppoſed and troubled. *To you it is given to ſuffer for his name*, Phil. 1. 29. *And bleſſed are ye when all men ſpeak all manner of evil againſt you for my names ſake.* And ſo, *He hath predeſtinated us to be conformable unto the Image of his Son*, Rom. 8. which as the context ſheweth is ſufferings and tribulations, and *we ſhall raign with him, if ſo be we ſuffer with him.* Thus they thought it a priviledge, when they *glorified God, that they were accounted worthy to ſuffer for his names ſake.*

2 The ſpirit of Adoption. A ſecond priviledge is, *The ſpirit of Adoption, whereby we are enabled to call God Father*, Rom. 8. Gal. 4. Servants might not call their Maſters Father; but theſe children may appropriate God unto themſelves, ſaying, *Our Father:* Oh what a comfortable condition is this, eſpecially in ſad times, when we cannot ſay any thing is ours, yet upon juſt grounds to ſay, *God is ours.* And having this ſpirit of Adoption, we are thereby enabled to go with boldneſs into the preſence of God. Fear and ſlaviſhneſs, which is like a torment in the ſoul, is for a great degree quite caſt out. Thou therefore mayſt go with an holy and humble confidence unto God, and ſay, O Lord, to call thee Father, to be aſſured of thy love in particular, *this is childrens bread*, children are to feed on it: And *what Father when his Son asketh for bread, will he give him a Scorpion?* O, my Father, Why is it that I have asked for bread ſo long, and yet have a Scorpion? Do not thou then who expreſſeſt the duties of a Son, queſtion the priviledges of a Son: If thou liveſt like a child of God, believe alſo, be bold alſo like a Son of God.

3. The working of all things for good. A third priviledge is, *The working of all things together for their good*, Rom. 8. Being the ſons of God, *they are made co-heirs with Chriſt*, and by him have every good thing promiſed them, *Whether things paſt, or things preſent, life or death, all is yours*, 1 Cor. 3. Though men may admire outward honour and dignity in the world, yet certainly this is the ſtate of glory to be ſought for. When men are put into ſuch a relation to God, that now what ever doth befall them ſhall turn to their advantage. They have the promiſe of God, which is better than the Philoſophers ſtone; for this turneth every thing not into gold, but into grace and glory. No marvel though *Moſes adopted to be a ſon to Pharaohs daughter, yet refuſeth the pleaſures of Egypt, and accepteth the reproaches of Chriſt before them*; for to *Pharaoh*, all good things turned to his evill; his greatneſs, his power, his pomp, and all the Miracles God did to him: But to *Moſes* all his evil things proved for his great advantage. Oh then, what ſpiritual content, and holy ſecurity of ſoul may the ſons of God live in the moſt dangerous times.

The laſt priviledge is, *Gods care and protection over them.* Fathers treaſure up for their children; and thus they being the ſons of God, God layeth up for them: Our Saviour bringeth this argument to confirm his Diſciples, and in them all Believers, againſt ſinful cares, and worldly thoughts what to do. *Your heavenly Father knoweth what you have need of.* Oh then in any exigence, in any great ſtrait, ſay, O my Father, though I know not what to do, yet thou doſt: Though I am unworthy to be a ſon, yet thou art gracious and good to be a Father. What encouraged the Prodigal but this, *He would go to his Father*; that was a ſweet name, and would work ſweet things: *If ye who are evil know how to give good things to your children, how much rather ſhall your father which is in heaven?* Oh beloved, we need no other fountain to draw out water of ſalvation from: We need no other

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hony comb to ſuck the ſweetneſs out than this. God is a Father to his Children.

Uſe, Are we by regeneration the ſons of God, and do the ſons of God imitate and reſemble God, holy as he is, pure as he is? Then *Who can bewail enough the curſed and hopeleſs eſtate of moſt men who live under the Goſpell?* How are they affected with this glorious eſtate of ſonſhip? How careful are men to get their Leaſes, their Evidences made ſure about earthly advantages, and not in the leaſt manner careful to make ſure this heavenly inheritance? And as for their lives, their fruits may make you know what they are. Is it for the ſons of God to wallow in their ſwiniſh luſts? Is it for the ſons of God to curſe, ſwear, and blaſpheme the name of their Father? Oh let the Heavens be aſhamed, and the Sun bluſh to ſee the wickeneſs committed amongſt us, who yet would be all thought the Children of God. Thou calleſt God *Father* in thy prayer; Oh baſphemy! Is God the Father of prophane wicked men? *Uſe.*

SECT. V.

Treating of the Nature of Grace under the name New Creature, with the Counterfeit of it.

SERM. XL.

Shewing the Neceſsity of the New Creature.

GAL. 6. 15.

For in Chriſt Jeſus, neither Circumciſion, or Uncircumciſion availeth any thing, but a New Creature.

THE Apoſtle at the 11. Ver. concludeth this Epiſtle with a teſtification of his love and kindneſs to them: For his reproofs had been ſharp, yet love cauſed them, and that is good of *Auſtins*, *Dilige*, *loquere quod vis*, Love, and then ſpeak what thou wilt. The Argument of his love is ſeen in the length of his Letter; a *large Letter* argued large affections, and that *with his own hand*; whereas many of his other Epiſtles were written by others. The ſecond demonſtration of his love is in warning them againſt falſe Apoſtles, whom he deſcribes by their ambition and hypocriſie: Their hypocriſie, they *deſired* εὐπροσωπῆσαι, an excellent word, *To make a fair ſhew*. As Strumpets commonly trim up themſelves more than grave Matrons, ſo falſhood is more varniſhed and painted than truth. Then their ambition is deſcribed in affecting Diſciples, *ambitio ſcenam reſpiciat*, ambition loves to have ſome look on and applaud. Laſtly, there is the carnal advantage they look at, it is to *avoyd perſecution*: For the Jews being zealous of the Law, and perſecuting to the death thoſe that ſeemed to take it away; theſe falſe Apoſtles to avoid danger would retain the Doctrine of Chriſt, and the Ceremonial Law alſo: Thus they were as *Reeds ſhaken with every wind*. Now the Apoſtle to oppoſe them, inſtanceth in the contrary grace in himſelf, *God forbid that I ſhould glory, ſave in the Croſs of Chriſt, &c.* Perſecutions for the Goſpel I fear not, but glory in them; and hereupon layeth down a general ſentence, an excellent practical Aphoriſm, *In Chriſt Jeſus neither Circumciſion or uncircumciſion availeth any thing, but a new Creature*. As if he ſhould have ſaid, you are wholly taken up in diſputations about

Circumciſion and uncircumciſion, all your conference, all your ſtudies run out about this; but the truth of grace lyeth not in theſe things. It is not any Priviledge, any Sacrament, any external duties makes us acceptable to God, if we are not new Creatures. The Apoſtle hath a parallel expreſſion in the Chapter before, *Chap.* 5.6. 1 *Cor.* 7.19.

Before I come to handle the nature of this new Creature, I cannot paſs the preheminence and ſuperiority the Apoſtle giveth it, to all other priviledges and duties, though never ſo glorious. From whence obſerve,

Obſerv. *That no Priviledge, or Duty in Religion, is acceptable to God, unleſs a man be a new Creature.*

Doſt thou pray? unleſs a new Creature God owneth it not. Doſt thou hear? unleſs a new Creature God regardeth thee not: As *Joſeph* ſaid to his Brethren, *Unleſs ye bring* Benjamin *come not in my preſence*; Unleſs you come to holy duties as new Creatures, God loveth not to ſee you: This Doctrine is ſo neceſſary, and ſo worthy of all acceptation, that the Apoſtle addeth, *Whoſoever walketh after this Rule* (that is) as ſome expound, according to this poſition, that no external duties are accepted without a new Creature) *peace be on him and mercy.* The receiving of this truth, is opening of the door for the peace of God to reſt on you.

The neglect of duties not hence to be inferred.

To underſtand this better, know, *That the Apoſtle doth not ſpeak this, as if external duties were to be omitted or neglected*; for he that ſaith here, *Circumciſion availeth nothing*, doth in another place ſay. *It profits much every way*, Rom. 3.2. and he calls it, *The ſeal of the righteouſneſſe of Faith*, Rom. 4. 11. Thus the Ordinances of the New Teſtament, prayer, hearing, receiving of Sacraments, though they are nothing without Regeneration, yet they are duties commanded in their time and order. If a man ſhould ſay, eyes, and ears, and a head are nothing without a ſoul; it doth not therefore follow, that they are not to be prized as mercies, when God gives us to enjoy both ſoul and body. Though the Chaffe be worth nothing when the Wheat is not, yet it was a great defence and ſhelter to the Wheat when it covered it growing in the field. Outward duties are not to be oppoſed to the work of grace, but compoſed; you muſt not argue from one, to the deſtruction, but to the poſition of the other.

If a man ſhould ſay, there are ſo many forms of Church-Government, and if a man be for this form, or the other; it is nothing unleſs a man be a new creature, he ſaith truely: but to infer from thence, that Therefore it's no matter for that form which hath cleareſt teſtimony from Scripture, it is a great inconſequence; and the ground of all this is, although outward duties, and the religious forms God hath appointed, be not the eſſence of grace; yet being commanded by God, we are to uſe them, and thereby teſtify our worſhip of him; and withall where true grace is, they do encreaſe grace, and by daily frequent exerciſe therein, we come to an higher degree in holineſs; for they are the Pool, in which not an Angel, but God comes in with healing; they are the Garden, wherein Chriſt walks; they are the Feaſt, at which God himſelf is preſent; and for theſe ſpiritual effects the Saints of God have ſuch admirable raviſhing expreſſions about them. Take heed therefore of that dangerous Rock on one hand, to neglect the Ordinances, expecting immediate Revelations, and Enthuſiaſms; or on the other hand, a prophane contempt of them, even as the Swine doth a Pearl.

Now let us conſider, *Why God careth not for thoſe external duties, without the work of Regeneration.* If thou prayeſt and heareſt in that old ſtate thou wert born in, and not renewed, theſe duties are like wild Grapes. And,

Reaſon. 1. Without Gods likeneſs no acceptance.

First, *Becauſe God doth not graciouſly accept any man, but where he ſeeth his own likeneſs, his own ſimilitude.* Thus God made man at firſt *after his own Image*, that ſo he might delight in him, and communicate happineſſe to him, which Beaſts were not capable of. Now this Regeneration is called, Epheſ. 4. *A renewing after the Image of God.* It is a known Rule, That *likeneſs is a cauſe of love.* And this holdeth

holdeth in ſome proportion between us and God: For although this new creature of grace hath many imperfections and deformities in it; yet for the ſubſtance and main it is the likeneſs and Image of God, and ſo for Chriſts ſake he accepts of it.

Is it any wonder then, if the prayer, the hearing of a wicked man be an abhomination? For God ſeeth there the Devils likneſs, the reſemblance of Satan, and how can he entertain ſuch? Say then to thy ſelf, I go to pray, I go to hear to day, but is there any thing of God in me, am I holy, as he is holy in ſome degree? If not, God ſeeth nothing, but what he hates and abhoreth in me. Thoſe outward duties they put not a divine ſtamp upon us, but this inward change wrought by God. How then is it, that you are no more ſolicitous in this great matter? Why ſhould you not be as much afraid of praying without a new heart, as not praying at all; of hearing without a new heart, as not hearing at all?

Secondly, God doth not regard outward duties unleſs we be new Creatures, becauſe *we are not able without this to perform them upon ſpiritual and ſupernatural grounds*: And unleſs all our duties be grafted upon this ſtock, they are no more than brambles and thorns fit for burning: Now the ſupernatural ground in praying and hearing is becauſe of God, and in reference to him: *Iſrael was an empty Vine*, in all her duties, becauſe *ſhe brought forth fruit to her ſelf*, *Hoſ.* 10. 1. She did not turn to God, even unto him. The Motive or Loadſtone to draw our affections in any ſpiritual exerciſe, muſt be Gods goodneſs, holineſs, and ſpiritual excellency: *The Virgins love thee, becauſe of thy oyntment powred forth*, *Cant.* 1. 2. Chriſt taxeth his followers, becauſe of his loaves; and the Apoſtle reckoneth it as an Argument, *That all old things are paſſed away, and all things are become new*, becauſe *they know no man, no nor Chriſt himſelf after the Fleſh*, 2 *Cor.* 5. They do not look for carnal advantages by Chriſt, but love him and obey him becauſe of ſpiritual grounds; now a ſtone may as well fly up into the aire, as a man without this new Creature be carried out in religious duties upon ſpiritual grounds. A Beaſt may as well ſpeak and underſtand reaſon, as a natural man diſcern and be affected with ſpiritual Motives; and yet if this be not, a man in all religious duties is like *David in Sauls Armour*, they are too big and great for him, he knoweth not how to manage them: Conſider then, how can I pray, or hear upon thoſe ſupernatural Motives which God requires, if this new nature be wanting? How can I in prayer rejoyce in the promiſes of God, mourn becauſe of the foul and loathſome nature of ſin, if there be not this good foundation laid? This then is all in all, and yet we do not above all attend to this: Therefore as *Paul* ſaid commending the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, ſpeaking with tongues, working of Miracles, &c. *Yet I ſhew you a more excellent way*. So, though ye do well in praying, in hearing, yet there is a more excellent and more neceſſary way, and that is to perform all theſe by a ſanctified renewed principle within.

2. We cannot perform duties upon right grounds, unleſs regenerated.

Thirdly, as religious duties cannot be performed graciouſly without this, ſo, *Neither is a man a fit ſubject to receive thoſe ſpiritual benefits communicated by God in them, without this*. Unleſs a man be a new Creature, he knoweth not what it is to have Communion and fellowſhip with God in Prayer and Sacraments; he can not taſt of the *comforts* and *joyes* in the Holy Ghoſt; ſuch expreſſions as theſe, *I will come and ſup with him, and he with me*; *and my ſoul panteth after the living God, when ſhall I come and enjoy him?* he is not able to underſtand: There is in the ſpiritual diſcharge of holy duties, a very heaven, a comfortable enjoying of Gods preſence; *I will dwell with them*, *ſaith God*, 2 Cor. 6. *And ye are the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Cor. 3. But (alas) theſe are unſpeakable miſeries to an unregenerated man. In all duties they have but the bone as it were, not the marrow; They ſtand in the Porch of the Temple, they do not enter into the Holy of Holies; They do not feel what *David* and *Paul*, and all thoſe holy ſervants of God have felt in Gods Word; What ſhould move you more to ſeek after this new Creature than this? To think theſe Ordinances are but huſks to me, and Manna to others; they are but a Wilderneſs to me, when a Garden to others; others go home bleſſing and praiſing

3. We are not fit to receive the benefits of duties without regeneration.

praiſing God, as if they had been in a glorious transfiguration, but I return earthly and ſtupid. Oh why is all this, but becauſe I want this new Creature, then it would be new praying, and new hearing.

4. Juſtification and Regeneration are inſeparably united.

Fourthly, therefore no outward Duty or Priviledge is accepted without a new Creation, *Becauſe Juſtification and this new Creature are inſeparably united together, and cannot be one moment divided from each other*, Rom. 8. *There is no condemnation to thoſe who are in Jeſus Chriſt*, (there is juſtification:) *Who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit*, (there is Sanctification:) Now ſeeing that Juſtification is the ground of all acceptance both of our perſons and duties, and this is alwayes concomitant with a new Creature; therefore without this, that hath neceſſarily adjoyned to it a ground of all acceptance, we can never be regarded by God. Oh therefore think with thy ſelf, the prayer of a juſtified perſon is only approved of, God hath firſt reſpect to *Abell*, and then to his *Offering*: You muſt not think by praying and hearing to get your perſons accepted, but they muſt firſt be accepted, that your duties may; now this juſtification is of none but this regenerated perſon: Why ſhould ye not hearken diligently to theſe things, for if all thy duties hitherto have not been accepted, thou art to begin anew, to lay a new foundation; and certainly it is the neceſſary duty that lieth on many perſons, though Chriſtians, to raze the very foundation they have built their hopes upon; they have troden in a road, judge of acceptanee with God according to the principles of Reaſon, and light of Nature, but have not informed themſelves out of Gods Word, for by that we muſt attain to thoſe two great works of God, Juſtification and Sanctification; Juſtification to reconcile our perſons; Sanctification to make holy our Natures, and ſpiritualize all our Duties; and if theſe two be not in us, God rejecteth all our Duties, as the Artificer in his building doth ſome crooked ſtone that he cannot make ſtraight.

5. Duties are not good in a true ſenſe without the new creature.

Fifthly, God doth not accept our religious ſervices without this new Creature, becauſe *they cannot be ſo much as called good, and holy in a ſcripture-ſenſe without this.* God ſaith not unto thee as unto the Centurion, *Thy prayers are heard*; Neither doth God, as it is ſaid of *Noah*'s Sacrifice, *ſmell a ſweet ſavour*, till thou art made new, and changed from thy Original eſtate. For they are not good or well done, becauſe to have a good action there is required all the conditions, *Bonum eſt ex integris cauſis, malum e quolibet defectu*, one defect is enough to make an action evil, but it cannot be good unleſs all circumſtances are concurrent; now the Scripture, to have it good praying, good hearing, requireth; Firſt, *That the Man himſelf be made good*: *Make the Tree good, and then the fruit will be good*; *Cleanſe the inſide firſt*: The heart is the good Treaſure; ſo that a man cannot do any thing after a godly manner but by a renewed nature, he may do it after a cuſtomary and ſeeming religions manner, ſo that men may admire it, but he cannot do it with a gracious foundation, till his nature be healed: Then as the principle muſt be good, ſo the manner alſo, that is, after a fervent, zealous and heavenly manner, not with a meer lip-labour, or bodily preſence; there muſt be motions and earneſt ſtirrings of heart: Take heed how you hear, and pray with *groans unutterable*: and laſtly, as you heard all this muſt be to God, *pleaſing God*, aiming at God, looking at God, and not at man; ſo that all our ſpiritual duties are to be of him, and by him, and to him; and no wonder if ſo much be required to the right diſcharge of any holy duty, for *Ariſtotle* requires as much to any virtuous action; He ſaith, That only can be called a righteous action which is *juſta, à juſto, juſtè*, from a juſt man, in a juſt manner; and ſo that is only a godly duty, which is done by a godly man, in a godly manner, to a godly end.

6. True Chriſtianiſm conſiſteth in the new Creature.

Sixthly, This new Creature is looked after, rather than any outward duty, *Becauſe in this true Chriſtianiſm doth conſiſt*. A man is not really and properly a Chriſtian, becauſe baptized, becauſe he profeſſeth Chriſt, and worſhippeth him, but becauſe he hath this new Creature in him, and this is the ſcope of *Paul* in the Text: So that as in the time of the Old Teſtament, true *Judaiſm*, or the true being

ing of a Jew did not consist in being outwardly Circumcised, but it was in that of the heart, *and he was a Jew which was so inwardly*, Rom. 2. Thus he is a Christian, not who is outwardly baptized, but who is inwardly anointed with the graces of Christ; for to be a Christian is to be an anointed one; and then of this inward Jew see what the Apostle saith, *Whose praise is of God not of men*. It is God that is a *Father of Spirits*, that looks to the hearts of men, that praiseth this Jew, this Christian. *The denomination of every thing is from its chief and better part.* We call a man reasonable, because of his Soul the chief part of him; so a man is called a Christian, not so much because he prayeth, heareth, cometh to Church, which is but like the body; but because these are done by a renewed nature within, which is like the soul. Oh then know, as every profession hath its Art, its Skill, its Mystery, which a stranger hath not; so hath Christianity; there is a Mystery of praying, a Mystery of hearing, which the natural man understandeth not.

Seventhly, *If external duties were enough without this new Creature, then the way to heaven would be an easie broad way.* Whereas the Scripture sets down a peremptory position clean contrary; *Streight is the way*, and *strive to enter into it*, and *Few enter in it*. But if no more were required to pray and hear than most men do, it would be a broad way, every man would enter into it. There needs no striving, no agonies to such duties: A man in prayer must have *a broken contrite heart*; it is a Metaphor from a broken bone, which cannot be without much pain and torment; to a broken heart in a duty cannot be without much sense of grief, shame and spiritual confusion; and as when any thing is broken, we see what is in the midst of it, which did not appear before; so in a broken heart we discover all that sourness, all those loathsome Monsters, all that horrid impiety, which we had no acquaintance with before. And Oh that this truth had got full possession in your hearts! Every Religious duty, if rightly performed, puts the heart into a great Agony: They are but few that can enter into this streight way: Therefore say, I fear my praying, my hearing, my walking is too broad a way, too large a way, it doth not wound deep enough, or affect throughly.

7. Otherwise Heaven way would be broader than Scripture allows.

8. These external duties are nothing without a new Creature, *Because while this is absent, here cannot be faith to apply Christ, and bring him to dwell in the soul, who only is the meritorious cause of all acceptance with God. Without faith it is impossible to please God.* By faith we are justified, we have boldness: Now this faith cannot be but in a new nature; yea, it is made equivalent to this new Creature; for that which the Apostle calls here a new Creature, in the Chapter mentioned before, he expresseth it, *By faith working with love. As in the Holy of Holies every thing was gold or covered with gold; so all that is accepted with God, is either Christ, or Duties covered with Christ.* Till therefore thou art a new Creature, thou canst not put forth an Act of faith, there wants that *Hissop* which should *sprinkle Christs blood* upon thee; and howsoever people may think and say they believe in Christ, yet it is impossible for them to do it, till they be born again; for to believe in Christ is the greatest grace, and so needeth the greater power of God.

8 No faith interesting us in Christ without the new Creature.

Ninthly, Thereupon it is, that we must be new Creatures in all our duties, *because Gods Promise is only to such Duties that flow from such a Fountain.* There is no promise made singly to bare hearing, and bare praying, but to those that are done with a godly heart, with the whole heart: To those that are *poor in spirit*; To those that *turn from their evil wayes*, and all these properties are the fruit of the new Creature. If therefore there can be no promise, then there can be no acceptance: Now what a terrible consideration is this! Thou that livest in thy sins, thou that *refusest to be reformed*, yet thou prayest, thou hearest, think with thy self what Promise is there in all Gods Word, that I may challenge. What Word of God is there to encourage me to pray in hope, to hear in hope; so that by this you see the absolute necessity of this point: Well might the Apostle say, *Peace be on*

9 The promises to duties are only as they come from new Creatures.

all those who walk after this pinciple, for to other there can be no juſt peace in all their prayers and religious duties,

10. The new creature alone gives life to duties.

To conclude all; a new Creature muſt needs be more than all duties, *Becauſe this only gives life, vigour, and power to them*: they are but dead works; as a dead eye, or a dead hand without this ſupernatural life. This new Creature is the root that communicates all juice, and ſap to theſe branches; This is the kernel, the other is but the ſhell: Out of this renewed heart come renewed duties; ſo that as long as you are defective in this, whatſoever parts, abilities, enlargements you have in any duty, you are ſtill defective in the main. All knowledge, all underſtanding, though it were equall to Angells, cannot make a good prayer without a renewed heart. *Bernard* ſaid well of *Lucifer*, the chief Angell that fell, *Bonum erat ſi fuiſſet ignitus magis quum Lucifer*; He had better have had the fire of love to God, than the light of knowledge; ſo it is here, it is better having a renewed heart, which is full of faith and love of God, than the greateſt parts and aſſiſtance that can be.

Uſe 1. Inſtruction. We ought to be affected with performing duties without a renewed heart.

Uſe 1. Of Inſtruction, *That there is a juſt and great reaſon why men ſhould as well be troubled for not doing of duties with a renewed and regenerated heart, as for not doing them at all.* Thou thinkeſt, Oh if I ſhould never hear, never pray, I may juſtly be accounted an Atheiſt, one that hath no fear of God in my heart; this is a good thought; but think further, if I do not pray and hear with a ſanctified nature, God caſteth all my duties away, as ſo much dung. Conſider, doth not the ſame God that commands thee to pray, to be baptized, to profeſs his Name, commands thee alſo to have a new heart & a new ſpirit. Oh then ſit down & bewail thy ſelf, Lord, how have I lived! What ſhall I do! Whither ſhall I go that have been carefull in the outward work of Religion, but not in the inward. God forbid that any ſhould think this is to diſcourage you in your outward duties, to abate your willingneſs and diligence. No, *theſe muſt alſo be done; but theſe are not all that are to be done*; remember, *God is a Spirit, and ſo muſt be ſerved in Spirit.*

Uſe 2. Exhortation. Pray for the new Creature,

Uſe 2. Of Exhortation, *Be at laſt provoked to pray to God for this new Creature*; Think all thy Religion is like an houſe without a foundation, till this be accompliſhed in thee: Oh think God ſaith to thee every Sabbath day after every duty private or publick, What is all this, If I have not your heart? Say, I want the main, the ſoul, the life of all, while I want this: To pray, to hear, are duties too high for me to do in a right manner, till God cloath me with ſpiritual power from above; Think upon this very ground, ſo many ſhall pretend to heaven, and glory, yet by God will be rejected, for imagine there come men with parts and abilities, and they ſay, *Lord, we have done thus in thy name; but depart* (ſaith God) *ye were not new Creatures.* The third and fourth kind of hearers, they knock to have heaven opened to them, but depart, ye were not new Creatures. The fooliſh Virgins came with more hope to ſpeed than any; but depart, ye were not new Creatures. Oh it is this makes a Chriſtian; *This makes us have praiſe of God.*

SERM.

SERM. XLI.

Shewing that the Production of the New-Creature is from God alone; and what Attributes are conspicuous in the Work.

GAL. 6. 15.

For in Christ Jesus, neither Circumcision, nor Uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a New Creature.

THis Text hath informed us of that Superiority and Preheminency which the Apostle giveth to the New Creature above all external Priviledges or duties in Christianity. We therefore come to search out the Nature of this New-Creature, and by the name we shall come to know the nature of the thing. In the Greek it is κτίσις *Creation* or *Creature*; for the word is used both for the *action* it self, and the *effect* produced by it: Now this phrase to create a thing, is used of some strange and unwonted work of God. Thus *Numb.* 16. when God is about to make the earth swallow up *Dathan* and *Abiram*, he is said according to the Hebrew, *to Create a Creation*. As Gods wonderful judgements are called a Creation, so his mercies, as in that of *Jeremiah*, Jer. 31. 22. *Behold I create a new thing, a woman shall compasse a man*, that is, *Israel*, weak as a woman, shall compasse about in an hostile manner, and so overcome her most potent adversaries; and thus here, because God doth work upon some men a wonderful and great alteration by the Word preached, such as cannot be performed by any moral education; therefore this is called a *New-Creature*, and the expression is allusive to many passages in the Prophets, where when God intends to make a glorious Reformation in his Church, by abolishing their former wayes of wickedness, and guiding them into paths of Righteousness; he is said *To create new Heavens and a new Earth*, Isa. 65. 17. and that *Old things are passed away*: So that this phrase a New Creature, implieth that the work of Grace is wrought by the sole power of God only, it cometh only from him, and also, that this being thus wrought in us, it is of a most excellent and glorious nature. And first I shall speak to the nature of it, it is a creature; then the qualifying adjunct, it is a new Creature.

That the work of grace in mans heart, whereby he is born again, is a creature wrought meerly by Gods glorious power.

Observ. It is the alone power of God that produceth the New-creature,

No Angels, no men are able to work this in a mans heart, but as a man, though he beget the body of his sonne, yet not the soul; for that is infused by the Father of spirits. So though men come to Church, and outwardly hear, and though the Ministers of God they labour faithfully in preaching, yet it is God only that makes *this light shine in the heart*. *Paul plants and Apollo waters*, *but God giveth the increase*, 1 Cor. 3. The Gardener doth only use his outward means,

he doth not make the tree, nor can he make any one apple that groweth upon it. I ſhall not at this time inſiſt upon the nature and operations of this new creature, that will be proper when we ſpeak of the Adjunct; but of the efficient cauſe of this, that ſo we may know where to have it. As God only created the world and all the things therein, ſo he only doth this new world of grace. Thus *Auſtin* defined grace, *Bona qualitas facta in nobis, ſine nobis*, Wrought in us without our help and power: Now that this work of grace is wrought in us by God meerly, appeareth:

Arguments. 1. God only can create. Requiſite to Creation, I. Infinite power

First, *In that it's called a Creation, and God only can create.* For to create there are required theſe particulars:

1. *An infinite vertue & power*; in ſo much that the moſt ſolid Divines do hold, that no Creature can be uſed as an inſtrument in Creation, much leſs be a principall: For ſeeing it is the giving of a Being to ſomething out of nothing, no Creature can work but upon ſome materialls provided; But God when he Created the world, when he made that Chaos, there was nothing pre-exiſtent: Hence that power of God which turneth our hearts unto him, is ſaid to have ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος, *Epheſ.* 1. 19. *an exceeding great ſtrength with it*; compared to that *power of raiſing Chriſt from the grave.* Hence Chriſt in converting the hearts of men towards him, making them at this command to follow him, demonſtrated his Divine Power more than in externall miracles. Oh then we need not wonder to ſee men love their ſins and delight in them, notwithſtanding they hear and know to the contrary. Alas the Miniſters are not able, no more than the women at Chriſts Sepulchre were, to remove the ſtone upon mens hearts, yea, this is heavier than that, for there came an Angel and rolled it away; but here God only can ſpeak to this Mountain to be removed into the Sea; ſee we then a man by nature dead in ſinne, and by voluntary practice buried in it; if ever this man came to be holy and to live in holineſs, wonder at it, as if a new world were made; for only an infinite power could make this alteration. As Divines to prove that God made the world, it could not be made of it ſelf, give many fit examples to convince thereof: If a man ſee a glorious houſe built up in a curious & moſt exact manner, he concludeth, That houſe did not make it ſelf; or if one have an inſtrument of muſick curiouſly tuned, & excellent Muſick played upon it, he concludeth, This doth not make it ſelf, or its Muſick: ſo the world being ſo curiouſly & harmoniouſly compoſed, called therefore κόσμος, did not of a ſuddain put it ſelf into this excellant glory: As they argue thus from the world, we may much more argue from the godly life of a Regenerated man, ſee ſuch a man leaving off with deteſtation all his former wickedneſs, & that becauſe he loveth God, & delighteth in holineſs, ſee you him acting above the praiſes of men from God, and to God; this man could not do this of himſelf, but God hath changed him. Seeing therefore an infinite power is put forth by God to make us thus new Creatures, well may we exclude man from being partner in this work; ſo that as *Auſtin* obſerveth well, We are the Creatures of God, both *quâ homines*, and *quâ juſti*; As a man thou art Gods Creature, as a renewed man much more Gods Creature.

II. The Creature is made of nothing.

2. *In Creation the Creature is made of nothing*; and thus Creation differs from the works of men, which alway ſuppoſe matter aforehand to work upon. Thus in this ſenſe, the Chaos, or confuſed heap, that was properly created, becauſe made of nothing, yet the works on the other dayes are ſaid to be created, becauſe, though they were not made of nothing, as the Son and Mans Body, yet of matter [illegible] together indiſpoſed, and unfit; and this ſome Divines call Creation *mediate*, as the former, Creation *immediate*. Now in this ſenſe the work of Grace is truly called a Creation; for there is nothing in us that did cooperate, or conſent to it; our hearts are dead wombes, till God cauſe us to live, & in this reſpect the Scripture doth repreſent us ſo full of ſinne, & all over corrupted, that thereby the work of grace may be acknowledged only of the Lord. Theſe are derogatory Doctrines to the grace of God, that ſay grace doth only ſtirre up and excite the naturall

power

Power of our wills to embrace good; for the Scripture saith, *It's God that giveth us to will, Phil.* 2, 13. & those expressions of *taking away the heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh, and writing the Law in our hearts*, do conclude every thing *de novo* to be wrought in us, there was not so much as the least spark left in us: When the Spirit of God comes to dwell in our hearts, he doth not as the unclean spirit did, finde an house *ready swept and furnished*, but he layeth the very foundation; and as great Persons brings his furniture with him; Take heed then of having any confidence in thy self, trust not in thy indowments, or morall abilities, think not that thou must prevent God, but Gods grace doth prevent thee; *God saith* to the Church, *in her blood, Live*, and there he puts comelinesse upon her; and this consideration should make thee ready to lay hold upon all these sweet dews of grace that fall on thee at any time, that they may throughly soften & mollifie thy heart for it is not in thy power to have such thawings & meltings of heart when thou pleasest. Hence also it is, that God to confirm this truth, that this new Creature is made of nothing existent in us before, that many times he converts those who were the blackest and foullest of all other sinners, as *Manasses*, *Mary Magdalen*; And thus *The Publicans and Harlots are said to enter into the Kingdome of Heaven before the Pharisees:* For what was there in these men before, that could any ways dispose them, or assimilate them to grace and glory? The *Arminians* and others who think it inconsistent with the liberty of the will, to have grace thus insuperable in its efficacy, are seduced, as the *Aristotelians* who denyed the Creation, and sate down with this Position, *E nihilo, nihil fit*; because they observed it to be thus constantly in naturall agents: This consideration of our bringing not so much as Water to have it turned into Wine, might debase & humble us; & indeed God communicates his grace only to these humble and lowly persons.

III. Creation is in an instant.

3. *Creation is in an instant*, on a suddain; and that is the reason why the Scripture expressing Gods work in bringing about any suddain mercy, or suddain judgement, calls it creation, *I create light, and I create darkness, Isaiah* 45. 7. What a glorious world did God make in six dayes? Here was a mighty alteration in a short space of time; & if as some of the Ancients speak, whom *Cajetan* pertinaciously argueth for, & followeth, that God made all in one day, & that the distinction of six dayes is but for our capacity; if this opinion should be true (as I think it far from truth, because so expressely contradictory to the very letter of the Scripture) it would much more demonstrate the instantaneous nature of Creation. As Creation is thus suddenly, so this work of a new Creature is wrought very quickly in the hearts of those, whom he effectually toucheth. Thus *Paul* of a Persecutor, how quickly made a Prosecutor of the truth and Gospel? Thus *Zacheus* the *Publican*, how immediately doth he leave all and follow Christ? and in all instances of Conversion, we may wonder to see the strange and admirable alteration on a suddain: that as the Psalmist cryed out, *What ailest thou, O Jordan that thou turnest back?* Thus may we admire, What ailes these men that formerly lived in such grosse and prophane courses, that now they should love and delight in the contrary? Only you must know that although it be wrought thus suddenly and from nothing in us, yet God hath ordered that he will dispense this grace no other way ordinarily than in the preaching of the Word, & the constant waiting thereon. Doe not thou therefore expect this Manna will fall from heaven in what place soever thou art in; and although thou neglect the publique Ordinances, & the means of grace. No, for although God hath not tyed himself to means yet he hath tyed us to them; and therefore every time thou doest willfully neglect any one Sermon, thou knowest not how much thou hast provoked God; what effectuall and gracious operations thou hast lost by not being present.

IV. The operations of the new Creature are so excellent, that it must needs be of God only.

4. This new Creature must needs be wholly of God, *Because it's of a supernatural being, and so the operations of it do exceed the sphere of naturall power*; As when the Apostles were inabled to work miracles, it was plainly a demonstration of Gods power with them, because they did those things which did wholly transcend

ſcend any natural power; ſo when men love God, when they obey his commands out of upright and ſincere motives, they are inabled to doe that which wholly tranſcends the moſt refined natural abilities; It is therefore called *A participation of the divine Nature*, 2 *Pet.* 1.4. whereby our actions have a divine ſtamp upon them; and as *Sampſon*, when he put forth thoſe wonderfull acts of ſtrength, he did it not by his naturall power, but an extraordinary aſſiſtance from God; ſo in thoſe actions of a new Creature, whereby we mourn for ſin, or delight in God, we have then more than as a man, for we pray not as a man, we hear not as a man; but God is in us, and with us.

V. VVe are the old Serpents, old Creatures, till thus new created.

5. This new Creature muſt needs be of God, if ye do conſider, *What we are till made ſo, even The old Creatures of the Devill*; therefore *the old man is ſaid to be in us*, and the *Devill*, *that old Serpent*, he reigneth and ruleth in our hearts: This old houſe muſt be pulled down, ere a new one can be built. The making us new Creatures is ſometimes called a *Reſurrection*; now as our bodies cannot be made glorious and happy, till a great and wonderfull alteration hath been made in them, ſo neither can our ſouls be made thoſe new Creatures, till God hath wholly new moulded us, put another ſtamp upon us, and another life in us: There cannot any thing be a greater object of horrour and terrour to us, than the beholding our ſelves in the pure glaſs of Gods Word; for that repreſents us ſo full of loathſomneſs and enmity unto God; that we have cauſe to cry out, *That God would waſh us, and make us whiter than ſnow*: Never think with that natural condition thou art born in, to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

VI. It is a greater work than the Creation of the VVorld.

6. *This Creature muſt rather be made of God ſolely, than the heavens and earth*; for although the Scripture doth often celebrate the power and wiſdome of God, *in founding the earth upon nothing, and ſtretching out the heavens*; yet this Creation upon a mans heart, and his life, is far more wonderfull: Hence it's ordinarily ſaid, That it's a greater wonder to make a man holy and godly, than it is to create a world.

For firſt, it coſt God only a word when he made that; *Let there be light and their was light*; but ere this mercy could be purchaſed for any, Chriſt was to become man and dye for us; ſo that God doth not only ſpeak, but in his man-hood ſuffer; for you muſt know, as juſtification and pardon of ſinne is a fruit of Chriſts bloud, ſo is alſo this new Creation, and new making of us.

Again the excellency and glory of the heaven & earth is only in a naturall way, th'is in a morall way, *They declare the glory of God*, as *paſſive objects*, Theſe as *active agents*, and underſtanding inſtruments: If therefore the Ancient looking upon the heavens, ſaid, If theſe be thus beautifull, how beautifull is God the Maker of them? ſo may we much rather, beholding the grace and holineſs of this new Creature, cry out and ſay, He that makes man thus holy, how holy is he? If this new Creature be ſo admirable, how wonderfull is the Creator of it? Hence alſo it is, that the godly are ſaid, *to ſhine as lights*, Philip. 2.15. *in dark places, that ſo others beholding them, may glorifie God in the day of their viſitation*. If the world be thought a Book ſufficient to convince men of God, and that they ſhall be inexcuſable, becauſe they did not glorifie God as according to this knowledge; how much rather, that ſo many godly men as have lived with you, will be a condemnation to you, if ye have not followed their examples? you ſhall not only give an account of that good gotten by the Sermons we preach; but of the godly life of thoſe new Creatures who have dwelt amongſt you; not only our Sermons, but their converſations ſhould have turned you unto God.

VII. The graces in Chriſts humane nature were the gift of God.

7. This work of grace muſt be wholy of God, *Becauſe even in Chriſts humane nature, where there was a fullneſſe of, yet it was the gift of God*. The humane nature of Chriſt, though infinitely advanced by reaſon of the hypoſtaticall union, yet being not God, but a Creature, could not furniſh or anoint it ſelf with thoſe rich graces he was adorned with; Therefore the Scripture ſaith, *God giveth not the Spirit in meaſure to him*, *John* 3.34. It was given him, though it was not in meaſure;

now

now then if this new Creature of grace was wrought by God in Christs humane nature, how much rather must it be wrought in us, who are altogether polluted, when his humane nature was like the sun, wholly spotless? This is a clear and an undeniable demonstration, that God is sole Author of this grace; That as the Sun is like an universal principle in regard of light, and every thing is enlightened by that, so is God the universal Fountain of all that holiness which is communicated unto the godly.

VIII. God hath absolutely promised it.

8. This must needs be Gods Creation only, *Because he hath so absolutely promised to accomplish it for us.* All those expressions, *I will give a new heart, and write my Law within thee*, Jer. 31.33. *And I will take away the heart of stone*, Exek. 36. necessarily infer that it is Gods peculiar prerogative; for if this could not be till man had consented, and there could not be any application of grace till we had given way; Then all those promises of God must be only conditional, expecting till man will yield also; and thus it would not be *Predestination*, but *Postdestination*; and mans will should not follow Gods, but Gods will lackey it after mans. But this cannot be thought, that God is not *sui juris* in his promise, and that he is not able to make good by his hand, whatsoever is gone out of his mouth. Oh therefore when thou findest thy heart so greatly assaulted by sin, and thou complainest thy lusts and corruptions are too strong for thee, remember they are not too strong for God.

IX. Otherwise the glory of the work would belong to a mans self.

9. If this were not Gods Creature meerly, *Then the greatest glory in mans Conversion and Salvation would belong to himself.* Certainly, if a man cannot arrogate this to himself, that he made himself a man rather than a Toad, much less can he glory in any such strength, whereby he should difference himself from other men wallowing in sin. This differencing work of God, Christ himself resolveth into his Fathers will; *Even so Father, for so it pleaseth thee*, Mat. 11. And *Paul* also into the like cause, *What hast thou that thou hast not received?* and *Who makes thee to differ from another?* 1 Cor. 4.7. Certainly, it is the greatest idolatry which God can be jealous of, to give the glory of thy new nature unto any other but himself; Thou dost not indeed fall down to a stock and a stone to worship that, but thou dost inwardly put confidence, and rely upon thy own power and abilities, to procure thy own salvation, and inward peace.

By these Arguments it may appear, that whensoever you see a man, of an old servant to sin and Satan, made the son of God and a new Creature; you may say, *Verily God was there*, these Devils and Lusts have been cast out only *by the finger of God.*

God discovers many of his glorious Attributes in forming the new Creature.

Now in making his Children new Creatures, he demonstrates several properties of his in their great lustre and glory: As

1. Goodness.

First, *His great goodness and pity to us*: How often is this called his *grace*, and the *riches of his grace*. It [illegible] Gods goodness to make a world, but this is the riches of his goodness not to throw us away, as refuse, fit fuel only of everlasting flames; It might have been with all mankinde as it was with the Devils; in their Deluge God did not provide an Ark to save so much as eight persons, not one Angel had he compassion on. This grace of God is so deeply apprehended by the partakers thereof, that they rejoyce in it, speak of it all the day long, plead for it, and that they live, or have any outward comforts is nothing to this wonderful mercy of God to them.

2. Power.

Secondly, *He declares his power*; That you have heard sufficiently of, it being a Creation, it being the same power that made the World, that raiseth the dead out of the grave; and although we do not use to call it a *Miracle*, yet it is *Mirandum*, a wonderful thing; and indeed it being to the hearts of men, changing them, and new framing them, it must argue an omnipotent power; how often do we speak to the ear, intreat, and invite, but it is God only that can turn the heart; yea, how many resolutions and desires are sometimes excited in many men, but they vanish away like a land-flood? How often have they purposed to leave their

sins;

ſins, to ſet upon other duties, but ſin is too ſtrong for them. Oh that power of God, which keeps the ſea from over-whelming the banks, that power of God, which hangs the earth upon nothing: This muſt be ſeen to turn the ſtreams of our corruption backward. *Draw me*, crieth the Church, *and I will run after thee*, Cant. 1.4. *No man comes unto me, unleſs my Father draw him*, John 6.44.

3. Wiſedome. Thirdly, *His Wiſedome*, That is admirable from many conſiderations; for if you do reſpect the perſons whom he doth commonly make theſe new Creatures, they are, for their outward condition men & contemptible in the world, *Not many wiſe, not many Noble*, &c. 1 Cor. 1.27. though ſome of theſe he chuſeth, nor doth he approve *according to outward appearance*: As his wiſedome is remarkable herein, ſo for their quality; He takes the worſt weeds, and makes them the ſweeteſt flowers, the moſt crooked pieces in the timber, and makes them a glorious building; thus *Paul, Zacheus*, Publicans and Harlots; his wiſedome is wonderfull herein, that ſo all may be of his grace. Then theſe are but few in compariſon of thoſe rejected; *Many are called, but few are choſen*. Hereby his love to thoſe who partake of it is made more glorious: And laſtly, Gods wiſedome is ſeen in the time of making them new Creatures, wherein ſo many concurrences of ſtrange love meet together, that it raviſheth, and over-whelms them for ever.

4. Holineſs. Fourthly, *His holineſs is admirable herein* If a clod of earth, or piece of muck, ſhould be made a glorious Star in the heavens, it is not more wonderful than for a man become like a Beaſt in his affections and actions, to be made like an Angel, doing the will of God. We ſee when God made man with other Creatures at firſt, what a ſignal difference there was in his proceſs about the making of one above the other: *Let us make man after our own image*, Gen. 1.26. And here again God doth renew, and make us after his Image: Once God ſaid by way of ſcorn, *Man is become like one of us*; but now in grace and holineſs, he ſaith, *Man is become like God*. If we admire the skill of Artificers, who of rags and other baſe materials can blow up ſuch a curious piece of clear and ſplendent glaſs; How glorious is God, who makes thy earthy and ſordid heart, heavenly, and pure, who makes thy ſwiniſh deſires Angelical. The Philoſophers called the matter of the heavens Quinteſſential, and this ſoul is above a ſinful conſtitution.

Uſe, Of Exhortation: *If thou haſt found any good grounds that God hath made thee ſuch a glorious new Creature, let thy heart and mouth be filled with praiſes*. All the power in heaven and earth, but Gods only, could not make them ſuch. Oh but this new Creature is a rare Creature; like new and ſtrange ſights brought from remote parts of the world: For if we be new Creatures, how is it that the old man is ſo prevalent in thee? How is it that thy old luſts, thy old converſation is not quite abandoned? Thou wouldſt eaſily call it blaſphemy to ſay, God makes thee lye, makes thee ſwear, are ſuch ſins of his Creation? O then wallow in the duſt for ſhame and ſorrow, as thou haſt heretofore allowed in luſts and pleaſures; let the glory, beauty and lovelineſs of this new eſtate much move thee; This is a commendable new faſhion, when thy principles are new, thy aims and ends are new, thy life and manners are new; How can men with-hold from panting and longing after it!

Uſe. Exhortation. Bleſs God for the new Creation, if found in our hearts

SERM.

SERM. XLII.

Shewing what the New Creature doth not imply, and to what it is oppoſed.

GAL. 6. 15.

For in Chriſt Jeſus, neither Circumciſion, nor Uncircumciſion availeth any thing, but a New Creature.

THE work of Grace regenerating and renewing us, is here called *A new Creature*, or Creation (as you have heard:) And this phraſe ſignifieth two things.

1. That it is the work ſolely and wholly of God, for he can only create. If God ſhould onely make thee a man, and thou make thy ſelf righteous, or a new Creature, thou ſhouldſt do ſomething better than God: *Melius eſt te eſſe juſtum, quam te hominem eſſe*, It is better for thee to be a righteous man, than to be a man, ſaid *Auſtin*. Now though this point of Gods ſole and irreſiſtable efficiency in point of grace, be of large and noble concernment, both Doctrinally and Practically, yet I ſhall ſay no more of it than what hath been delivered, reſerving the reſidue of that poſition, to ſome other opportunity, and ſeaſonable Text.

I come therefore in the next place to the ſecond thing implyed in the adjunct that qualifieth this Creature, *It is a new creature*, which denoteth the great excellency, and noble nature of it: for ſo the word *New* is uſed frequently in Scripture, for that which is excellent and admirable; though here in the Text it doth eſpecially relate to an oppoſition between the *Old* things that formerly were done by this Regenerate perſon, and the *New* things he now exerciſed himſelf in.

The Obſervation from the Text is obvious. *The work of grace regenerating* Obſerv. *maketh us altogether new.*

That new and glorious Body which the people of God ſhall have by their reſurrection, doth not more exceed this vile, mortal, and infirm body that we now bear about with us; than the alteration and change God makes in the ſoul when he reneweth it, cauſeth it for the future to differ from what it was formerly; then proud, now humble; then earthly, now heavenly. Then it was like *Naaman* before his waſhing, full of a loathſom leproſie; but now like his skin after his waſhing, freſh and beautiful. Before it was like a *Lazarus* full of noyſom Ulcers and ſores; but ſince it is like *Abſolom*, that was comely from the head to the foot.

This point deſerveth diligent explication, becauſe it will be a mirror or glaſs to ſee your ſelves in, as alſo to know whether you may go on comfortably in the way you are in, or elſe wholly begin a new courſe; for the Apoſtle by this ſuppoſeth, That a man may live many years in the outward priviledges of the Church, and in the diſcharge of the publick duties which relate to Gods worſhip, and yet be an old creature, he muſt begin all anew again: Do not therefore think it ſtrange, thou who haſt ſerved God, as thou thinkeſt, this fifty or threeſcore years, if it be told thee that thou art yet to begin to be a Diſciple of Chriſt. The Apoſtle in this Text tels us what is true Chriſtianity, wherein the marrow of Chriſtian Religion conſiſts, *viz.* Not in external duties, but in a new ſanctification of the whole man: This is the Holy of Holies, whereas duties are like the outward porch of the Temple: I ſhall proceed in this method.

What new creature doth not imply.

1. I ſhall inform you what the phraſe doth not imply.

2. What it doth oppoſe.

This expreſſion, *A new creature*, doth not imply

1. It doth not imply that there was no ſuch work before the times of the Goſpel.

First, *As if there never were ſuch a work of God in the world, before the times of the goſpel:* For although this phraſe be uſed in the new Teſtament, yet *Shem*, *Enoch*, *Adam*, after repentance all theſe were new creatures. So that this new creation was as ſoon as ever there was any godly man in the world. It is true, the Goſpel-adminiſtrations have many prerogatives above that of the Law: hence it is called in a peculiar manner, *The Kingdom of Heaven*, but yet this work of God in regenerating & renewing, was in that former diſpenſation as well as now, though it may be not ſo many in number were begotten unto God. Hence *Rachel* is more fruitfull than *Leah*, as I may ſo allude. Though God ceaſed from this work of Creation on the ſeventh day in reſpect of temporal objects, yet not of ſpiritual. Nor,

2 Not that new faith &c. ſhould be looked after.

Secondly, *Is this new creature ſo to be underſtood, as if it ſhould alwayes be ſeeking after new religion, a new faith, new worſhip, and ſo ſhould every day have ſome new thing.* No, but the doctrine, the pure worſhip of Chriſt, the holy life commanded in the word, this new creature applieth it ſelf to, receiveth it without any further change or alteration, though the uſe and cuſtom of it be never ſo old. Indeed when a Church is become like the Chaos at firſt; darkneſſe of ignorance and prophaneſs, ſpreading it ſelf all over; then as the Apoſtle preſſeth, 1 *Cor.* 3. *They are to become a new lump*: but when the pure Doctrine and way of God is received and imbraced, there ſtill to affect new things, is as if a man ſhould not be content with the Sun or Earth, but to deſire a new Sun and a new Earth. Though this new creature is to grow in knowledge, faith, and other graces, yet they are not to look for new things above what is written. The Scripture is like the body of the Sun, into which God hath put all light: And ſaith *Tertullian* well, *Hoc primum credimus cum credimus, quod nihil ultra credere debemus*, This we firſt believe, as ſoon as ever we believe, That the Scriptures are like *Hercules* his pillars with this Moto, *Ne plus ultra*.

3. Not that it makes a man eſſentially new

Thirdly, *This new creature is not ſo to be underſtood, as if it did make a man ſubſtantially and eſſentially new.* For a man might ask, Where is this new creature? Doth it give a new ſoul? A new body? Another kinde of natural life than other men have? No, this new creation is not in reſpect of ſubſtantials, though the ſcripture calls it the New man, but only becauſe of Accidentals. A man by this hath a new faith, new repentance; new affections, new deſires, and a new converſation; and certainly this moral change is of as great efficacy and wonder, as a naturall change. It is not therefore to be expected as if this grace of God ſhould work bodily changes, though it makes a change of the body, Thy eye is changed, thy Tongue is changed, for theſe were inſtruments of evil, but now of good.

4. Not that it is in life only.

Fourthly, *This new change or creature is not ſo to be explained, as if it were one-*

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ly in the outward lives of men. For though it demonſtrate it ſelf there in part, yet the Choyceſt, and moſt Noble operation, is within upon the underſtanding, heart, and will of a man. This new creation is moſt potent there, where it is inviſible to the bodily eye. For if this new creature were no more than an outward change in our lives, then we might finde ſuch in *Plato's Socrates*, and *Ariſtotle's* School. To define a man to be a godly man by outward duties onely, is to define a man by his body, and not by his ſoul, which is the main part: though therefore thou haſt given over thy former leud and ungodly practices, yet we cannot preſently ſay, Behold a new creature; for though all old outward things are paſſed away, yet not all old inward. Therefore the promiſe of this great work of God is primarily upon the heart, and inward parts of a man. and *David*, though totally abdicating his former wickedneſs, yet cryeth out, *Create in me a clean heart; Jer.* 31. *Pſal.* 51.

Neither in the Fifth place is this new creature to be underſtood, *as if there were no reliques of the old corruption in ſuch a man.* As if in the deſcription of this work, you muſt all expect to finde nothing but what is the meer work of God in you, not any thing of your old ſelves, or the old Serpent. No, although Chriſt, when he cured any man of his bodily diſeaſe, did it perfectly and preſently, yet the cure of our ſoules is by degrees, and hath much imperfection cleaving to it. There are ſome old dregs in this new wine: yea, there is not any one duty, or act of Grace can be done by this new creature ſo perfectly and purely, but that ſome droſs may be found in it. *Paul* was a new creature, like the ſun among the ſtars, yet he found *Evil preſent with him when he would do good:* And this God in great wiſedom is pleaſed to do to keep us humble, and low in our ſelves; to be alwayes thirſting and panting after Chriſts grace: That as long as this flux *of bloud runneth*, thou ſhouldeſt alwayes be deſirous *to touch at leaſt the hem of his garment.* This is neceſſary to the godly, who many times think this mountain of grace is ſo high, that they ſhall never climbe to the top of it.

5. Not that no reliques of the old man remain.

In the ſecond place, *Let us conſider the nature of this new creature by what it oppoſeth:* For when the Apoſtle ſaith, *a new creature*, he ſuppoſeth there are ſome old things to which this ſtands diametrically oppoſite. Therefore the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 5.17. expreſly mentioneth the generall of them, when he ſaith, *Old things are paſſed away, and all things are become New.* Let us therefore examine what thoſe Old things are, in whoſe room this New Creature comes.

VVhat the new creature is oppoſed to.

Firſt, There are the old things of ſin and ungodlineſs. The glorious ſun and a dark night can as well ſtand together, as this new Creature; and thy old ſwearing, lying, thy old luſts and prophaneneſs: As ſoon as ever God works this new work upon thee, preſently thoſe old things do not only paſs away, but are thrown away with great deteſtation: As it is ſaid of *Naaman*, 2 King. 5.1. *That he was a great man*, a man of much eminency, *but he was a leper*, & till he was waſhed, he was loathſom and unclean. So may we ſay of many a great man, a rich man, a learned: but if an ungodly man, He is altogether unclean. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the *Corinthians* what they were formerly, *Riotous, Thieves, Unclean, Effeminate*, but *ye are waſhed, but ye are juſtified, but ye are ſanctified*, 1 Cor. 6.11. Such blackmores muſt have their skins made white: Oh then, Why is it that ſo many who bear the glorious profeſſion of a Chriſtian, ſhould yet wallow in ſuch mire, and vomit? The Apoſtle reckons up many groſſe ſins, and tels them, *They ſhould not be ſo much as named amongſt them*, much leſſe then practiſed, and lived in. Oh, what Miniſter can *lift up his voice loud enough, like a trumpet, to declare unto people their tranſgreſſions.* Thou art to be a new creature, a new building, Why then is there that old rubbiſh in thy life? Why is not that old houſe pulled down? VVhy is it that cuſtom, & the Divel, & thy wicked heart is ſtronger to keep thee in theſe bonds, than Gods word, and his Miniſtry are able to unloſe thee out of them. In

1. To the old things of ungodlineſs.

other things, uſe and cuſtome bringeth contempt and wearineſs, VVhy ſhould not then dayly ſinning make thee weary? Thoſe old luſts, that afford no new comfort, Why doſt thou not loath it at laſt? If the Iſraelites were weary of Manna though ſo ſweet and excellent, Why ſhouldſt not thou ſay of theſe huſks of ſins and ſwines draff, thou haſt enough? It were impoſſible if this new creation were in thee, thou couldeſt live in, and love thoſe unlawfull pleaſures thou haſt been uſed to. *Calvin* well preſſeth that forementioned Text: *Old things are paſſed away, all things are become new*, as (ſaith he) *Old leaves in Autumn through drineſs they wither, and fall off from the tree*, there is no more ſap or juyce to maintain them. Thus when a man is regenerated, thoſe former luſts loſe their vigour and life, they have no more nouriſhment to ſupport them. Be therefore no more blind at noon day: thoſe continual and dayly luſts which thou frequently practiſeſt, demonſtrate to all the world thou art in thy old ſtate of Gall and Bitterneſs: If the fountain were ſweet, it could not ſend forth ſuch bitter ſtreams.

2. To old darkneſs & blindneſs.

Secondly, *That old darkneſs and blindneſs which was upon his minde, is paſſed away, & new lights in the room thereof.* I might inſtance in every particular of old corruption in a man, and ſhew you what a new creation there is inſtead thereof; but that would be infinite: I ſhall therefore inſtance in ſome remarkable particulars: And what is more notable than that Chaos, which is on every mans heart before converſion, Darkneſs covering the face of his ſoul, not able to diſcern any ſpiritual thing, yea to judge them folly and madneſs? What doth a man naturally more ſcorn and contemn than the practical power, and preciſe ſtrictneſs of godlineſs? He ſeeth no lovelineſs, no Majeſty, no beauty in ſupernatural things: *Ariſtotle* ſaith, *That if an old man had the eyes of a young man, he would ſee as well as a young man, becauſe the ſoul in its own operations doth not grow old or weary, but the organ of ſeeing in an old man is more indiſpoſed and unfit*: And we may ſay, if a natural man had the eye of a new creature, he would then ſee, judge and diſcern as a new creature. The Apoſtle mentioneth this great alteration in men converted, Epheſ. 4. *Ye were darkneſs*, in the abſtract, *but now ye are light in the Lord*, yea its called *Marvellous light* by Peter, 1 Pet. 2. 9. For certainly that light of knowledge, faith, and ſpiritual diſcerning in a Godlyman, is wonderfull and admirable. So then where this new creation is, that old ſtupidity, dulneſs, blindeneſs, knowing nothing, and regarding nothing of God, doth paſs away; and now they know God, believe his word, and are filled with much delight and comfort thereby. Therefore how canſt thou judge thy ſelf to be a new creature, whoſe right eye is put out, whoſe underſtanding is wholly darkned? Every ſermon is a riddle and parable to thee. The Bible is a book ſealed up to thee: Why is it that thou art no more carefull to get light in thy heart? How hath nature defended the eye, by placing it in an hollow place of the head, fortifying it with skins & an eyelid, and brows as a three-fold wall to keep off any thing that may hurt it? And wilt not thou be much more deſirous to preſerve ſpiritual light?

3. To old preſumption.

Thirdly, *His old confidence and bold preſumption concerning his good eſtate, and Gods love towards them, that alſo paſſeth away*: And inſtead thereof trembling entereth into his bowels, rottenneſs gets into his ver[illegible]arrow, becauſe he hath felt the terror of the Lord. There is no greater deſtruc[illegible] principle of that old man in us, than that it bewitcheth a man with a ſelf-flattery, ſelf-fulneſs, & ſelf-righteouſneſs that God loves him, that he hath a good heart, and a good God: Thus the devil keeps all things in quiet and peace, till Chriſt a ſtronger comes; but when *Mary Magdalen* feels the burthen of her ſins, ſhe needs Chriſts comfortable ſpeech to her, *That her ſinnes are forgiven*. *Davids* heart roareth like the ſea, and the windes and tempeſts blowing on it, are not ſtill till God quiet them: She that thought her ſelf full, wanting nothing, now ſhe knoweth ſhe is poor, miſerable, and naked. What a vaſt difference between *Paul* a Phariſee, and *Paul* regenerated? Then *he was alive*, all was well, now *he is dead, and ſin kils him*. If

thou

thou art a New Creature, thou art loathſom, defiled in thy own eyes. Thou ſtandeſt like a Leper alof off from all the mercies and promiſes of God. Thus God hath ordained, *That none ſhould finde reſt to their ſouls, but ſuch who are loaded and burthened, Mat.* 11. 22. Now thou haſt a reſt without any burthen, thou haſt an eaſe and never didſt feel a load: This is much to be ſuſpected.

Fourthly, *That old end, aim, and ſcope, to which he formerly referred all things, is now changed, and a new white is now ſet up.* Every man hath ſome ultimate end to which he doth refer all his actions, that is, the center to which he falls. Now while a man is this old Creature, he looks no further than at earthly comforts, pleaſures, and advantages in this world: Thus they are like bruit beaſts, meaſuring their happineſs by thoſe objects that do pleaſe the ſenſe: and as *Eve* deſired to taſt the fruit, *Becauſe it was lovely to the eye*; ſo do they long to taſt of that fruit which is pleaſing to their corrupt appetites: But ſaith the Apoſtle, *Whether we live, we live to the Lord, and whether we dye, we dye to the Lord*, Rom. 14. 8. *Whom have I in heaven but thee*, ſaith *David*? whereas the property of every natural man is deſcribed, *Pſal.* 4. *Many ſay, Who will ſhew us any good*? and the contrary diſpoſition of the regenerate ſheweth it ſelf, *But Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us*: So that if thou art a new creature, thy end is no longer to grow great in the world, no longer to fulfill thy bruriſh luſts, but to glorifie God and ſave thy ſoul. And this end being earneſtly and affectionately deſired by thee, thou doſt diligently practice all thoſe means that obtain this end in praying often, in examining thy ſelf often, in humiliation, and reformation often. As the ſupreme Orb carrieth all the inferiour Orbs about with its own motion, ſo this great and noble end wheels about all thy actions; every thing is ſubſervient thereunto. Now if we would ask men, What is the great aim and end you propound to your ſelves in this world? Though with their tongue they would happily ſay, the ſalvation of our ſouls; yet with their lives they would deny this: For if thy end be changed, the means would be changed, the way would be changed thou diſt uſe to live in. 4. To his old ends.

Fifthly, *All his former falſe waies of worſhip and ſervice of God, they are renounced, and now he ſerveth God after a new manner.* Thus all the heathens when they came under this new Creation, they threw away their Idols, they forſook their falſe gods; and if they were not Idolators, but trained up in ſuperſtitious waies, and a Traditional worſhip invented by their Fore-fathers, as the Jews were, they forſook this alſo. *The Kings daughter is to forget & forſake her Fathers houſe.* We ſee *Paul* ſpends much in his Epiſtles to take off the Godly from thoſe very Ordinances God himſelf hath commanded, when the time of their abrogation was come. Not but that even this New Creature, may for want of good light and inſtruction be far plunged into ſuperſtitious and unlawfull worſhips: But as the Day-ſtar ſhall ariſe in their hearts, ſo by degrees the night will wear away. *What agreement hath Chriſt with Belial?* ſaith the Apoſtle, handling the caſe of communicating with Idolaters in their VVorſhip, 1 *Cor.* 6. *Seeing they are the Temple of the Lord.* It is worth the obſervation, *Iſa.* 2. when the people of God by his heavy judgements upon them for their Idolatry, ſhall be weary of it, it is ſaid, *They ſhall throw their Idols to the Bats & Owls*, that is into dark corners & holes: A fit expreſſion; for as their Idols were blinde, Eyes they had, but did not ſee; ſo they ſhall caſt them away unto blinde creatures. This ſhould make people take heed how they plead for any old thing in religion, meerly becauſe it is old; for then thou ſhouldeſt have continued in thy old popery, in thy old ſuperſtition, which many years ago thou didſt live in. Remember we are to be new Creatures in the Lord, and ſo muſt leave all old falſe wayes; though there may be *the good old paths alſo that we muſt enquire after*, Jer. 6. 16. when new errors have overwhelmed us. 5. To old falſe wayes of Worſhip.

6 To old natural actions

Sixthly, *His old animall and natural actions, they passe away, and he is a new creature in them.* Not that he doth not eat and drink still, as if he did not live after the natural way of other men: but only a new creature over-rules all those actions after a godly manner, in so much that we may say, it is new eating, and new drinking when this creation taketh hold of us. For in that former condition,

1. *We did only eat and drink to comfort our selves, to satisfie nature, or to please our appetites*: But when regenerated, we eat and drink thereby to be enabled in our places to serve him, fulfilling that of the Apostle, *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* Oh the exactnesse and excellency of this new creature; it makes new eating, new drinking: now when thou drinkest thy self drunk, Art thou drunk to the glory of God? If grace were in thee, What an alteration would it make?

2. *Natural men they eat without fear*, Jude. 12. *They do not remember their Mortality*, How quickly Gods judgements may come upon them: Those who were drowned in the deluge, the old world lived in this old corruption; they did eat and drink, and gave in marriage: That is, spent their time in the use of the creatures with much carnal jollity and mirth, and then the floud overwhelmed them on a sudden. Oh there is a great deal of carnal eating and feasting, a great deal of carnal mirth in the Creatures. But when a man is made this new Creature, he useth all these comforts with temperance and an holy fear. *I beat down my body*, saith *Paul*: That is, he kept himself in an holy strict way in the use of all lawful comforts, that no spark of fire might suddenly break out and set him on fire. Thus *Job, He sacrificed unto God, and was afraid, least while his sons were feasting, they should sin against him. David* prayeth about some, *That their table might become a snare unto them.* And certainly this is the portion of wicked men, their eating, their drinking is a snare to them; their mirth and jollity is a snare unto them: They marry, they buy houses, oxen, & these things hinder them from coming to the feast when invited. But this new Creature is taught otherwise, *He marrieth as if he married not, he buyeth as if he bought not, he useth the world as not overusing it.* And truly this work of grace is not only seen in casting away the works of darkness, unquestionable sins; but in a gratious moderating and ordering all lawfull comforts.

7. To old ways in civil actions and relations,

Seventhly, *That old way they were accustomed unto in their civil actions and relations, this new creature changeth*: And indeed this work of grace where it leaveneth a man, makes an alteration in a man, not only in a general, as a Christian, but as a Magistrate, a Minister, an Husband, or a servant in any particular relation. If the Heathen said, He could not be *Bonus vir*, which was not *bonus civis*, not a good man in the general, who is not a good Citizen in his particular relation; How much more doth the Scripture verifie this which doth not only instruct us about our duties, as Christians in the general, but layeth down the several Graces of Husbands, Masters, and Servants? So that as by it the Minister is *Prepared for every good work*, 1 *Tim.* 6. so every relation also is. If therefore thou art a new Creature, this will make thee a new Magistrate, a new Minister, a new Husband a new Wife. A Magistrate who before looked only to his own greatnesse and power, *Ut præsit, non ut prosit*: Now he remembers he is *the Minister of God for good to those that do well, and for terrour to those that do ill.* He considers that as the sun hath its light not for it self, but the world; so he hath not his place and authority for himself, but for others: He remembers that it is *Res publica*, not *Res propria*, Thus also, if a Husband, if a Master, he observeth all those Relation-Duties and Qualifications commanded by the word, and looks at God in all those things, which makes them called spiritual men; because their principles, aims, and whole guidance of their souls in these things is upon higher grounds than morality can attain unto.

Eighthly,

Eightly, *This new Creation oppoſeth alſo thoſe old religious approaches unto God:* They do not pray, hear, as they were wont: Not that they change theſe inſtituted Ordinances of God as they do when they come out of Idolatry and ſuperſtition: But in theſe reſpects there is a great alteration made. 8. To old religious approaches to God.

1. *Whereas they thought the very externall Duties were enough to commend them to God*, and upon this ground they prayed, came to Church, received Sacraments: Now they ſee they were deceived, and judge all nothing without an inward change of the heart, and an outward reformation in the life. Obſerve the Apoſtle *Galatians* the 5. Where having ſaid the ſame thing in the Text, *That Circumciſion and uncircumciſion availeth nothing, but Faith working by love*, He preſently addeth, *This perſwaſion cometh not of him that calleth you*: That is, this perſwaſion that external Duties are all the ſervice God requireth, that he looketh after no more, this doth not come from God who hath called us, for he enlightens our minds, and ſpiritualizeth our hearts to worſhip him in ſpirit and truth.

2. *There is a glorious change alſo made in manner of theſe duties:* Before he prayed and heard perfunctorily, he came after a cuſtomary manner, doing theſe duties without the ſenſe of ſin, a broken heart, and groans unutterable: but now he is fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord: ſo that a new creature leaveth not only his former old Luſts and ſins, but his former way of performing all religious duties.

Uſe of Inſtruction, *How few are new Creatures?* For in how many mens lives do you ſee their old ſins, their old luſts? Their Duties, and ſolemn Worſhip of God is done with no more fear, inward and ſpiritual deportment of ſoul. That which thou gloriеſt in, That thou art no changeling, it is thy ſhame. As this body muſt be changed er'e it can inherit immortality, and glory, ſo thy ſoul muſt be changed er'e it can come to everlaſting happineſs. What is more miſerable than to ſee an old man with his old ſins upon him, as ignorant as he was threeſcore years ago? The ſame Oaths, the ſame Curſes as he had uſed fifty years ago: Oh thou great God of heaven, make this Truth fall like *The Coal from the Altar*, to touch *Not their Tongues only*, but hearts.

Sermon

SERMON XLIII.

Concerning the Supernaturality and Excellent Qualities of the New Creature.

GAL. 6.15.

For in Christ Jesus, neither Circumcision, or Uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a New Creature.

THis new Creature hath been discovered as it stands oppositely to those old things, which the Apostle saith, are *passed away*. We come in the next place to handle it positively, as it is in sense absolutely considered, and in the generall, when the Apostle calls it a new Creature; the essence or being thereof is thereby declared to consist in a supernaturality, or way of life, above that which the power of a meer man can reach unto; so that it is no more than a supernaturall Creature, one, who is acted above the principles and motives of nature in all the duties he doth, so that the best way to discover this new Creature is, to shew wherein it is above the ordinary course of Nature: And although the School-men dispute, wherein lyeth the true and proper notion of supernaturality, or what is that which makes a thing supernaturall, yet I shall not enter into that Labyrinth.

The work of grace is a new Creature, or supernaturall, 1. In its Originall.

First therefore, this work of grace is a new Creature or supernaturall, *in regard of its original and beginning*. It doth not flow from the principles of nature: it's from the power of nature that a man eateth, drinketh, laugheth or discourseth; but let a man do any thing holily, believe, or repent, to this a speciall power from heaven is necessary. Indeed we need the aid and assistance of God, even to all ordinary actions; Therefore the Scripture saith, *In him we live, we move, and have our being*; and God is the Author and Actuator of nature, as well as of grace; but that is a common help, this a special help. God doth more for thee when he gives thee an heart to breathe after Christ, than when he enableth thee to breathe the breath of a naturall life; and if God be the Fountain of our naturall life, much more of our spirituall life. It is not enough to call a thing supernatural, in that it's solely of God, for so the world was created only by him at first; but it must come from him in a peculiar and speciall manner, as the author of all grace; thus every where in the Scripture, faith, repentance, love, joy and all other graces are made a fruit of the Spirit, or the gift of God, they are not by humane power; and this should make us sensible of our own poverty and nothingness; for as often as thou hearest the Word calling thee to believe, to repent, it doth but put thee in minde of thy utter impotency. By the precepts a man may see what he should do, by the reproofs what he doth not, and by the promises what the grace of God doth; from this stock and foundation that Thou art nothing, and Grace is all, must the new Creature proceed. The beginning of this is with a deep poverty of spirit, and apprehension of our inabilities. The great obstruction in the way why thou

dost

not aſpire after this glorious eſtate, is becauſe thou findeſt not the need of a power from heaven to lift thee up thither: As thoſe that were blinde and lame, they deſired Chriſt, knowing, he only could give them their eyes and their limbs again; ſo do thou; O Lord, I muſt mourn for, and turn from my ſins upon holy grounds. Oh that I could do it, how often, Lord, do I reſolve to climb up this hill toward heaven, but I preſently fall back again; to thy power therefore, and to thy grace I fly.

2. The ſupernaturality of this creature is ſeen *in the Motives, why it ſets upon any duties*, and that is, becauſe of God. Thus faith, part of the new creature in a man, believeth Gods word, not from cuſtome, and education, or the Authority of the Church, but becauſe of that divine Authority and Revelation which appeareth therein; As a man ſeeth the Sun by the light of the Sun ſhining from it. Thus the *Theſſalonians* received the word of God, *not as the word of man, but as of God*, 1 Theſ. 2. 14. This new creature believeth the principles of Religion, *Quia ipſe dixit*, becauſe God hath ſaid it, not becauſe men ſay ſo: When a man aſſents unto matters of Religion no further than humane grounds lead him, it is but an humane faith, and we need not a ſpecial gift of God to believe thus: After the ſame manner alſo it is, when a man bewaileth his ſins, and condemneth himſelf for them, meerly becauſe of the natural light of conſcience, not from the Word, and becauſe God is offended, but becauſe of external judgments, this is but to move as a man, to repent as a man; whereas the Apoſtle telleth us *of ſorrow after a godly manner*, 2 Cor. 7. 9. which is, *when a ſpirit of prayer* and ſupplication, & mourning is upon our ſouls, becauſe God is diſpleaſed with what we have done; and indeed, the greateſt, and the moſt noble part of the ſupernaturality of this new creature lieth in this, That we go to all divine objects upon a divine ground, upon a divine motive; ſo that it is acknowledged by all both Papiſts and Proteſtants, that nothing can be ſaid to be graciouſly and after a godly manner done, unleſs it aſcend as high as God, and be terminated on him as the object: We are not to ſtay on *Jacob*'s Ladder, but to go up to him, who ſits at the top of it in heaven. Oh conſider, we may believe as men, repent as men, pray as men, hear as men, but al this while not new creatures; becauſe theſe things are not done with a reference to God, and a complacency in him: And by this we may eaſily judge why it is ſo poſſible for a man to be taken from the wedding Feaſt, *and bound hand and foot, and thrown into utter darkneſs*, I mean to be taken from religious duties, and damned, becauſe theſe were not the acts of a new Creature, but the humane devotions of a moral man. Let not therefore thy heart be quieted in any holy duties, till it be immediatly applied to God himſelf. The women that ſought for Chriſts body were not contented to ſee the linen in which it was wrapped, but they looked ſtill after the body; ſo neither may we reſt in the expreſſions of duties, but to go further even to the Lord himſelf; this very point is the hinge of Chriſtianity, get this and you get all: Believe becauſe of God, mourn becauſe of God, and then you are at the higheſt of eſſential perfection, though not gradual. This is the only, or at leaſt main ſpecifying difference between *Judas* his tears and *Peters*; this makes *Manaſſes* his humiliation good, and the want of it makes *Ahabs* bitter. Do not then any longer like worms crawl on the ground, but like Angels ſoar up into heaven: This would make you like the Silk-worm, ſending forth that which is precious alwayes from you.

2. In the motives which ſtir it up to duty. Becauſe of God.

A man applies himſelf to God; As revealed, I. In the Creature.

Two wayes a man may apply himſelf to God: Either, Firſt, *As he may be known by the creatures*. Of this the Apoſtle diſcourſeth much, *Rom.* 1. For in them he revealeth his wiſedome, power and goodneſs, and ſo the Gentiles are condemned, becauſe they did not glorifie him as God; they did not go ſo far as by the Moon light of Nature they were guided: But ſuppoſe they had glorified God according to the knowledge they had of him, & did not detain the truth in unrighteouſneſs; yet in thoſe acts they were not new creatures, becauſe there wanted faith in God revealed in his word, which is the ſoul to every action, and the ſalt that ſeaſons it.

II. In his Word. Therefore there is a ſecond way of the ſouls tendency to God, and that is, *As he is revealed in his Word, and made known in Chriſt*, being drawn unto him by his Spirit, and ſo lifted up above all his natural abilities, and this is the expreſſion of a new creature; So that what *Luther* prayed for *Melanthon*, *Rapiat te Deus, ex humanis in divina, è tuis in ſua*, is to be poured out in the behalf of every natural man. If you ſee a *Paul* crucified to the world, having his Converſation in heaven, knowing how to abound, and how to want, enabled to do all things, through Chriſt that ſtrengthens him; that his former ſins he once lived in, do not ſtill ſtick cloſe to him, and damn him; you may as much wonder as they did, when they ſaw the Viper upon his hand did not kill him; and when they ſaid, the gods are come down to us in the likeneſs of men; and *Paul* would return the ſame anſwer as then was, Why, do you look upon us, as if we had done theſe things by our own power? But in the name of Chriſt are they wrought. If you ſee a man walking holily, humbly, reformed from ſin, ſay, this is the great power of God to ſalvation.

3. In that the perfection it leads to is above natures inclination. Thirdly, This ſupernaturality is ſeen, *In that it is a way of ſuch perfection and exactneſs, that it is no wayes agreeable to our nature*; we have not ſo much as an inclination to it; and ſo ſupernatural is as much as connatural; for thus holineſs was not ſupernatural to *Adam*, but it was a fit and ſutable qualification, even as rationality and riſibility was connatural to his ſoul: So God creating *Adam* for ſuch a glorious end as to enjoy him, holineſs was a connatural perfection due to him; but now ſince our lapſed and polluted condition, all holineſs is ſo far ſupernatural, that it is againſt our natures, we have no inclination to that which is holy; yea, the Apoſtle ſaith, *We have enmitie againſt the way of God, and we neither are, or can be ſubject to it*, Rom 8. Godlineſs is a kind of violence to our corrupt natures; and therefore we are ſaid to crucifie, and mortifie ſin, yea, to deny our ſelves; all which argueth the repugnancy that is in us to that which is holy; wonder not then, if men be ſo unwilling, ſo untoward to be brought to this work of grace: There is a ſecret enmity, and antipathy in us to it; we love it no more than the thief doth the light; and upon this is grounded all that rage, hatred and oppoſition they have againſt godly wayes: They cannot give you a good reaſon why? Only their hearts are full of venome againſt it.

4. In its analogie with God. Laſtly, This ſupernaturallity may be ſeen, *in that proportion and analogie it hath with God*, though with a vaſt difference. We call Gods wiſedome, power, holineſs ſupernatural, becauſe it tranſcends the ſphere of the creature, though to God it be natural; ſo Chriſts power to work miracles was natural to him, though ſupernatural to us: Now in this new creature there is a rude draught, and ſome imperfect lineaments of this; *Be ye holy as I am holy*; *and he purifieth himſelf, even as God is pure*. As God loveth all things, and doth all things to the glory of God, ſo doth this creature refer all to him, it liveth wholly to him; and as all the ſtreams empty themſelves into the ſea, ſo do they all their glory, welfare and advantage into the honour of God. As all comes from him, ſo they return all to him: Thus they alſo learn of Chriſt, who is the treaſure of all ſupernatural perfections, not only his miracles, but his graces were above our humane ſtrength; his patience, his meekneſs, his humility, his zeal, his obedience to the death; All theſe demonſtrated him to be the Son of God; and therefore in this we are to ſhew his image and likeneſs.

The Qualities and Properties of the New-Creature.

1. A participation of the divine nature. *In the next place let us conſider the qualities and properties of this new Creature; and firſt the excellency and perfection of it is very obſervable, it being a participation of the divine Nature*, as *Peter* ſtiles it, 2 *Pet.* 1 4. And hereby we are like not Angels, but God himſelf. The School-men do ordinarily determine, that grace is more noble and perfect than any creature; neither the Sun, or the Heavens, or any creature in the World is comparable to it: for they have only a natural perfection, this a moral: Yea, grace in the ſoul, they ſay, is more excellent and noble than the ſoul it ſelf; and if the ſoul of a man be more worth than a thouſand worlds, what

it

is grace in that ſoul worth; and the reaſon why grace is a more noble thing than any other creature, is, as *Austin* ſaith well: *In illis tantùm ſunt opera Dei, in hâc eſt Imago Dei*; look upon the glorious Sun, in it is only the work of God; but look upon grace, and in it is the Image of God; ſo that as we ſay, *Non poteſt aliquid eſſe melius Deo*, Nothing can be better than God, ſo neither can any thing be better than grace the Image of God. If therefore this be true, that this new creature is more perfect than any other creature, no marvail if the wiſe man ſay, Riches and Pearls are not to be compared to it; and although this new creature be an accident, and the ſoul a ſubſtance, and ſo *in modo eſſendi*, in the manner of being, it is more imperfect than the ſoul; yet becauſe it is an accident that floweth not from the ſoul, as an effect from the cauſe, but is cauſed by an efficient of a more eminent nature; therefore it is more noble than the ſoul it ſelf. As you ſee the light, though it be an accident, yet is more glorious than the air in which it is, becauſe it cometh from the Sun a more glorious body than the air: So that the meaſure of every things perfection, is the near or remoter participation of God, and this new creature bringeth a man to the neareſt participation of God of any creature. We are not like God in being Rich, Great, Noble, Honoured, but in being holy; and the perfection and nobleneſs of this creature is herein unqueſtionably ſeen; becauſe the promiſe of ſalvation and eternal life is made only to this. An Angell hath not eternal glory, becauſe he is an Angel made of ſuch a glorious nature, but becauſe he is holy. And the ſoul of a man, though it be immaterial, immortal and hath many perfections, yet ſalvation & happineſs ſhall not be given to it becauſe it is a ſoul: though it be worth more than a world yet it is not worth an heaven, but becauſe it is found in the life of this new creature, though even it then be alſo of grace; becauſe this new creature is not made perfect in this life.

Again, this new creature muſt be more noble than any other creature, becauſe it prepareth and fitteth us for a more noble end and being (I ſpeak not of merit, but of the order God hath appointed) ſo that it doth not qualifie a man as a man; in which ſenſe Learning, Prudence, and other political abilities do, but as one who by it may enjoy and have communion with God himſelf; but though it be thus excellent, we muſt not lift it ſo high as if thereby we were juſtified and accepted of God through any inherent worth thereof.

Secondly, From this excellency cometh another quality, which is *Beauty and Lovelineſs*, to be deſired by all. Oh if thy eyes were not blinded, thou wouldſt ſee every thing in the world to be contemned, that this may be obtained. No wonder if the man in the Parable, *ſold all he had to get this Pearl*: No wonder if *Solomon* doth ſo commend this new Creature under the name of *Wiſedome*, and exhorteth to take pains for this rather than for other things. Oh that the preaching about it might beget love in you to it, deſires after it, ſaying, I take pains for wealth, to live in this world, but there is a more noble good than all theſe things below: Let me not be ſatisfied till I be made a new creature. If duties do not avail without this, can wealth or greatneſs profit without it? Shall the Devil think, that the ſhewing the glory of the world may tempt men to worſhip him; and ſhall not the opening of this glory make thee willing to worſhip God? 2. Deſirable Beauty and Lovelineſs.

Thirdly, *The neceſſity of this*: If thou art not a new creature, thou art miſerable in all fulneſs. Thou art not a wiſe man indeed till thou art a new creature. Hence the Scripture commends this under the Title of Wiſedome, and calls every wicked man a fool. Whatſoever parts and abilities thou mayeſt have, yet thou art not wiſe till thou art thus made new: For a wiſe man, *ſapiens ſapit res prout ſunt*, judgeth of things as they are. The child thinketh copper is gold, and thus while thou art not this new creature, thou judgeſt earthly temporary comforts, which are but for a ſeaſon, which will dy with thee, to be the only good to be laboured for. He is a wiſe man that judgeth earthly things as earthly, but eſteemeth heavenly things as heavenly. Again, he is a wiſe man that prevents after-wiſhes. *Non putabam*, I did not think it, is the portion of a fool; therefore God cannot repent, 3. Neceſſity.

becauſe he fore-ſeeth alwayes what is to be done. When *Tully* ſaw *Pompey* was overcome, whoſe ſide he favoured, and *Cæſar* prevailing, he crieth out, *O miſeram ſenectutem, O me nunquam ſapientem*; He is now full of miſerable wiſhes, becauſe he did not fore-ſee events. Now this new creature, if we alwaies follow the direction and inclination thereof, we ſhould never cry out, Oh that I had done otherwiſe, Oh that I had lived another life: Then ſhall I not be confounded, when I have reſpect to all thy Commandements, *Pſal.* 119. The ſweetneſs of this new creature will be ſeen when you come to dy. Oh how happy will it then be to think, I do not repent of my praying, of my ſtrict ſerving of God; though I denied my ſelf much unlawful pleaſure, yet now I am full of lawful and good joy. Again, Wiſedome is to lay up to eternity, when reſolutions to alter will be too late. Now only this new creature layeth up treaſure for eternity. Oh if men would look on ſin now as the damned in hell look on it, if it were as terrible to you now, as it is to thoſe that are roaring in Hell, how quickly would men ſay to their ſins, Be gone?

As the new creature is thus only wiſe, ſo this only is true riches, true wealth; *rich in faith*, ſaith the Apoſtle. And *Laodicea* was poor, though abounding in outward fulneſs, *Rev.* 2. It was the Stoicks Poſition, that the wiſe man is only a rich man. To be ſure, it is the Scriptures truth, that this new creature is only a rich creature, for he only hath God the Fountain, he only hath the promiſe: All things are his, as the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 3. This is better than the Philoſophers ſtone, which is ſaid to turn all into gold.

Again, This only is true peace, happineſs and comfort: Thus the Apoſtle, *As many as walk after the rule, peace on them.* Where this new creature is not, there is no true peace, no true joy; they may in the midſt of all their jollity, read many Texts of Scripture, which will be like the hand-writing in the wall, filling them with terror and horror. If then only wiſedome, only riches, only joy be in this new creature, how is it, that men ſeek not after it in the firſt place? Why is it not the firſt thing that all people begin with?

4. Strictneſs and exactneſs.

Fourthly, As the neceſſity of it is conſiderable, ſo another quality obſervable, is, *the exactneſs and ſtrictneſs of it*: For you heard that this new creature doth not only make a man forſake his old ſins, and ſo he is a new man then, but it new moldeth and ſtampeth all his lawful actions and comforts; it keeps a man exactly to his bounds, ſo that the water doth not over-flow the banks leſt it get ſoil; he loveth, but not over-loveth; it ſets the heart of a man like a Watch, to ſtrike when, and no more than it ſhould. Hence the Apoſtle calls it, *walking exactly and circumſpectly*, *Epheſ.* 5. 14. ſo that from this exactneſs, neceſſarily floweth a ſingularity, as to the common cuſtomes and wayes of the world: You deſpiſe men for their ſtrictneſs, for ſingularity; this argueth your ignorance of grace, for this new creature neceſſarily makes a man ſingular; as to wicked and worldly men, Mat. 5. *What ſingular thing do ye? Do not even the Heathens and Publicans the ſame?* So that although a vain proud ſingularity be a part of the old creature, and a plain demonſtration of pride and folly, yet a godly ſingularity is a fruit of this new creature; he doth not ſuch things, as wicked men do, as natural men do, as he himſelf once did; ſo that every man is bound to be ſingular in this ſenſe, elſe he cannot be a new creature.

5. Preparedneſs for every good work.

Fifthly, *This new creature is endowed with a fittedneſs and preparedneſs for every good work*; ſo that thereby there is an univerſal inclination to every good way: Thus the Apoſtle, Epheſ. 2. 20. *We are his workmanſhip, created to every good work.* As every creature is by Gods providence furniſhed with powers and faculties ſutable to thoſe actions and operations which belong to them; ſo is this new creature accommodated with all thoſe principles that may induce him to ſuch a life as is anſwerable thereunto, ſo that what is ſaid of Chriſt, *A body thou haſt prepared for me*, is true, both of ſoul, and body in this new creature. Now this preparedneſs of heart for every duty and grace, is of infinite concernment; for without this the

duty

duty miscarrieth, and the heart is not easily put into an instrumental fitness for Gods glory; there must be much cutting, and sawing, and hammering, ere the heart be a polished stone in Gods building.

Sixthly, *This new creature being wholly of God, both in the nature and operations of it, doth elevate and lift up a man to it*, so that a man is not to bring that down to him; *The love of Christ constraineth us*, saith the Apostle; and, *He that is born of God cannot sin*; and hence it is, that *Paul*, with all new creatures, doth not consult with flesh and blood in their duties, but with Gods word, the Law and Rule of this new creature; so that it is a thing which this new creature abhorreth, to make use either of grace it self, or the opinion of it, to bring about any wicked thing; for as the Load stone draweth the iron, not the Iron the Load-stone, so grace doth draw and move the heart of a man after it, and man is not to make that follow him, grace being a new creature; and so of God, it lyeth not in mans power to make what he will grace. The Magistrate is called, ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις, 1 *Pet.* 2 13. an humane Ordinance, or mans creature, because he is of man, and to man; but this a divine creature, and therefore godliness is the same in all ages; As a man may not make a new rule of life instead of the Scripture, so neither a new manner or way of godliness. Do not thou therefore bring down this new creature to thy way, and to thy capacity, which a man is very prone unto, *tantum quisque laudat, quantum se posse imitari putat*, but bring thy self to it; otherwise this is to make the sun to go by the Clock. 6. A man needs not bring it down to him, but it elevates a man to it.

Seventhly, Another excellent property, *is, the immutability and perpetuity of it*; wherein it far exceeds humane greatness and power; *All flesh is grass, and the flower thereof fadeth*, but this is *incorruptible seed*; therefore this new creature here is the same in kind with that glorious creature in heaven; when a man shall be glorified in heaven, there will come no new thing to him for the main; God is not a new God to him, he hath been acquainted with him, and enjoyed him in this world; peace and joy will not be new to him for the main, I say for the main, otherwise in the manner and degree every thing will be new. 7. Immutability and perpetuity.

Lastly, *This new creature is wondered at, and despised in the world*, As the shadow alwayes followeth the Sun, so do reproaches slander this new creature: It is like the speckled bird among the creatures, as the Scripture describeth the Church; *They think it strange*, saith the Apostle, *that they run not into the same excess of riot with you*, for it is a life that is contrary to theirs, and so cannot stand together any more than the Ark and Dagon; but how despicable and miserable soever in the eyes of the world, yet of glorious account with God. It is with this creature, as with all strangers, hated and despised; and like Christ himself, not having where to lay his head: But if thou art a new Creature, though in an old prison, in old rags, and nothing but outward ruines, thou art endeared to God.

Use. Is this new Creature of so excellent and necessary use, *Then be moved to desire after it*; Think not it is already well with you; do not say, my old life shall serve, I will do as I have done: Alas, though thou art confident and satisfied in thy self and wayes, yet remember there is no true wisedome, riches, or peace without this: Thou art ashamed of old garments, to wear old rags; Why art thou not ashamed to continue in thy old lusts? What can work upon thee if these things do not? But this new creature is wholly of spiritual discerning; and so no wonder, if there be no closing with it: Many times new things affect us that should not, new fashions, new opinions; but here is a new way that every one ought to desire, and yet it is not regarded: Nay, do not your consciences sometimes see the necessity of being new men? How many resolutions have you taken up to this purpose, and broken them again? *Use.*

SERM. XLIV.

Answering those Carnal Objections men are apt to make against such a change in themselves.

GAL. 6. 15.

For in Christ Jesus, neither Circumcision, nor Uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a New Creature.

WE have already declared the nature of this New Creature, *Negatively*, *Positively*, and *Oppositely*, to those old things which are passed away: As also the excellency of this new Creature above all other creatures. I shall now examine the weakness and insufficiency of those grounds and obstructions which mens corruptions are prone to make against such a change in themselves; for the wicked heart of man makes many objections against this new creature; and that it may not seem to do so unjustly, and unreasonably, it makes many plausible excuses and fair pretences: The Apostle *James* speaking of a man pretending to the title and name of Religion, yet opposite to the reality and power of it *James* 1.26. saith παραλογίζεται, *He deceiveth*, he makes a false Syllogism, and so cousens his own soul. The heart of a man is a cunning Sophister; think not to say within your selves (saith *John* to the Jews) *There are no Auditors*; but when a pricking powerful truth is pressed upon them, they have many things to say within themselves for their justification.

Let us therefore see those strong reasons they can produce for themselves in this matter.

Obj. And First, *It is plausibly Objected, if we should become thus new in all things, in animal, civil, religious, and moral actions, as is urged, this would bring a necessity of condemnation upon all our former wayes.*

We shall in effect proclaim to all the world that we were naught and rotten before; and then we must pull down all our former building, acknowledge we have prayed in vain, came to the assemblies in vain, and lastly, it is enough to drive us into despair; for if once we be perswaded that the condition we are in is damnable, and that the life we live is abominable and contrary to God, What shall we do? Must we not cry out with *Cain? Our sins are greater than we can bear.*

Answ. *Answ.* Thus here is a three-fold cord of absurdity which binds them hand and foot, although if they did judge of things after a Spiritual, and aScripture manner, they would break these bonds asunder as easily as *Sampson* did his green cords.

For let us consider them in order.

The First grand absurdity is a self-condemnation, and a publick manifestation to all the world that thou wast not in a good way before. Now it is unreasonable to pretend this.

For

For 1. This is the very neceſſary ingredient in our converſion and turning to God: For in that thou art not admitted to pardon and conſolation, either God muſt be blamed, or thou muſt be blamed: Seeing God was an adverſary to thee, and thou an enemy to him, the fault is ſomewhere, and either God muſt acknowledge (I ſpeak with reverence) that he hath done ill to threaten thee, to afflict thee, to break thee, or thou muſt confeſs the blame lyeth upon thee. Now it would be blaſphemy to charge God ſo fooliſhly; but it is piety to charge thy ſelf heavily; and what do the words μετανοεῖν, *Repent*, or be wiſe after the fact? But imply that thou haſt been fooliſh, and out of thy wits all the while thou livedſt in ſuch ungodly courſes; ſo νουθεσία, admonition, which the godly man is with all readineſs to receive, is as much as putting a mind, and underſtanding in a man, as if a man were a beaſt before, and when he is converted, God breaths a rational ſoul into him again, at leaſt gives a ſanctified and right uſe of reaſon. Again the word ἐπιστροφὴ, Converſion, doth it not ſuppoſe an averſion, or a turning away from God? So that the reaſon thou bringeſt againſt this change, is moſt for it. *Goliah* is cut off with his own ſword: Thou pleadeſt, if thou art a new Creature, thou muſt condemn all thy former life, all thy by-paſt converſation: Very good reaſon; For how is it repentance elſe? How is it converſion elſe? Neither is this ſuch diſhonour, for God only cannot repent, becauſe of his infinite perfection, having no ignorance in his underſtanding, or mutability in his will, which are the grounds of repentance: But as for man naturally corrupted or defiled, he is, *Ad nihil aliud, quam pœnitentiam natus*, Born, at leaſt new regenerated to do nothing but repent of his former converſation. Do not then think with thy ſelf, if I leave my old life, my former courſes, I ſhall confeſs a blame upon my ſelf. Alas, in this very thing lieth the great work of a new creature; in this particular thou art often to exerciſe thy ſelf. 1.

2. Stick not at this, to ſhame and condemn thy former life: For this is the only neceſſary qualification for thy admiſſion into grace. Thou muſt come with a ſacrifice of atonement, if thou wilt be accepted: That is, Chriſts blood which is only ſhed for thoſe that feel themſelves loſt. If we confeſs our ſins, is often the condition expreſſed, for the ſcepter of grace to be held out to us, Lev. 5. 5. 1 Joh. 1. 9. And the Apoſtle *Paul*, *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged of the Lord*, 1 Cor. 11. And *David*, *He confeſſeth and bewaileth his folly, that God may be juſtified and cleared when he is judged*, Pſalm 51. God will receive a Publican, not a Phariſee. If thou giveſt glory to God by judging thy own wayes, clearing him, though he ſhould damn thee, this is the moſt compendious way to obtain grace. *Plutarch* ſaith, *Some Heathens in their ſupplications to their Gods, would not carry either Gold, or Iron, or a Staffe into the Temple with them, but lay all aſide when they went to pray*, to ſignifie they did not truſt in earthly wealth or greatneſs, but Gods goodneſs and power only. And thus it ought to be in our ſpiritual ſupplications to the true God, we muſt lay aſide our own righteouſneſs, and go to Chriſt, as the menſtruous woman who had ſpent all ſhe had upon Phyſitians, yet could not be cured: Oh therefore be ſo far from fearing this duty, that rather thou wilt forwardly offer thy ſelf thereunto: Say, the way to get honour and praiſe with God, is to diſhonour my ſelf, and magnifie him. His mercy in pardoning, his grace in forgiving, will be ſo much the more admirable, by how much unworthy and vile I am in my own eyes. 2.

3. *If thou art once ſenſible of the guilt and filth of thy old wayes, thou canſt not but glory in that thou art changed*: Paul ſaid, *When he was a child, he ſpake as a child, but when a man, as a man*. Thou wilt ſay, when I was a beaſt, I lived as a beaſt, but ſince a new Creature, as a new Creature. *What profit have you of thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* Rom. 6. 21. Thus *Paul*, With what ſhame and bitterneſs doth he recall his Blaſphemies and Perſecutions? 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. If therefore God hath once made thee aſhamed of thy old wayes, Thou wilt not fear to acknowledge all thy former life was out of the way: Thou wilt remember the dayes 3.

of

of old and be troubled: See how are *Job* and *David* affected with the ſins of their youth; yea, godly men are ſo far from fear of condemning themſelves for former ſins, that when their ſins have been ſcandalous to the Church of God, they have acknowledged, and bewailed them in the publick Aſſemblies: And this was that publick confeſſion of ſin and penance, which afterwards by popiſh Doctrines was ſo corrupted. If any of the Church had been overtaken by a foul ſin, they had no peace in their hearts till they had thrown themſelves down in the publick Aſſemblies, crying out with him, *Calcate me inſipidum ſalem*, Tread upon me as unſavory ſalt; No leſs wouldſt thou do, if the glory of God, and the edification of the Church did require it for thy own ſinful wayes. Know therefore, that this excuſing thy ſelf, is but ſo much accuſing thee with God. Thou art afraid to be thought a new man, that thou haſt done amiſs heretofore: Oh if thou wert truly wrought upon, all the world could not make thee keep in thoſe accuſations and indictments which thou makeſt againſt thy ſelf dayly at Gods tribunal.

4. 4. *A new creature ſticks not at this ſelf-condemnation, becauſe thoſe former wayes repented of, are uſed as an advantage by him to ſet up the praiſe and glory of God in ſhewing mercy to him.* Thus *Paul*, he is often willing to make mention of all former impieties, that ſo the grace of God may be made the more illuſtrious, and this is one reaſon why you have the ſins of the godly recorded in the Scripture to all eternity as it were: *Noah*'s drunkenneſs, *Moſes* his unbelief, *Aarons* baſe compliance in Idolatry, *David*'s Adultery and Murther, *Peter*'s abjuration of Chriſt, not to defame them, but to have perpetual monuments of Gods grace and goodneſs to them. Thus the Apoſtle when he would ſtir up the *Epheſians* and others to thankfulneſs, and to admire the riches of Gods grace to them, he puts them in mind of their former converſation what they were once, *Epheſ.* 2. and this they did not take ill, as a matter of upbraiding of them, but as a whetſtone to ſharpen their thankfulneſs. Why then ſhouldſt thou be afraid to confeſs thy ſelf once out of the way? Seeing this will make for Gods grace, which left the ninety nine ſheep, and fetched thee home upon its ſhoulders who was gone aſtray.

Obj. A ſecond *Scarcrow that men pretend againſt this new creature is, that hereby they muſt begin all anew, and pull down that whole building of Religion, which they thought was good and ſure.*

Anſw. To Anſwer this, conſider it is no new thing for many men to be ſuch fooliſh maſter-builders in matters of Religion, as that all muſt be taken down again; there is nothing more ordinary than to have ſome crack in the foundations: our Saviour doth fully clear this, when he ſpeaks of one who built upon the ſand, the winds blew, and tempeſts aroſe, *and then the fall of that houſe was great*, Mat. 7.26. Thus alſo the Apoſtle chargeth the *Galatians*, *Have ye ſuffered ſo many things in vain* Gal. 3.4 So that it is very ordinary for a people to go on many years in a rode of Religion, and in the practice of holy duties, yet they do all theſe things in vain: All muſt be undone and a better foundation laid. If thou haſt built hay and ſtubble, the fire will conſume it all at laſt: Do not therefore do in thy ſpiritual condition, as bankrupts uſe to do in their temporal, never care to look to their accounts, afraid to conſider of their debts, but ſtill hope to rub it out, till at laſt it be too late: So many a man hath inward thoughts and fears that his eſtate is not right, that this will never hold when he comes to account, but he is unwilling to dwell in his thoughts upon theſe things.

2. 2. As this is ordinary, ſo we have plain inſtances in Scripture of men accuſtomed a long time in the way of religious duties, yet this hath been earneſtly urged to them to become New: *Nicodemus* a Teacher in Iſrael, and ſo of long ſtanding, and acquainted with the Scripture, in prayer often, yet unleſs he be born again, he cannot enter in to the Kingdome of heaven, *John* 3. And thus all thoſe Jews that were converted by *John* Baptiſt, by Chriſt and the Apoſtles Miniſtry, they were all diligent in that outward worſhip of God he had commanded, but by their preaching they ſaw a neceſſity of being born again: And this is the moſt happy,

happy, and neceſſary leſſon thou canſt learn, to ſee thou muſt pray anew, hear anew, make an univerſal change in thy life.

3. Thou art the rather to make the more diligent enquiry here, becauſe of all vanities that is the ſoareſt which is in religion. If it be found that thou haſt thus many years come to Church in vain, not laid good foundations, and right principles, this is the moſt dangerous vanity of all: for to take pains in vain about temporall things, is but an outward momentary loſs; but to pray in vain, to hear in vain, is a ſpiritual & eternal loſs: Its an happineſs for a traveller to know betimes that he is out of the way; but if he ſhould travel the whole day in unſeaſonable ſharp weather, and dangerous rodes, and then at night be told he is clear out of the way, What ſad tydings would it be to him? And thus it is here: if a man ſhould live forty or threeſcore years in many ſad exerciſes, & outward miſeries, & when he comes to dye be truly told, Oh ſir, you are quite out of the way to heaven, you have been travelling to hell this many years: How muſt he cry out, Oh why did not I think of this before? Why did I not know it before? 3.

4. Let not the conſideration of loſing all that is paſt ſo much deject thee, as to quicken thee up to be the more diligent for the future: As the Travaller goeth the faſter when he knoweth he hath been out of the way; thus the Apoſtle, *redeem the time, Epheſ.* 3. Thou muſt make up all thy former loſt duties by future fervency, diligence, and fruitfullneſs: ſay, Oh Lord, it troubles mee that I loved thee ſo late, that it was ſo late e're I could do any duty after a ſpiritual godly manner; but now I ſhall preſs forward after the mark, I will labour to do much in a little time: Oh then think, If all my former time hath been loſt, I have the greater cauſe to be up and to be doing. 4.

And as the Third pretended abſurdity, *That to queſtion our former condition, or to ſuppoſe it naught, would plunge us into deſpair*: to that there are ſeveral Anſwers. *Object.*

1. It argueth ignorance of the breadth, and depth of Original corruption to argue ſo: Thou forgetteſt in what ſtate thou art born, and how unclean thou art by natural propagation; otherwiſe if this were acknowledged, thou wouldſt eaſily ſee that there is a neceſſity of being born again: What, thou wert not born with the image of God upon thy ſoul, Thou wert not born a Childe of grace but of wrath: *As this corruptible body muſt put on incorruption, e're it can be made glorious*, ſo this defiled ſoul muſt put on purity e're it can be made happy in heaven. So that there is a neceſſity upon thee to conclude, That thou art wholly in ſin and ſhut up under wrath; thou muſt ſee thou art undone: And from hence it is that men deſire not more this New Creature: they think their old life will ſerve, They perceive not the Ruines that are on their ſouls, and by this means reſt contented, though in an undone eſtate. *Anſw.*

2. *Thou who art afraid of deſpairing, if all be found naught in thee, conſider that it is neceſſary thou ſhouldſt deſpair, and have no hope or ſtay in thy ſelf, or any thing thou doſt.* For thoſe loaded & burthened ones, who are invited to come to Chriſt, *Mat.* 11. can finde no reſt or eaſe in themſelves till they come to him: Inſomuch that none are further off from grace and mercy, than thoſe who juſtifie themſelves, as the Phariſee did. It is true, through the ſenſe of ſin to deſpair of the grace of Chriſt offered, and to neglect that ſalvation, is a crimſon ſin, and immediately oppoſite to the Goſpel; but to deſpair of our ſelves, and to have no hope in what we do, is a neceſſary qualification, and hereby we give glory to God; and therefore if we did deſpair more in our ſelves, our condition would be leſs deſperate: And this is the condemnation of men, that they preſume in the mercy of God, and bleſs themſelves in their hearts, when yet there is but a ſtep between them and hell. 2.

3. *It is better deſpairing here with hopes, than deſpairing hereafter without any the leaſt ground of comfort.* We had better know the worſt here, while it may be prevented, than hereafter, when it will be in vain. Would not every one damned 3.

in hell be a New Creature upon any terms, whatsoever it cost him, if it were possible? But we are foolish, like some foolish, infirm, and wounded person, who will not discover his wounds, nor make known his grief till it be too late: Lay it therefore home upon thy heart, and say, If I am afraid of the sight of sin here, What shall I do with it hereafter? If a spark be thus heavy and scorching, What will the whole flames be? Oh, but men are never wise till it be too late. *Dives* when he is in hell, then his eyes are opened, and he bewaileth his condition. Be assured of this, that God hath unchangeably decreed, thy sins shall be bitter to thee here, or hereafter. The word is gone out of his mouth, and it cannot be recalled: thou shalt either glorifie him by a voluntary confession, or by an extorted and constrained one hereafter: Therefore do not feed thy self with vain hopes, as if thou shouldst never finde sin with a sting: no, at last it will bite like an Adder, and sting like a Scorpion, if it do not in this life.

4. And lastly remember, *That trouble and pain which may be for a while in the pangs of this new creature, will be abundantly recompensed with the after joy and quietness thou wilt have. Rejoyce in the Lord, ye upright in heart, and the godly rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory*, 1 Pet. 1.8. Thou canst not imagine what sweet peace, and comfort of heart it will bring to thee, to think that once indeed thou wast captivated to such and such sins, but now thou hast broken those snares. *Paul* once a bitter adversary to the wayes of God, How much doth he rejoyce in the change made upon him? How often doth this new creature cry out with gladness and thanks-giving, he would not for a world be as once he was? If he might have all the glory on earth, he would not live as he hath lived: And thus we have dispelled that objection, grounded upon a three-fold absurdity.

A Fourth Objection, or Obstruction against this New Creature, *Is the strictness and singular exactness of it.* Not only gross sins to be cast away, but even all lawful affections to be moderated, and dieted: They must not do as the world, nor live as the world, this is to put themselves into a misery, as he said, *Qui Medicè vivit, miserè vivit*, because he must be so temperate, and abstemious in those things to which his appetite carrieth him. Now this cavill is wholly unreasonable: for

1. First *Thy very Christianity, and the profession of it, carrieth thee not to do as men of the world doth.* So that thou must either lay aside thy christianity, or else be exact in thy life, and singular to the manners of the world. The Church of God is compared to a woman clothed with the Sun, *and the moon under her feet*, Revel. 12.1. Doth not the Apostle exhort us, *Not to be fashioned unto the world*, Rom. 12.1. We are not to have their fashion upon us: And why are we called a Church, but because we are called out of the world, and so have not our conversation according to the principles thereof? And the Apostle *James* calls it *Pure religion, and undefiled, to keep our selves unspotted from the World*, James 1.17. If therefore drunkenness, lusts, pride, earthlinesse, immoderate affections to these things below, be things of the world, thou art no more to conform to them, than light to darkness; and howsoever the world accounts those men of the best fashion, who are rich, great, & honoured, yet the Scripture saith, *they are of the best fashion*, who are not fashioned to the manners of the world: by this argument thou shouldest still lie in thy Paganisme, and Heathenisme; For why shouldst thou come out of the world in respect of thy faith, and not also in respect of thy life? Thou wouldst have a better faith than infidels, Why not also a better life? Answer that, if thou canst, God hath not only called us to imbrace his Doctrine, but unto holiness.

2. 2. *Thou complainest this is an exact strict way, full of difficulties*: Is it not true this of every good thing? Is there any good thing either natural or moral to be obtained without much labour? so that the difficulty makes for the excellency of it: *Strive to enter in at the straight Gate*, Luke, 13. 14, *For the way to destruction is a broad way.* You cannot get so much as the bread and food of your bodie without the sweat of your browes: & think you to get the salvation of your souls so easily?

sily? Learning cannot be obtained without great paines and study: *Sudavit & alsit*, saith he: If therefore this new creature be so difficult and rare, so hardly to be obtained, then thou hast the greater reason to presse the more about it. Thou art to fear the way thou walkest in is too broad away: Thou must be a *Jacob* wrestling, before thou canst be an Israel prevailing: You must run in a race, e're you can obtain a Crown: and indeed that Crown of glory is so rich and glorious, that these are but *siliquæ laboris*, as *Austin* called them, the husks of labour in respect of that Manna hereafter.

3. *Thou complainest of labour and paines, if thou dost observe it, every man takes more paines to go to hell.* A servant to sin is a far greater slave and drudge, then a servant to righteousnes. Take the Adulterer, How doth he wait for the twilight? How full of fears and hopes to accomplish his lusts: Take the Ambitious man, How doth he break his sleep, toil his mind, and consumeth himself, to accomplish his design? Take the covetous earthly man; How is his soul pierced through with many cares? And how doth he drown himself in thoughts and fears about his estate? So that thy service in the wayes of Godlinesse would be far more comfortable, quiet, and profitable, then those of sin and Satan. It is a known story of *Pambo*, who seeing a strumpet taking pains about the dressing her selfe to please her Mate, cryed out and said, *He could not take as much pains to please God*; and this will appear true; men take more pains, are more turmoiled in going to hell, than they may be in going to heaven. 3.

The last impediment I shall insist upon is, *The reproach, contempt, and persecution that doth follow this new creature, even as sharp pricks attend the sweet roses.* Now to Answer this. *Object.*

1. Our Saviour saith, *Blessed is he that is not offended at mee*, Mat. 11.6. The very Doctrine of Christ, and the Christian faith is subject to all manner of slanders to the enemies thereof: Yet for all that thou art not ashamed of the Gospel or the Protestant religion: To believe in a Crucified God, What matter of reproach was it? What names were given Christians by way of contempt? And if the faith of Christ be subject to persecution, yet thou dareſt not Apostatize from that, Why then from the power of Godlinesse, though subject to troubles? How often doth the Scripture forwarn us in this respect? *That we are not to think the fiery tryall strange*, 1 Pet. 4.12. *And we are to know that we are appointed to all afflictions and troubles in this world*, 1 Thes. 3.3. This demonstrateth the excellency of a New Creature: For if it were of the world, *the world would love it as his own*, John 15.19. *Answ.*

2. *These troubles and persecutions are not a misery, if rightly apprehended, but are a blessing. Blessed are ye when men speak all manner of evil against you for my names sake*, Mat. 5.10, 11. And thus the Apostles when they were persecuted, went away rejoycing that they were accounted worthy to suffer any thing for Christs sake: they are several wayes a blessing, for first, The more they are afflicted, the more of Gods Grace and support is vouchsafed unto them. The spirit of glory rest on them, 1 Pet. 4.14. If they be upon Mount *Calvary*, they should also be upon the Mount of *Transfiguration*. *Nihil crux sentit in ligno quando animus est in Cœlo*, said *Tertullian*. Again they are a blessing, for they have a blessed operation. This fire is more precious than that which tryeth Gold: this is the file to get off the rust: the winnowing to blow away their chaff. And lastly, they are a blessing in the event, for they work an everlasting weight of glory, so that these troubles should not be discouragements to thee. 2.

Use of Exhortation, *Not to hearken to any of those cavils, or prejudices thy heart may be filled full with, against this New Creature.* Say, It is no longer disputing: shall I become a New creature? Is it wisdom to change my former life? But follow the Scripture, and do as that directs thee. Oh if there were nothing but the peace and joy that accompanieth this life, that were enough to set my heart on edge after it. It will be no grief of heart to thee to think of thy prayers often, thy *Use.*

frequent exercises of grace. To die a new Creature, is the putting of thee into a possession of eternall glory: But who hath believed our report? who begins to feel in himself hungrings and thirstings after this estate? who saith, I will return to God from whom by sinne I have wandred, for so it will be better with me than in all my sins? Alas, It's this new creature only which hath the promise of this life, and of that to come.

SERM. XLV.

Shewing the Counterfeit of the New Creature.

GAL. 6.15.

For in Christ Jesus, neither Circumcision, or Uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a New Creature.

I Shall now finish this Discourse about a new Creature: we have handled the nature of it, and its properties: I shall in the last place *shew you the counterfeits of this new Creature*, or what that is which seemeth to be this new Creature, and yet is not. There is nothing wherein a man doth oftner deceive himself than in this. If the question should be put to every man, Whether he be a new Creature, or not? He would answer affirmatively, And thank God he is: It is therefore good to demonstrate it ocularly and palpably, that there are many things which have the vizar and form of this new Creature, but they want the power of it: and indeed to have the shew, name and title of it, is easie, but to put forth the powerful operations of it, is burdensome and difficult: In the number therefore of these Counterfeits, are.

1. Who seem to be born again, but are not.

First, *All those who have the outward form and shape of godlinesse, but are wholly destitute of the inward efficacy and power of it.* Thus the Apostle *Having a form of godlinesse, but denying the power of it*, 2 Tim. 3 5. The Greek word μόρφωσιν is rendred by a Form, Image, or Similitude; As if you should say, the Picture or Statue of a man, it is not a man: Thus it is here, there are many who have the outward fashion and expression of godlinesse, but they have not the reality of it, which is here in the text called δύναμις, virtue or power, because the true nature of every thing is discerned by its operations: a picture doth not speak, nor walk, nor go, because it's only the form of a man. Now this outward profession might seem to put in fair for this new creature; for look upon him as a Christian, so he is one who hath renounced the Idols of the world, he is one that comes out of the wilderness he once lived in: If you compare him and an Heathen together, doth not one seem to be a new Creature in respect of the other? But this externall new change is not enough.

Why an outward form of godlines without inward efficacy of it, &c. 1.

First, *Because as you have heard, The greatest work of his new Creature is in the heart*, called therefore the hidden man, and the inward man. It is not so much a new Tongue to professe a new worship of God, as a new Minde, a new Will, new Affections: for look where the old man had his greatest Hold, and his strongest

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Fort, there this new man cometh and poſſeſſeth it. now the ſtrength of corruption lyeth in our mindes and hearts; there is the Treaſury and Shop of ſin: It's from the heart (ſaith our Saviour) that evil Thoughts, Adulteries, Murders, and all wickedneſs doth flow, *Mark.* 7.21. Then on the contrary, when a man is made a new Creature, from his heart come good thoughts, holy affections, and a godly converſation. Do not then judge according to outward appearance, thou muſt not only look to what fruit thy life bears, but what root that is from whence it groweth.

2. *This outward form cannot be the new Creature, becauſe the Apoſtle in the Text makes it contradiſtinct, and an oppoſite, or at leaſt a diverſe member to that of a new Creature.* II.
For when he ſaith, Circumciſion availeth nothing, he meaneth the whole external form of the ſervice of God in the old Teſtament, when he ſaith uncircumciſion availeth nothing, he meaneth the whole external form of the worſhip of God in the new Teſtament. Now to both theſe is contradiſtinguiſhed this new Creature: ſo that if a man have all the poſtures and outward forms of the Chriſtian Religion, and godlineſs profeſſed therein, yet he hath not oyl, he hath only lamps, & when the voice of the Bride-grooms coming will be heard, he will fall into miſerable confuſion: Why is it then, that men reſt in forms & external ſhews, as if that were all God required, as if there were no further things requiſite?

3. *This outward form will not ſuffice, it not the new Creature, becauſe men may be reall Heathens, while they are formall & titular Chriſtians.* In works they may deny Chriſt, III.
while in words they do acknowledge him, and reall denying by actions, is worſe than verbal by words. Thus *Iſaiah* calls the Rulers among the Jews, *Iſa.* 1. Princes of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, the worſt of Heathens, becauſe their lives were like ſuch: The Apoſtle inſtanceth in one ſin, & we may ſay ſo of any other groſs ſin, if any man provide not for his own, he hath denyed the faith, & is worſe than an Infidel 1. *Tim.* 5 8. As it holds true of that ſin, ſo we may ſay, if any man be a [illegible] hard, lyar, ſwearer, Sabbath-breaker, he hath denyed his faith, & is worſe than an Infidel. But why *worſe* than an Infidel? Becauſe he ſinneth againſt more light and knowledge, as alſo againſt more holy obligations & bonds which are in the Chriſtian Religion. Know therefore that a titular Chriſtian, but a reall prophane man, a nominal believer, but a reall ungodly perſon, is like old Sepulchers with new guilding and painting over them, like a Statue of earth & dirt, with ſome ghaſtly colouring, & as if a man ſhould go to touch & feel what ſuch a Statue is, it would preſently turn to dirt & duſt in his hand: ſo if thou wouldeſt ſeriouſly lay to heart thy condition, that which thou hopeſt in, & boaſteſt of, thou wouldeſt finde to be empty and vain: reall ungodlineſs and prophaneſs under the form of Chriſtian profeſſion, is groſs & palpable hypocriſie, and it's a wonder, how that contradiction between thy faith and thy practice, thy Religion and thy converſation is hid from thy eyes, it's a wonder, that thy ſins face thee not in the face, when thou are in thy Chriſtian duties, like ſo many devils, asking you what you do there. How ſuits thy praying & ſwearing ſtand together? how doth thy hearing and thy contempt of godlineſs conſiſt together?

4. *This new nature thou boaſteſt of by being a Chriſtian, and a baptized perſon cannot be a new Creature, for then every one who is baptized, and of the Orthodox Religion, ſhould be ſaved;* IIII.
for every new Creature, whether Jew or Gentile, bond, or free, ſhall be ſaved; there is none that is a new Creature here, that ſhall not have new robes of glory hereafter, but the Scripture doth terribly, yet plainly ſet down this poſition, that but few only of thoſe who enjoy the outward priviledges of the Church ſhall be ſaved, *Many are called, and few are ſaved, Mat.* 20. 16. It's a ſentence, though full of terror, yet worthy to be written on your Pew doors, or your Chamber doors, yea rather upon your hearts with a Pen of Iron, to think that few of thoſe who come in our aſſemblies & hear, and ſit within thoſe walls, ſhall yet have a Crown of glory upon their heads, who art thou then that boaſteſt of thy Church priviledges, of thy Proteſtant Profeſſion? Thou art no Atheiſt, nor Papiſt,

but if no new Creature neither, heaven is not a place prepared for thee. The paucity and little number of those that shall be saved even of Christians, & baptized persons, should alwayes make us tremble and quake. O *Lord* are we in the number of those few or not! But eight persons in the whole world were preserved in the Ark; but two persons of those many thousands that came out of Egypt, entred into *Canaan*. If the Scripture were not plain in this point, you might cry out, It was an hard speech, and not to be born. But heaven and earth shall sooner passe away, than one jot or tittle of that sentence: say not then every thing that groweth in Gods garden is a flower, every thing in Christs field is good seed, every called man is an elected man, every baptized man a new Creature, for this is directly repugnant to Gods Word.

2. Every man changed from his wicked wayes, is not this new creature.

A second *Counterfeit pretending to this new Creature, may be every one who formerly being given to some prophane and wretched wayes is now turned a new man*; for what can be thought the new creature, if this be not? But every man changed from his former wicked wayes is not presently a new Creature, though he be a new man. *Ahab* was a new man in his humiliations; he had new affections, new sorrow, new humiliation, yet not a new Creature. This is diligently to be considered, that so men may see upon what grounds and motives they set upon a new course of life. And first, *this new man may not be a new Creature for want of constancy & duration.* This new Creature is incorruptable, being born of the seed of God, and therefore liveth and groweth under discouragements as well as encouragements, under temptations and oppositions, as well as fair and pleasant oportunities; like Camomile it groweth the most by treading upon it. The new creature hath alwayes been in its most spiritual glory when it hath been in greatest outward reproaches. Golden times of peace and plenty made rusty new Creatures, as I may so allude; but times of persecution took off all their rust, and made a lustre upon them: This new creature therefore is unchangable in all changes, at least for the main substance and root of grace; but there is many a man became new and wonderfully changed for a fit, for a pang, It's but a Land-flood not a Fountain, & so is quickly dryed up. The people of Israel in their afflictions were wonderfully changed, but their hearts were not stedfast within them; we have a notable instance in one particular, *Jer.* 34. 15, 16. when the Prophet *Jeremiah* warneth the people of *Israel* to let their servants go free at the time appointed by God, otherwise they should not go free from judgements: Hereupon they entred into a Covenant, to proclaim liberty to their servants; but they did not hold long in this new change: Therefore mark that expression *Ye were turned to day, and had done right; but ye turned again, & polluted my name*; See here how a people may be changed from evill to good, & then not long after change good unto evill again. Thus the swine new washed is all over new for a while, but she returneth to her mire again. Thus *Johns* Hearers did rejoyce *ad horam*, for an hour, for a season; and afterwards they say, *John* had a Devill. Do consider then, whether thy becomming a new man be not upon some fits for a little while, and then thou Apostatizest again. Thy inconstancy is an argument of thy hypocrisie. Thou art but a blazing star that may make a shew for a while, thou art not fixed in the Orbe. Now with what earnestness should this be pressed upon you? How many men become new for a day, for a week, but then presently return to their old lusts again? This argueth thy motion is not naturall but violent, otherwise it would hold out. *It may be defective in the motives of it; Then art become a new Creature upon sinfull grounds*; for so it may fall out. Not love to Christ and spirituall considerations may set thee upon this change, but temporall ends, and love to outward mercies. When the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 16. would declare, *That every man in Christ is a new Creature, and old things are passed away*, he declares both his by instancing in particulars. Henceforth know we no man after the flesh, no not Christ himself. A mighty expression. The sense is, That whereas once they delighted in, and had much comfort by the bodily presence of Christ, he was a grievous stey and comfort to them, insomuch

so much that they were exceedingly troubled to hear of his departure. Now (saith the Apostle) we look not after those corporeal considerations, but know him after a spiritual manner, we expect spiritual strength, spiritual priviledges, & spiritual consolations by him; so then if a new Creature, thy humiliations are after the Spirit, not after the flesh; all thy religious duties, thou knowest them not after the flesh: But there are many men, though changed in their dives, yet it is after the flesh only they are changed, because Gods judgements were upon their estates, their bodies, & the outward man. The Prophet *Hos.* c. 7. doth excellently compare all the Jews Prayers & Fastings, because for their wine and their oyle only, to howlings, that as bruit beasts, when they are deprived of their food, & ready to be starved, make an horrid howlling, & yeling. No better did God esteem of their humiliations, & dejections before him. Let not then any corrupt worm breed in thy duties thou dost newly set upon, for that may quickly devour all thy expected fruit.

3. *This new man may not be a new Creature, because the change is wrought upon him by confused principles of the minde, and suddain affections and resolutions, not by a distinct, clear, & well advised information of judgement.* Those hearers that received the Word with joy, found immediately a change upon them; but they held out for a season only, because it was not a deliberate word on them; Therefore our Saviour exhorts every one that would make a change of his life, & become his Disciple, to sit down first & consider, *Luk.* 14. 28. whether he be able to make such a building as that of grace is, or whether he can set out strength enough against so many thousand enemies that will be in the way. Observe it, he compares this undertaking of Christianity, & his discipleship to two great & chargeable things; which have exhausted men of great Treasures, Building and waging Warre; and therefore our Saviour turned back some that came to be Volunteers in his service, informing them of the hardship that would accompany his ways; so that there is no such hopefull way of continuing in a good new change, as when this is wrought by a sound illumination of the mind, and by strong conviction of the judgement, through potent Arguments. And what can be thought the reason of so many Apostates from the hopefull beginnings of grace, wch. seemed in many, but this only, Their affections were wrought upon, they had great grief, great fear and terror upon their consciences, but little, or very weak workings upon their judgements? Therefore we Ministers of God, think not this any such great matter, to stir up in you, new grief, new sorrow, new fears in you. Alas this water will quickly be dryed up; but this is the great work, to convince your judgement with such new light & reason out of Gods Word, and this will stick like an Arrow in thy heart. Thou wilt roar out and cry, Oh there are such arguments from the Scripture, such strong reasons from Gods Word for me to become a new man, that I am not able to gainsay them. Therefore this new creature is called light in the Lord: fear all those affections of grief, & sorrow & terror that are in thee, being but affections, & not the fruit of an inlightened judgement, will quickly vanish away: And as rotten fruit falls to the ground before it is ripe, so will all these affections decay before they come to any maturity, that flow not from a sanctified understanding, & by that moveth & exciteth the affections, but the divel he first moveth the affections, & by them he perverteth and corrupteth the understanding. Thus he propounded to *Eve* what was good to the eye, & pleasant to the taste, thereby to ensnare the affections, and by that means blinded her judgement, Therefore the Apostle commands *Timothy, to reprove with all Doctrine,* 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. To make men afraid and tremble about sin, when by good and sound Doctrine they are not informed of the foulnesse and guilt of it will never hold.

4. *This new man comes short it may be of a new Creature, because the work of grace is not deep enough* He is an outward new creature, but not an inward new creature. That foolish builder our Saviour speaketh of, who lost all his pains & cost, miscarried in this, because he did not dig deep enough: thy heart is throughly wounded

for

for ſin, and ſlightly cured again: It hath not been a deep wound, or a ſure cure again: ſo then as Planters of trees are careful about the root, and builders wary about the foundation; ſo when thou beginneſt to ſet upon a new courſe of life, remember that thou go low enough into thy ſoul, that it may take root downward as well as fruit upward. The heart is full of hardneſs & ſtonineſs, and ſo thou canſt not get into the bottome of it preſently; the love of God, the fear of God rooted in the heart would make thee hold out a new man alwayes.

4. Helps and directions how to become new Creatures.

I might now ſpeak of other Counterfeits of this new Creature, *As a man affecting new and ſtrange opinions, he is very prone to judge the better of himſelf, becauſe of this*; ſo a man undertaking ſome new and ſtrict way different from the Word of God, as the way of Phariſaiſm: but I have handled theſe already, when I ſpake of falſe Signs. I ſhall therefore conclude this Text and Subject with the ſuggeſtion of ſome helps and remedies to become new Creatures; for I doubt not but that many of you, at leaſt in ſome ſad thoughts or other, have reſolutions to become new creatures. The conſcience ſurely is not ſo ſtupified, but it many times tells thee, O this old life thou liveſt muſt be altered, it's time to turn over a new leaf, to learn a new leſſon; God forbid I ſhould dye with theſe ſins upon me! How many times doſt thou reſolve and purpoſe, I will never be prophane more, My life ſhall be new, I will ſet upon a new courſe in my family; but theſe buds are quickly ſnipt off by ſome cold froſt or other. What directions then may be given to keep this purpoſe in our hearts, and to put theſe reſolutions into practice? for we reſolve, and reſolve to be new, but we live and dye in old wayes. To help us herein, take theſe directions following.

1. Firſt, *Let thy reſolutions come from ſolid reaſons, not ſuddain affections.* This I hinted before; What purpoſe is taken up by ſtrong demonſtrations from Scripture, they will hold alwayes the ſame, becauſe the Scripture is the ſame. The Scripture doth repreſent ſinne in a terrible aggravation as well one day as another; that declareth the goodneſſe of God in the ſame attractive manner as well one week as another: whereas meer ſuddain affections they ebbe and flow. If therefore thy reſolutions do not hold as firmly againſt ſinne in time of health as well as ſickneſs, if they be not as cordiall in thy life time as at the time of death, quicken thy ſelf up with Scripture-arguments, and ſay, The Word of God ſaith the ſame things ſtill, and why ſhould not my heart be the ſame ſtill?

2. Secondly, *Let thy reſolutions to become a new man, be made not in thy own ſtrength, but in the ſtrength of Chriſt:* Thou doſt reſolve in thy own power to caſt out the devills that poſſeſs thee, thou purpoſeſt in thy own ſtrength to deſtroy theſe *Goliah's*, But ſaith *Paul, I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me*, Phil. 4. 13. And ſaith Chriſt, *Without me ye can do nothing*, John 15. He doth not ſay, No great thing, but nothing; and he doth not ſay, Ye cannot perfect, or conſummate any thing without me, but ye can do nothing without me, as *Auſtin* well conſidereth the Text; and then it's χωρὶς ἐμοῦ, without me, or ſeparated from mee; As the Branch cut from the Vine cannot bear any fruit: Now the more ſenſible and apprehenſive thou art of thy own infirmities, and impotency, the more ready Chriſt is to help: ſay, O Lord, though this be too great a work for me, I cannot throw theſe mountains into the Sea, yet it is not too great for thee.

3. Thirdly, *Let theſe reſolutions be accompanied with earneſt and fervent prayers to God.* Thou purpoſeſt and reſolveſt, but where are thy lively and powerfull ſupplications unto God? There is no ſuch Engine to batter down all the ſtrong holds of ſinne, as prayer; ſee our ſaviours incouragement herein, *Aſk and ye ſhall receive, knock and it ſhall be opened*, Mat. 7. 7. Prayer is the key of Heaven, as the Ancients called it; thy reſolutions therefore and deſires are like thoſe of the ſluggard, who deſireth, & deſireth, but putteth not his hands to work, & ſo his deſires are ſaid to kill him; Thus thou reſolveſt, and reſolveſt, but doſt not ſet home, or back theſe reſolutions by earneſt and ſtrong prayers; therefore thy reſolutions deſtroy thee. A man ſtrong in reſolutions, and weak in ſupplications will preſently

ſently be foiled upon every temptation, you muſt not therefore only reſolve, but you muſt watch, pray, and even yet thy reſolutions take no place, extraordinarily faſt and ſeek to God; for ſins that have been long upon thee, are like thoſe Devils which poſſeſſed a man from his youth, and ſuch could not be caſt out, but by prayer and faſting.

Fourthly, *If thou wouldſt turn theſe godly reſolutions into godly actions, ſeparate thy ſelf immediately from all temptations and occaſions to ſin,* from all evill companions, who are apt to hinder thee in ſuch good purpoſes; for it is a vain thing to think thy ſelf ſtrong enough to abſtain from ſin, when thou canſt not withdraw from the occaſion of it The Jews that were to abſtain from leaven in the dayes of the Paſſeover, that they might be ſure not to eat it, would not ſo much as have it in their houſes: Yea, ſo ſuperſtitious were they, that they would not ſo much as mention the word *Lechem*, Bread, leaſt leaven ſhould come into a mans minde. The *Nazarite* that was not to drink wine, would neither eat grapes. Therefore bid farewel to all thy old companions, all thy old temptatations, and ſay as that new Creature once did, who formerly living in Fornications, and the Whore coming to ſolicite him as ſhe uſed to do, he cried out, *Ego non ſum ego*, I am not I: I am another man than I was. 4.

Laſtly, *Purſue thy reſolutions into actions*, becauſe of thy mortality and uncertainty of life. *To day if you will hear, harden not your hearts*; Now therefore, or it may be never: Do not as ſome Heathens, which Offer their Bee-wax unto their gods, and keep the Hony to themſelves. Do not thou reſerve thy old decrepit age for this new creature, and ſpend the prime and flower of thy time in the ſervice of ſin: *Poſt Geneſin ſequitur Exodus*, as ſoon as we have a beginning, we are making to an end; Why then art thou ſtill reſolving, and reſolving, when thou haſt no ſecurity for thy life? This night, this day, thy ſoul ſhall be taken away from thee. Oh thou mortal man, and lump of clay, thou that art but ſo much duſt before the wind, how dareſt thou put off becoming a new man? 5.

Uſe, Of Exhortation, *Let not this ſubject be preached in vain unto you.* The neceſſity and excellency of it, might be our conſtant Theme: We might ſit down as ſoon as ever we had read the Text, and ſay, this is the ſumme of all. Do not deceive your ſelves; as if thy old wayes thou haſt lived in will lead thee to happineſs. If theſe were our inventions, if they were our words and perſwaſions only, you might eaſily reject them, but being the aſſertions and plain commands of the Word, how can you but hear and tremble! And above all motives let this prevail, *viz.* The wonderful comfort, joy, and peace of conſcience you will have in thinking, that I am not as I have been; ſuch and ſuch ſins have been committed: But Oh (bleſſed be God) I have forſaken them: You would not be what you were once for all *Solomons* wealth. Alas! What torments and helliſh pangs did you, while old ſervants to ſin, feel? What gripes and ſtings, that thou livedſt ſo, and waſt not changed into a new man! *Uſe.*

SECT. VI.

Handling Grace as Gods workmanſhip, and Good Workes as the end thereof.

SERM. XLVI.

The New Creature is Gods Workmanſhip, alſo its neceſsity and dignity.

EPHES. 2. 10.

For we are his Workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God had before ordained, that we ſhould walk in them.

I Have choſen this Text as an additional to the further explication of this New Creature you have heard ſo much of: That as continuall drooping doth at laſt make an impreſſion into a very ſtone, ſo a conſtant information, and application of this Doctrine, may in the cloſe make a powerfull change on you. To underſtand the Text, we muſt take notice of the coherence, as the very firſt word *For*, doth advertiſe us. In the beginning of this chapter the Apoſtle after a moſt divine, and admirable manner, deſcribeth the whole nature of our juſtification, regeneration, and ſalvation.

1. From the Efficient cauſe, *God rich in mercy*; with the impulſive cauſe, *For his great love wherewith he loved us.*

2. From the Meritorious, or as the Logicians call it, the *Procatarctical* cauſe, *moving God from without, through Chriſt Jeſus.*

3. From the Final cauſe, *To ſhew forth the exceeding riches of his Glory.* From this deſcription ſo magnificent and full of ſpiritual glory, ariſeth verſe 8. a ſure and ſolid propoſition, *By grace ye are ſaved*: From the firſt to the laſt, *All is of Grace*: And grace that is without us, *viz.* The good love of God, not any dwelling in us. We are ſaved: Salvation is here either put for juſtification, becauſe by that we are intituled to heaven, or elſe we are ſaid to be already ſaved, becauſe we have the ſeal and pledge of it here; and it is begun in us, and alſo we have a ſure right

to it: And *qui jus habet ad rem, rem ipsam videtur habere:* Some understand salvation, as much as a purgation, or deliverance from sin; for as sin is called death, so freedome from it, may be called life and salvation: It comes all to one. In the next place we have the instrumental cause of our salvation, and that is Faith: And lest we should be thought to have this faith of our selves, as if God indeed gave his mercy and grace to those that believe, but we did believe by our own power; God giveth the Oyl, and we bring the vessel to receive it; he presently addeth, *and that not of our selves, it is the gift of God:* And as if the spirit of God would herein expresly provide against all those subtile opinions that craftily undermine Grace, he further addeth by way of opposition, *Not of works*, giving also a reason of the whole, *lest any man should* boast: Whereupon my Text is brought in as a reason to prove all is of Grace, *For we are his workmanship.* The strength of this argument lieth upon that rule in Logick, *Nothing can be a cause and effect too, in the same consideration.* But our works and holiness, they are the effects of his grace: *We are his workmanship*, therefore they cannot be a cause; and yet lest by magnifying of Grace, and setting up of faith, excluding all that we do, he might seem to justle out good works, and an holy life, he saith, *We are created in Christ to doe them*, onely they are effects flowing from grace, not causes producing grace. I shall at this time only insist upon the Apostles reason set down generally in the Text. *We are his Workmanship*, ποίημα, his figment, translate some, his creature, others; our translators well, *His Workmanship.* He doth not speak of our natural making, the forming our bodies in the womb, and infusing a soul, but of our spiritual renovation. Neither doth it signifie any kind of workmanship; but a curious and exact one: In which sense, Verses are called Poems, as consisting of exact measure, and quantity. It may be an allusion to those expressions the Old Testament useth about the people of *Israel*, *which God formed a people to himself*, Deut. 32. 6. Isa. 43. 21. especially that place, Isa. 43. 7. is remarkable, *I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him*: Where *Mercer* observeth a gradation; God by degrees did make *Israel* a glorious people, as he made the world by degrees, he created them, he formed them, that was a further work upon them; yea, he made them, that was the fulness and complement of all

Doct. Doct. *That all those who are renewed in a spiritual manner by God, are his workmanship.*

For the opening of this, consider these things as Introductory.

1. We become Gods Workmanship, or people upon several grounds and titles.

First, *That we become Gods Workmanship or his people* (for it is all one) *upon several grounds and titles*: As,

I. By conquest.

1. *By conquest and victory.* Satan is called *The Prince of the world*, John 12. 31. And he rules in the hearts of the disobedient, *Ephes.* 2 He kept the whole world as his own Castle; but when Christ a stronger than he comes, *the Prince of this world is judged and cast out of his possession*, John 16. 11, And now Christ having thus conquered, we become wholly his: Even as the people of *Israel* are said to be the people that God had made for himself, because he destroyed all their enemies for them, and delivered them from the hands of *Pharaoh*: So it is here, The people of God are his workmanship, because delivered by the mighty power of God from all their spiritual adversaries, that we being delivered from our enemies, might serve him without fear all the dayes of our life, *Luke* 1. 74. Therefore never think thou art Gods Workmanship, till thou see thy self set at liberty and freedome from those snares of Satan thou wert held captive in. If God hath not subdued those lusts that war against thy soul, thou art as yet sins and Satans, not the Lords. Observe that expression of *Peter*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. *Abstain from lusts which war against the soul*: Thy ungodliness is a war-like adversary against thee: Thou feareſt the enemy that may take away thy life, thy goods; but thou feareſt not thy sins that are in battle array to deprive thee of God. Oh therefore say unto thy soul, Oh my soul, Why loveſt thou to be in this dark Dungeon? Why are these

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cords and chains of sin so pleasing to thee? Oh pray to God that he would save thee and deliver thee from those sins, thy deadly enemies.

II. By covenant.

2. *We are Gods people, and so his workmanship in respect of his gracious Covenant and promise, for that is the tenor of the Covenant of Grace so often mentioned, I will be their God, and they shall be my people* Jer. 31. 33. 2 Cor. 6:16. So that to be Gods workmanship in this sense, is the greatest honour and priviledge we are capable of. *Happy is the people whose God is the Lord*, Psal. 144. 15. *Yea, happy is the people*: The Psalmist speaks it comparatively to all those outward blessings, that are there reckoned up: And indeed to have God our God, is the treasure of all happiness and comfort; For then his omnipotency, his wisedome, his goodness, all his attributes are for thy use and advantage. It is to have the Fountain, the summe, the Treasurie of all good: It is the Divines rule, That we must not go to an absolute God, but relative one, considered in the relation of a gracious Covenant: For hereby God hath bound himself; and though we cannot plead our worth, yet we may his fidelity and truth: Though we cannot urge our works, yet we may his words: So that if we look into the Original of this workmanship, we shall finde it to be the only Grace of God: Gods word is gone out of his mouth; and so being once passed under his rod, as the Scripture expresseth it, *Ezek.* 20.37. we may boldly urge at the throne of Grace, *Oh Lord, it was once free to thee whether thou wouldst own us or no, do good to us or not, but since thou hast entered into promise with us, thou canst not deny thy self*. So that to be Gods workmanship, Gods people, is to be had as it were into the mount of Transfiguration, and God shews thee all the glory of heaven, and saith, *All this will I give thee.*

III. By purchase.

3. *We are his workmanship or people by purchase, and that at a dear rate, even by the blood of Christ.* Thus Christ is said, *To purchase to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, Tit. 2,14. And herein that holds true which was told you not long since, That it cost Christ more to make us his people, than to create the world; for there it was but his word, saying, *Let there be light, and there was light*: But here it is his death and sufferings to redeem us from our former evil wayes. This should make us even startle, and be astonished at the noisome, and foul guilt of sin, which plungeth us into an irrecoverable losse, unless by Christ's blood we are set at liberty: Every sin is the price of Christs blood. Now herein people do much decrive themselves; they look for salvation by Christs blood, but not for a freedom from the power of sin, whereas the blood of Christ doth not only cleanse away guilt, but it also makes white and fruitfull to every good word and work.

IV. By renovation.

Lastly, *Which is most proper to this Text, we are his people and workmanship by a gracious renovation, and making all things new in us*. God once made us after his image, but we soon defaced that superscription: That therefore we may be his again, he makes us the second time after his image again; and in this sense we are here called his workmanship: God takes away our rubbish, and all our filth, and *makes us a fit temple for the Holy Ghost to dwell in.* In this sense the Psalmist speaking of the Church, saith, *It is he that hath made us, and not we our selves*, Psal. 100.3 As the wilderness doth not make it self a paradise, nor the weed a flower; no more can a people wallowing in their sin, and tumbling in their filth, make themselves an holy Temple unto the Lord. This is the Lords doing, and it must be marvelous in the eyes of all those that behold it: As God is said to create new heavens, and a new earth, so he sometimes makes new inhabitants to dwell therein.

2. A woful thing to be Gods workmanship by natural creation, and not by gracious renovation.

Secondly, *That it is a wofull thing to be the workmanship of God by Naturall creation, and not his workmanship by gracious Renovation.* It had been better for thee never to have been born, never to have been Gods creature in the first making, if thou art not his creature in the second making. Thus our Saviour said of *Judas, It had been better for him he had never been born*, Mark 14.21. Some Scholastical heads

heads have thought the very naturall being of a man, to be so great a good as that in reason a man would chuse rather to be damned, than not to be at all: And therefore they expound that speech of our Saviours concerning *Judas*, to be true only in regard of the sensitive part of a man, but not his rational. But this cannot hold: for

I. VVhy it were better never to be, then not to be new made.

1. *Damnation is the inflicting of an infinite evil upon a man, so far as he is capable of it, and he depriving him of an infinite good.* Now to be, or to have a life is but finite limited good: If therefore thou art not Gods gracious workmanship, it had been better if thou hadst been a Toad, a Serpent, yea nothing at all, than to be a man And if men in the extremity of their bodily pain, have cursed the day that ever they were born, as we read *Job* and *Jeremiah*, though it was their great sinful impatience to do so: How much rather must they cry out so in hell, where there is not one drop of bony in all the gall they have? Not the least drop of water can be had to cool so much as the top of their tongue. Why then do not your ears tingle while they hear this? Art thou not a new Creature? Hath not God made thee all over anew? Oh miserable man! Alas that ever thou wert born! How often wilt thou wish in the horror of thy conscience, thou hadst never been a man? Why dost thou rejoyce in thy wealth, in thy greatness, in thy comforts, and hast no true godliness to rejoyce in? If thou hadst all *Solomons* wealth, and *Methusalems* daies to enjoy it, yet if not Gods workmanship, wo be to thee that ever thou wert born!

II. 2. *Thou hadst better never have been Gods natural creature, if not this gracious creature; because this natural life is fraughted with many miseries and troubles, so that the grief is more than the joy: now to be miserable here, and miserable for ever hereafter, is misery in its height. Man that is born of a woman is of few dayes, and full of trouble,* Job 14. 1. But man that is born of God, is incorruptible, and everlasting, and full of peace and joy in the holy Ghost. Alas, all thy comforts in this life, which are but few, they hang but upon the thred of thy uncertain life: so that as the heathen said, when one was commending the riches, and wealth of merchants, *Non amo felicitatem è funibus pendentem*, I do not love that wealth which hangs upon ropes, if they break, the ship miscarrieth. We may say of all comforts. We love not that profit, that pleasure which hangs upon thred: Why then dost thou not betake thy selfe to some solitary & serious contemplation? saying, What is my life worth? wherein am I more happy than beasts? than that Toad that creeps there, if I be not made a new Creature?

III. 3 *Therefore better never be born, than not be this workmanship of God, because hereby a man is frustrated of his end, & that true happiness which ought to be the study & endeavours of all.* Man as he was created with more remarkable excellency than other Creatures, therefore you have the Scripture bringing in God, as it were, consulting with others, *Let us make man after our own image*; so was he ordained to a more sublime and glorious end, which was to enjoy God, and have eternal communion with him; and the means to partake of this beatitude, was the image of God, a pure and holy nature. Now when we lost or fell from this means and help, we also apostatized from that glorious end: And by this means in stead of everlasting happiness, meet with everlasting horror and damnation: So that if the blessedness of every thing lye in its power and suitable operations after the most perfect manner, to its proper end, then are we become most miserable, who are turned both out of the way to, and end of all happiness. Oh that men should not more consider the end why they are made, the end why God gives them to live and move and have a being, is it to eat and drink and satisfie thy lusts, and at last go down into hell in a moment? Oh be not as bruit beasts, that perish without understanding.

3. In the third place observe this, *That as here in the Text we are called in the general Gods workmanship, so in other places we have the particular kinde of workmanship expressed*; For Gods word doth use several similitudes to expresse our relation

tion to God, that ſo what one is not emphatical to declare, the other may do it. Thus we have handled the relation of Sons, which is more than his Workmanſhip; for an houſe is the Artificers workmanſhip, but it is not his Childe, and therefore he hath not ſuch endeared affections to it. In other places they are called, *The wife of Chriſt*, to ſhew their intimate conjunction, *That they are bone of his bone, and fleſh of his fleſh*; but in other places the workmanſhip of God, under the inſtance of an houſe. As a man dwells in his houſe, ſo God doth not only make us his people, but he dwells in us afterwards: Now how rich and glorious muſt that ſoul be, who hath Chriſt lodging and reſting in it? He that ſits in his glory at the right hand of God, doth alſo abide and dwell in thy heart. In other places, this workmanſhip is not only called an Houſe, but a Temple, 1 *Cor.* 3. and that denoteth more than an Houſe, *viz.* a peculiar deſtination and conſecration of it to God. Thus every godly man converted is made a temple of the holy Ghoſt. Its peculiarly dedicated to God; ſo that luſts and Satan have nothing to do there. Thus you ſee what kind of workmanſhip we are, Gods Houſe, Gods Temple. Oh the marvellous dignity and purity that ought to be in every New Creature! How comes Owls and Satyrs, luſts of darkneſs to be in the Temple of the Lord! ſometimes we are his Workmanſhip of a Vineyard, or a pleaſant Garden, as the book of *Canticles* ſignifieth, planted as *Eden* was by God himſelf? Now how come briars and brambles up in Gods Garden? So that the conſideration of our being Gods Workmanſhip, ſhould make us take heed there be nothing of ſins, or the Devils workmanſhip in us.

In the fourth place conſider, *Wherin Gods Workmanſhip as we are New Creatures, ſurpaſſeth that as we are creatures*; And herein we muſt remove one falſe difference that is aſſigned in Popery, which is this, *God indeed* (ſay they) *made us without our ſelves, there was not our Will or Conſent required to it; but he doth not new make us, or cauſe us to be New Creatures without our will*; and they bring that old ſaying of *Auguſtines, Qui fecit te ſine te, non juſtificabit te ſine te.* He that made thee without thy own power, he will not alſo convert thee without thy own power. But the Scripture makes us wholly paſſive in that firſt work of grace. Although it be alſo true, That in being made New Creatures, we are not without underſtanding and a will at that time, but there is no natural imbred power in us to turn our ſelves unto God, as the very phraſe Workmanſhip and Created do import; and truly this is the end of the Apoſtle in this part of the Chapter, to exclude every work of ours; for if it be never ſo little, we may boaſt at leaſt ſo far, but there is a vaſt difference in the original and cauſe of the one and the other. 4. Wherein Gods workmanſhip as we are New Creatures, ſurpaſſeth that as we are creatures.

First, *God made the world, and with other creatures, man as the epitome of all, out of his general love and goodneſs.* He did not create from natural neceſſity, as Bees make their Hives and Hony, or as the Sun communicateth his light, but voluntarily and out of his meer love, *Ex indulgentiâ*, not *indigentiâ. Bernard.* So that it was Gods goodneſs to thee to make thee a man, and not a Toad, or a Serpent: *But the original of making us New Creatures is a ſpecial and more peculiar love.* As *Jacob* loved *Joſeph*, with a ſpecial love, and as a ſign thereof, gave him a party-coloured Coat: So God with a ſpecial favour is carried out to ſuch whom he converts, and beſtoweth on them the choice ornaments of Grace. Hence it is never called Gods Grace, that he made the world; we do not attribute it to Gods Grace properly that we live and have a being, but to his Love and Goodneſs. But the Scripture doth peculiarly appropriate it to the grace of God, that he calls us, juſtifieth, ſanctifieth, and glorifieth us. I.

A ſecond Difference is, *In regard of the acts and works of God in his adminiſtration and diſpenſation towards them*; For God dealeth with a man as a Creature in the way of a general Providence and ſo man as a Creature meerly is looked unto, as the Beaſts of the field, and the Fowls of the air, only in a more noble Degree, becauſe he is a more noble Creature: but now Gods dealing to his new Creatures, is in a way of Predeſtination, and a Covenant of Grace; ſo that even the very outward II.

outward mercies that the new creature hath, come from a sweeter and more comfortable spring, than they do to a meer man; for thy very food, health, raiment, and all thy dayly outward mercies, they are the fruit of Election, not of general Providence, and so they come from the same Love, which predestinated thee to glory, and doth justifie thy person; Oh what a ravishing consideration is this to every new creature! How may he triumph with *Paul, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?* That which is but Providence to others, is Predestination to thee.

III. A third Difference is, *In regard of the comforts, and supports God gives to the new creature, above those to the old creature.* God giveth to man as a man, many outward humane comforts, otherwise even to live would be an Hell; Insomuch that all life is for some delight and comfort. Thus God hath put into all mens hearts some delight and comfort, as a cordial against those many miseries they are to grapple with in this world. Hence some men take comfort in one thing, some in another, according to their several inclinations; and when these humane comforts are taken away, then their hearts break, and they have no more content in their lives. Thus God hath also provided admirable and wonderful comforts and supports for this new creature, *They rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory*, and that in the midst of all outward miseries, when all humane comforts fail, *Rom.* 5. 1. This is like some Herb that will be green and fresh in the midst of Winter, when all other are dead or withered: Oh then the folly of those who cannot part with their pleasures of sin, they think they shall part with all their joy then, and never have a comfortable day more. Alas, thou never hast true solid joy, till thou leave those sinfull pleasures, as the *Israelites* had not Manna, till the *Ægyptian* Garlick was gone. Other differences might be mentioned, but because this is a fruitfull point in the use of it, I come to the practical improvement of it.

Use 1. And first, Are those who are converted Gods workmanship, the choise and excellent work of his hands? then let us *Examine our selves, whose works are those we do?* Are thy Lies, thy Oaths, thy Lusts Gods workmanship? Are these the good works God hath ordained thee to walk in? Oh, if thou pretendest to be Gods Workmanship, why are there so many works of sin and Satan in thy life? It is strange that men do not commune with their own hearts, and consider their lives no more. Where is their Faith? And why is their Conscience so asleep? for do they not easily see themselves the Devils Workmanship, and are they not of him as their Father? Oh do not think that any greatness or stoutness of stomack will bear thee out against God! When God at the day of Judgment shall summon thee to his Tribunal, and ask, Whose workmanship art thou? Whose works hast thou done? Wilt thou not be presently confounded before God and the whole world, not knowing what to say or do?

Use. 2. Are the people of God his Workmanship? then here is ground for many comfortable considerations. As,

I. First, Thou groanest under the defect of grace, thou mournest for thy imperfect Faith, imperfect Love, imperfect heavenly mindedness. Oh consider thou art Gods workmanship, and he will make all perfect at last, never fear that sin, Satan or the world can destroy the work of God; Christ came to destroy the works of the flesh, and the Devil; The Devil cannot destroy the works of Christ, Christ did cast out Devils from men, but the Devils cannot cast Christ out of the heart; Oh then be not cast down and inordinately dejected with thy rude, confused and disorderly heart, for God will at last put all into excellent order. Never think that God is like that foolish Builder, who began to build, and could not make an end; No, God will make every grace in thee perfect, ere he hath done with thee.

II. Secondly, It is ground of great Comfort in all thy sad temptations and miseries, whatsoever thy burden be. Thou art Gods Workmanship, and so he cannot but pity thee. The Psalmist, *Psal.* 103. speaks of us as creatures. He knoweth what

what we are made of, he considers that we are not as brass, or iron, but brittle clay, and *he heareth the young Ravens when they cry to him*; Now if God shew such pity to all things, because his natural creatures; what compassion will he shew to his gracious creatures? Oh therefore pray fervently unto God, Lord, are we not thy Workmanship? Thou that heareſt the cry of Ravens, wilt thou not hear the cry and groans made by thy holy Spirit in us? Even the Sea-monsters draw out their breſts to their young ones, and Lord, wilt not thou behold us thy children, and relieve us in our wants? Many other comfortable Meditations might be sucked out of this Point sweeter than the hony or the hony-comb.

The last Use of Instruction, to such who are the Workmanship of God, Oh do nothing to blur and soil this curious work of God in thee. If God hath made thee excellent and holy, wilt thou with these new cloaths upon thee go and roll in the dirt, when sin or the world tempts thee? Remember that thou art Gods workmanship, Shall the heavens become like anoi some dunghill? Shall the works of flesh and Satan be found in the workmanship of God? You that are new creatures, as you have exceeding great Priviledges, so also great Obligations to holiness; that wickedness and ungodliness is not to be found in you, which is seen in the world. *Use.* 3.

SERM. XLVII.

That God gives Graces to the most indisposed.

EPHES. 2. 10.

For we are his Workmanship created, &c.

THe first Proposition in this Text, (viz. *We are his Workmanship*) hath been already handled; I now proceed to the further illustration of it in this present Verse; and there is observable;

First, The manner of this Workmanship, *Created.*

Secondly, The meritorious cause; *Through Jesus Christ.*

Thirdly, The final cause; *To good works.*

My business at this time will be to describe the manner of this Workmanship, *Created*: And here I shall not touch upon what hath already been observed about this notion, but consider it in another, distinct notion, which is this;

That God at the Creation made the earth, which was without form and void, and so wholly

wholly indispos'd, to bring forth fruit by that word of command and blessing upon it, when he said, Let the earth bring forth grasse and fruit. Even thus of disorderly, wicked and most indisposed men to any godly actions, he doth by his grace make us prepared and fitted to every good work. Now that it might wholly appear to be of Gods blessing and power meerly, that the earth did bring forth fruit and grass, observe Gods Providence herein; For he gives this command to the earth, before he had made a Sun, and before there was any rain, so that all must acknowledge this fruitfull and germinative power in the earth to be meerly of God. There was no more at first in the earth to bear fruit, than in any stones or dry wood. Even such an admirable work of God is this spiritual change which he makes upon men. For those who formerly were enemies, and adversaries unto all godliness, they become lovers and delighters in it. Oh how necessary and comfortable is it to preach of this mighty work of God? for hereby we hope, that God may create some such auditors, and make to himself a holy and godly people out of those who before were prophane and ungodly.

Observ. That God in this worke makes those that are unfit and averse to holiness, to imbrace and delight in it.

Such is the great and mighty work of God, that he makes those, who were altogether unfit and averse from what is godly and holy, to imbrace and delight in it. Thus God is said to be able to raise up Children to Abraham out of stones.

Every time thou seest an ignorant prophane man made a believer and holy, then is a very stone made *Abrahams* childe; every time you behold a wicked and wretched sinner, praying, humbling himself, and reforming his life, you may then wonder and say; Behold how God makes grapes to grow of Thorns, and Figs on Thistles; when God makes *Matthew* a Publican to leave his gainfull sinner, and to follow him; when he causeth *Mary Magdalen* to bewaile and forsake her former lusts, God doth as he did at first Creation, out of a confused and unformed heap, make a glorious world. Therefore the Apostle useth that expression, God who worketh light out of darkness, 2 *Cor.* 4 6. implying that God did not once only at the Creation, work light out of darkness, but still he doth it daily. Even as often as he makes the Word of God to enter into mens hearts. So that we may say even of the worst and prophanest of people, as the Prophet did to God, when God asked him, *Can these dry bones live?* Ezek. 37. 3. So, Can such a people, so stupid, so careless, so rebellious, be prepared to every good work? O Lord thou knowest! that is, O Lord, its in thy power, thou canst do whatsoever thou pleasest! A Camel with his big bunch on his back hath no disposition or fitness to enter a needles eye, yet God can make it do so. Though we deny there is any transubstantiation, God cannot (and *potentissime non potest*) or rather one substance cannot be changed into another, and they retain their proper dimensions and qualities; Yet in every conversion of a sinner, there is a soul-transmutation in respect of the qualities thereof, darkness is made light, gall is made honey. This glorious conquest over mens hearts is prophesied of as the great glory of Christs Kingdom, *Isa.* 11. 6: *The wolf and the Lamb shall lie down together*, &c. That cursed enmity shall be removed, when God shall take away the poisonous nature of evil men. Thus *Isai.* 29. 18. *The deaf shall hear, and the blinde shall see*, and *vers.* 24. *They that erred in spirit and murmured shall learn Doctrine*, who more unlikely to hear than refractory and rebellious men? yet these shall understand.

The Point explained in these particulars. 1.

To explain this Doctrine, let us view the truth of it in particulars. As

First, *God in this spiritual change makes a people unfit, unpolished, and every way indisposed, unfitable, and inclining to what is holy.* Every man naturally lies like a rude stone in the quarry, it must be polished and come under much sawing and cutting ere it can be put into the building. Hence an unbelieving heart sometimes is called by a word that signifieth a *polished heart*, the roughness & ruggedness of it is taken away. Thus the work of renovation is expressed by taking away an heart of stone, & giving an heart of flesh. Take a stone and you can make no impression upon it, whereas flesh is pliable and tender. Now this ruggedness

and

and unpreparedness of people to become godly, how universal is it? Though many *John Baptists*, are *A voyce crying, prepare a way for the Lord*, yet the *Mountains are not made low, or the Valleys exalted to make an even and plain way*, till God prepare all. That *Orpheus* so much celebrated by the Heathens for his musical Harp, thereby taming the wild and savage Creatures, as also making Trees and Bushes to run after him as ravished with his Musick, is nothing but a wise Magistrate, by wholsome and good Laws making a barbarous people, civil and righteous. But how much rather may the Word of God be called that Harp which changeth Beasts into Angels, and makes rude and foolish people holy? And certainly all people generally are such a barren wilderness, that if we do look to mans power meerly, we should despair of ever seeing them made pleasant Gardens. And as all new plantations finding a people uncivilized, and the ground unmanured, need a world of pains and diligence to bring them into good order; so the several Dispensations of Gods Word, in divers places which are like spiritual Plantations, need much labour, preaching, instruction and exhortations, ere they are fitted for heavenly operations. Let us therefore make you look up unto Heaven, imploring that omnipotent power of God: Oh say, Lord, bid these dry bones live! These crooked Trees to become straight: Say, Lord, I have no fitness in me to pray, to hear, to do what is godly: O do thou prepare and fit the heart!

Secondly, *Of a people wholly impotent and unable, God in this spiritual Renovation, he makes able and strong in some measure to do things pleasing to him.* That womb of the soul which was so barren that no humane power could open it, God makes fruitful. Our impotency is supposed in that we are dead in sin, and not *able of our selves to think any good thought*: What can be less than this, we are not able of our selves to entertain the least good thought how we may be saved, how we may leave and forsake our sins. Neither doth this discovery of our impotency excuse us, and make us to be the less sinful, or to be the less pitied; for it is with us, as with a man, who had a great stock given him, and he hath prodigally spent all. This voluntary inability of his doth not excuse him from paying his debts, but makes him more faulty, who might have done well and would not. That God gave us a rich and plentiful portion, and we quickly spent all; and now the Law of God calls upon us for good actions, as so many debts we owe, and we are not able to discharge any. But when this renewing grace of God is vouchsafed to us, then the *lame can walk, the blind can see, the dead* Lazarus *can come out of the grave, and have the grave cloaths untied*, in which he was bound; So that we Ministers in preaching, and you people in hearing are to call upon God fervently and earnestly, that he would take away all our inability and insufficiency. Oh pray that he would give thee good thoughts, good affections, and so good operations! Say, Oh that God who made so many *Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians*, of weeds to become flowers, that he would vouchsafe the like gracious power to us! Say, Oh Lord, thy arm is not shortened, our hearts is no more too strong for thee, than theirs were. 2.

Thirdly, *In this spiritual change, God of a froward, contrary and irreconcilable people makes a loving and willing people to what is good.* Take all men till fashioned by grace, they are enemies to God and godliness. The wisedome of the flesh is not subject to God, neither can it be. As the Wolf cannot love the Lamb, nor the Hawk the Dove, so neither can wicked men love those things that are holy. What a woefull experience have all the wicked men in the world in their several ages given of their cursed venome, and cankered malice against godliness, in all the oppositions they have raised against the faithfull Messengers of God, reproving them for sin, and informing them of duty! Oh but when God makes these waters to go back, when he toucheth these Mountains and they melt like wax, then what imbracing and loving is there of that which once 3.

they could not endure. Thus Psal. 110. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* Oh then that we could see God making such a wonderful change upon us. The time hath been, thou wast an enemy to all godly wayes, a professed opposer and scorner of them. No Toad so odious in thy eyes as one who lived strictly, and laboured to fear God in all his wayes; but now God hath made such a change, that they are onely thy delight upon the earth. Thy righteous soul is now like *Lots*, grieved and tormented to see and hear the evill doings of wicked men: if thus, thou art then one created to good works.

4. Fourthly, *Where this powerfull Renovation is, There God of a people that were weary of his service, and repining at it, as a burden, do now delight and rejoyce in it, at the greatest happinesse they are capable of.* Thus *Isa.* 4. *The Nations shall flow to the mountains of the Lord.* Though it be against their nature and custome, and former advantages of profit and pleasure, yet they overcome all these temptations, and account nothing so dear, as the opportunities of enjoying God in his Ordinances. See in what an heavenly manner *Davids* affections are enflamed, who could *live alwayes in the Courts of the Lords house*, and envied the very Sparrows that came so near the Altar. And certainly if the carnal and worldly heart can rejoyce so much in those advantages, where their lusts are satisfied, how much rather must a spiritual heart in the midst of all these spiritual applications, because spiritual good things are unmixed, and have no gall in them at all, as the good things of the world have?

5. Fifthly, *Of a people unconstant and unsetled in the wayes of God, by this new change he makes fixed and rooted upon a sure Rock.* Observe the people of *Israel*, they often cried unto the Lord in their extremities, but their hearts were not stedfast within them, and so they quickly revolted again, *Psal.* 18. 31. But the people of God are said to be like Mount *Sion, that cannot be removed*, Psal. 133. 3. *The gates of hell cannot prevail against them.* They are an house built upon a *Rock*, and so when the winds and tempests arise, *they stand fast.* As God is a God that changeth not, so they are holy, believing, and change not. *Israels righteousness is like a morning Dew*, Hos. 13. 2. it quickly drieth up, the Dew falls as *Aristotle* observeth, when the Mornings are neither too hot or cold; Thus an heart that is lukewarm, and hath no real, inward efficacy of grace, sets upon Duties, but when the Sun ariseth and scorcheth, presently the grass withereth. Oh it is a great argument of this New Creation, to be stedfast and immoveable in the work of the Lord. Not to change with the times and seasons; To be one while for the truths and wayes of God, and another while to be against them. Those things that are from a principle of Nature are constant, and alwayes alike, but those things which come about by accident, and as it happens; they are various and incertain. See then thou art, as it is said of Christ, *The same Yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* As great storms and tempests discover what rooting the Tree hath, so variety of conditions doth manifest what metal we are made of. As therefore *David* prayed, That God would alwayes keep up that willingness in the mens hearts, who then offered to God; so do thou desire that God alwayes would keep thy soul in that tenderness, love and strong affections which sometimes are kindled in thee. *Johns* hearers did ὥραν, for an hour, a short season ἀγαλλιᾶσθαι, *Rejoyce exceedingly*, as in triumph, but when his Ministry began to touch them close for their particular sins, then they said, *He had a Devil*: Now certainly God is alwayes the same, that which is good is alwayes as lovely, that which is sin is alwayes as abominable; Therefore thy affections should be alwayes in the same manner carryed out towards them. I might in many other particulars shew you, how God doth create a people to that which is good: The term from which, and the term to which, Happy are the people who finde such a change. What wondering was there when the Apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost;

so

so that they all spake with strange Tongues; No less is it here. Thy tongue praising of, and praying to God, speaks in a strange tongue to what it did once, when lying and cursing came as so many sparks of hell out of thy mouth. Oh when will God appear thus in his power, when will he bow the Heavens and come down?

Now the grounds why God takes such untoward and indisposed materials to any thing that is good, and makes them complying with, and imbracing of his holiness, are. Gods reason or end in changing such indisposed people.

First, *To shew forth the Glory of his Power and Grace.* That which *Paul* speaks concerning himself, whom he makes a monster of men, & stileth himself, *The chiefest of all sinners*: Now (saith he) God converted him, that the *exceeding riches of his grace might be made manifest to the ages to come.* Gods Power and Goodness is wonderfully revealed in this: His Power that he can subdue the hearts of men so averse and so oppositely bent: And his goodness, that he will do it to such enemies to him. That he should surprize *Paul* in his journey to persecute the people of God with so much melting Grace, when he might have struck him into Hell with the Thunder-bolt of his anger, This was unspeakable Goodness; so that upon this ground, the Ministers of God may earnestly importune God that he would turn their people from darkness to light, O Lord, thou dost all things for thy Glory! Now the more unwilling, unable and opposite men are to their own Salvation, the greater will thy glory be in helping of them; As *David* useth this as an Argument, that God would have mercy on him for his sins are very great. Some indeed translate it (*Although*) Thus we may urge, O Lord, Pity them, and shew compassion to them, for they are a people cruel to their own souls; and therefore God hath many times chosen the worst of men, that so his Goodness may be the more remarkable. Thus (some say) the Jews were the most brutish and blockish people in the world, yet God chose them rather than any other to be his people. So the *Corinthians*, they were noted to a Proverb for wickedness and uncleanness: They had a Temple dedicated to *Venus*, and many Virgins were dedicated to her yearly to make Whores; And *Cotys* the Heathen god for uncleanness was their worshipped, yet God turneth these Beasts into Saints, and sweet Herbs come up where Brambles and Thorns did grow.

Secondly, *God hath this end in this spiritual Creation, to shew his absolute Dominion and free Liberty in exercising his gracious Power upon what Subjects he pleaseth.* He doth not many time vouchsafe his Grace to those that are civil and of a lovely conversation, nor to men always of wisdom and parts, as our Saviour acknowledgeth with the admiration of Gods wisdome herein; *Thou hast hid those things from the wise, and revealed them to babes.* The Apostle *Paul*, *Rom.* 11. doth professedly dispute Gods Dominion herein *Whom he will he chooseth, and whom he will he hardneth: And who art thou, O man, that disputest with God?* Gods Dispensation herein is wholly Arbitrary, and none may say unto God, Why doest thou so? Thus while the Apostles were preaching, it is said, *As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed*, Acts 13. 48. *And the Election hath obtained*, Rom. 11. Hereupon it is that the Apostle doth so often put the godly in minde of their election, that hereby their hearts might be stirred up to all Thankfulnesse; for what an overwhelming consideration would this be to the gracious heart, to consider of those many thousands lying in a lump of sin, God should choose thee among others, and leave the rest in a perishing condition! 2. 3.

A third end, *Hereby God will for ever keep his New Creatures in Humility and self-emptiness.* For when we know, that Justification and Regeneration are Priviledges vouchsafed unto us, not for any Works we have done, for we were enemies to God; This keepeth us in daily humble and low thoughts about our

selves: God hath ordained that way to heaven, wherein he shall have all the Glory, and man take only shame and confusion to himself. How can Pride and Vain-glory ever lodge in our hearts, when God only makes us to differ from others, and we have nothing but what we have received? Hence the Apostle doth so often put the converted Saints in minde, what they were once, how they walked in all their grosse waies of sins and hainous crimes, as others did, till God had mercy on them, and this he doth to return all into grace. The remembrance of what thou wert once, how full of sin, what an enemy to that which is good, may make thee cry out, *Not unto us Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name belongs all glory.*

4. The fourth end, *Why God makes such a glorious change upon his people, is to ingage them to more Service and Obedience.* That as they have yeelded themselves servants to sinne, now servants to Righteousnesse: Men of great sins, when converted, become men of great services. Thus *David*, who sinned above others, how active is he for Gods glory above others? *Paul* who persecuted the Church more then all, when converted labours more then they all. This is a sharp good to be more then an ordinary Saint, when a man hath been more then an ordinary sinner. *Peter* that three times denied Christ, is three times called upon to *feed Christs sheep*. The ground that was fruitful of weeds, when well ordered, becomes excellent for corn.

5. A fifth end is, *Hereby God would provoke others to godlinesse*; For when we see that by Gods grace men of desperate lives, and hopelesse conversations, are become lovers of God and godlinesse, then what a shame will this be to others, who did not seem far from the Kingdome of Heaven? Thus God is said to provoke the people of *Israel* to jealousie, for when they saw the *Gentiles*, who knew not God, and lived in all darknesse and wickednesse, to become imbracers of Gods Worship; This was enough to stirre up jealousie in them. Thus also the Pharisees might have blushed to see the Publicans and Harlots entring the Kingdom of Heaven before them. O what a provocation should this be to men, when they see men who were formerly averse and contrary to what is good, now to rejoyce in it! When a *Mary Magdalen* forsaketh her lusts, and cleaveth to Christ, what Harlots then will any longer stand out? When *Paul* an enemy, makes much of that way he so hated once, How might this turn all the Pharisees? When therefore you see God working such great things upon any man, say, The Lord doth this to provoke me, Shall such repent and not I? Shall such amend their waies, and, I stand out still?

Having thus explained the Doctrine, let us consider what use may be made of this.

Use. And first, Is it thus usual with God, *To raise stones to be children to Abraham, to make a barren wildernesse a pleasant garden*? then what Encouragement may the Ministers of God have, where they see the greatest opposition and averseness? Alas God doth not find men with a natural propensity to good things, but he creates them, God doth not find men Lambs, but he makes Wolves Lambs; sometimes when *Paul* had a minde to goe, hoping to do good, the Spirit of God did prohibit him to goe, and at other times he is sent to a people, that was not likely. This made the prophet say, *He was found of those that sought him not.* We are with *Abraham* not to look to the dead womb of the Creatures, but to the mighty Power of God, who calleth things that are not, as if they were. It was *Moses* his sinne of unbelief, and for which only he was hindered from entring in *Canaan*, that when God bad him strike the Rock, *to have water gush out*, he was unwilling, and doubted whether God could do it or no. Let not the Ministers of God sinne through unbelief, as if to God, the conversion of men were not possible, because its impossible to men. When the Disciples had been fishing all night, and catched nothing, Christ afterwards bids them

them throw in their nets, and it was so full of fish that the net was in danger of breaking. So then let us be encouraged in our work, for all those who are ordained to live in a Parish, they will believe, they will be converted at one time or other. And because the Ministers of God know not the secret counsels of God, therefore are we to preach to all, to wait patiently upon all, as if every one were to be saved. Therefore the Apostle exhorts us to *instruct in patience and meekness, even those that gainsay, if peradventure God may give them repentance*, 2 Tim. 2.25. Though they are not sure their instruction will do any good, there be a difficulty in it, yet they must not give over.

Use 2. To humble us under all the works of grace God vouchsafeth to us, for we made not our selves New Creatures: Oh take heed of all those proud Doctrines that debase Grace, and set up mans Will, as also of all inward pride of Heart, glorying in any thing thou hast. Did God revenge himself so upon *Belshazzar*, because in the pride of his heart, he boasted, *That that was great Babel which he had built*; How much rather, if a man should say, This is the heaven I have merited, This is the eternal glory I have purchased: Alas, look into thy by-past life, and what was there to move God to shew mercy unto thee? In stead of having God call thee so graciously to him, he might have pronounced that curse, *To depart into everlasting fire*. *Paul's* former wickedness made him for ever humble and ashamed in himself. And this is the main reason, why the good Works the godly do cannot justifie them, because though they were for the present perfect, yet they could never absolve from the guilt of our former sins, we committed in ignorance of God. 2.

Use 3. What cause a people loaden with grievous sins, and rooted in them, have to cry mightily unto God, for his omnipotent power, for nothing can separate thee and thy lusts, but that strong arm of God which made heaven and earth, and raised Christ from the dead. In natural necessities there they apply themselves to God, thinking nothing but his power can give rain, can stay the pestilence, can sheathe the sword; and why then do you not also say, Oh it is God only that can soften this heart of mine! that can humble this proud stomack of mine! Oh therefore pray unto God! saying, O Lord, Thy arm is not shortned! Art not thou he who did turn *Manasses* his heart? Art not thou he who didst convert so many thousands at one Sermon? Oh put forth the same power, *Draw us and we will run after thee*, roll this stone away, and we shall praise thee! 3.

SERM.

SERM. XLVIII.

Of good works; What to be created unto good works implies, and what works are good.

EPHES. 2. 10.

For we are his Workmanship created in Christ Jesus to good works.

THe next thing in Order considerable in this Text, is the meritorious cause of this spiritual workmanship, and that is *Christ Jesus*. But this particular I shall pass by, as a subject requiring a more large and distinct discourse of it self. I proceed therefore to the final cause of this spiritual creation, and that is, *To good works*: In the Greek it is *Created in good works*. The final cause (saith *Erasmus*) is not here signified, but the effect of grace creating: So that in his sense the holy Ghost should not intend the end of creating us anew, but the effect of his grace, as if that did work all the good in us; and which is a wonder, *Estius* a Papist goeth this way, quoting *Isa.* 26. that place, *O God, thou hast wrought all our works in us*: It is much for him to do so, for this seemeth greatly to exclude the power of free will: But I rather take it for the final cause, and commend our translators who render it, *unto good works*; and it is an Hebraism to use the Preposition *in*, for *unto*, although the Grecians also do so, as ἐπ᾽ ἀφθονῳ ἁρπαζειν, for gains sake, for a rewards sake, There ἐπ᾽ denoteth a final cause, though indeed this is so the final cause, as that it is a also the effect.

Obs. New Creatures created unto good works.

Obs. *That all those who are new creatures, are created unto good works; so that a godly life is a necessary fruit of their renovation.* This new creature can be no more without an external godly conversation, than fire without heat, or hony without sweetness. In some sense it is more than the fruit of a tree; for a tree may live and grow, and yet bear no fruit; but this new creature cannot be, unless there be also those good and holy works which God requireth of us. This point is of great concernment, when so many satisfie themselves with hopes of this glorious life, and yet their works are the works of the flesh, and of darkness. As Christ said of the false Prophets, *By their fruit you may know them*; so it is also true of false Christians, by their fruit you may judge what they are.

1. What to be created to good works implieth.

For the understanding of this point, let us consider what the phrase implieth, *Created to good works*; and that comprehends,

First, *An inclination and propensity to a godly life.* For as God created all creatures with an inclination to their proper operations, thus this spiritual man is endued with a willing tendency unto those actions that are heavenly. Thus as the sparks fly upward, and the stone falls downward from an inward inclination of nature, so they are carried out to faith, repentance, holiness, from a free principle within. *Aristotle* defineth that to be the nature of every thing, which is the principle

ciple of its motion, for its self sake, and not by accident: And thus natural motions differ from violent, which are from a principle without, and by accident. Oh its a matter worthy of all your consideration, to attend to the principle of your motions in holy things, whether it be natural, or violent. You may read of *Ahabs* good works in some sense, he prayed, and humbled himself, but he was not created to them, because they were from a violent principle without, the judgments of God; not a natural principle within, which is a sanctified and renewed heart: Yea, if you look upon *Judas*, you may see in some respects also his good works: There was his contrition, his confession & his satisfaction, but he was not created to these good works, because extracted by slavish horror of conscience, not sweetly enclined thereunto by faith in God, and love of him. There is a great difference between the nurses care of the child, and the mothers: The former doth it because hired, and betrusted with it, but the latter from an inward *storgy*, and maternal bowels: So then is it thus with thee? dost thou pray, hear, live in all godliness, as one that is created thereunto? One who hath a free, voluntary inclination? In which respect the Law of God is said to be written in their inward parts.

2. Secondly, *To be created to good Works, implieth not only an inclination, but a readiness, or preparedness, which is a further qualification.* The fire hath an inclination to ascend upwards, but yet something may violently keep it down, that it cannot ascend actually: Inclination to good works implieth the remote power, but readiness supposeth the proxime, and immediate power. Gods own people who have the seed of Grace in them, yet how unprepared, and unready many times to that which is good! Therefore to watch and to be ready, is a duty so often pressed; *Be ready to every good work*, and *prepared to every good work*: To this is opposite, dulness, sluggishness, listlesness, and all kind of wearisomeness in the service of God. But this should quicken us up, *That we are created to godliness*: Therefore the heart should alwayes be swept and ready dressed for Christ to lodge in: You must have Lamps and Oyle; commonly sin surpriseth us, because we are not prepared for godliness: Thus Christ knocked, desirous to come in, but the Church was unwilling, and so deprived her self of much comfort. Prayer is the Key of heaven, but if rusty it will not open; and thus it is of all duties, if thy heart be not prepared for them.

3. Thirdly, *The Phrase, created to good works, doth denote them to be the principal and main end.* God hath appointed every thing to an end, which holds not only in moral agents, but also natural: Hence is that rule, *Opera naturæ sunt opera intelligentiæ*, The works of nature are the works of reason and understanding, because it ordereth and wisely directeth them to an end. Now as other creatures have their ends, so this new creature hath its, which is to be wholly imployed in those works that are godly. This is his errand, his business and imployment. The Apostles expression is remarkable, Tit 3.8,9. *This is a faithful saying*, and which thou art to affirm constantly, What is that? *That those who believe be careful to maintain good works*: Two Greek words are observable προϊστασθαι, that it be their care and study, and all their wisedome, and then καθίστασθαι, to maintain, or rather to be an example, and a president. The Apostles scope is, that all Christians should make their houses and families a School-house, as it were, of a godly life, that there should be no prophaneness, no filthy lusts, no scandals. That which the Apostle speaks to *Timothy*, belongs to all, γύμναζε to exercise himself unto godliness; as he that is to run a race, giveth himself wholly to that: So that hell is not more opposite to heaven, than their lives are to this new creature, who live in a constant way of impiety, & manifest wickedness. The fruits of the flesh are manifest saith the Apostle, every man that liveth in obedience thereunto, may presently discern he is not a new creature. Oh then, when thou art overtaken with any evil ungodly way, say, Is this the good work God created me unto? Is this the godly action he made me for? God did not make thee to eat & drink, much less to riot & revel it, but to walk holily, righteously, & soberly; and let the godly, when at any time unwilling,

willing, and indiſpoſed to that which is good, ſtir up themſelves to all chearfulneſs, ſaying, *For this end God created me anew; for this end I came into the world*; How can I neglect the main buſineſs I have to do?

Fourthly, *It implieth conſtancy and perpetuity.* That which we are created unto, is not once or twice to be thought on, or practiced; but it is the conſtant imployment of a man. All naturall actions are conſtant; The fire doth alwayes aſcend, the ſtone doth alwayes deſcend: And thus he that is righteous, doth righteouſneſs, 1 *John* 2.29. ſaith the Apoſtle: This diſcovereth the hypocriſie of thoſe who are uncertain. and in ſome fits only for good actions. In time of fear and danger, then they will do good, bewail their ſins, promiſe reformation; but this bulruſh that hangs down its head for a while, becauſe of ſome ſtorm falling upon it, after a fair day doth preſently perk up again, Gal. 6 9. *Let us not be weary in well doing*; let us not faint or ſwound by any diſcouragements or oppoſitions, but remember a good action will alwayes meet with a good reward, which grace will crown it with. How many are almoſt perſwaded to take up a godly and holy life, but preſently return to their vomit again!

Fifthly, *Here is univerſality of good works.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks indefinitely, created to good works, and that is equivalent to an univerſal. where the matter is neceſſary: He doth not ſay, created to ſome good works, or this and that good work, but good works in the general. If a man be ſtudious for all the good works of the ſecond table that relate to man, as the works of righteouſneſs, liberality, humility, and love, *&c.* if negligent in the good works that relate to the firſt Table, of piety, worſhip of God in Truth and ſincerity, keeping his Sabbath, zealous for his glory, fearing an Oath; this man is but for ſome good works, and ſo not created by God, which is univerſal. Again, if a man be zealous for the works of piety and religion, but careleſs in the duties of juſtice, equity, truth to men, of brotherly love and liberality to thoſe that are in neceſſities, as far as it is his duty, he alſo is to doubt whether he be created to good works; for Gods grace createth to one as well as to another.

Sixthly, *It doth not only ſuppoſe us inclining, and ready to them, but zealouſly to purſue them.* Thus they are called a peculiar people, *zealous of good works*; zeal is an hot burning affection, compounded partly of grief, becauſe we are hindered in what we would do; partly of anger againſt that which oppoſeth us; and partly of vehement love, which carrieth us out to that we deſire Thus the godly are greatly grieved, becauſe of that relique and remainder of corruption which makes them not to do the good they would, as *Paul* bitterly complaineth. They are alſo angry at thoſe luſts which have the greateſt power over them: And Laſtly, hot burning love for the glory of God, whom they do honour, and deſire to exalt continually. And as zeal breeds jealouſie, ſo it doth alſo in the godly breſt: Their zeal to that which is holy makes them jealous, leſt at any time ſin ſhould deceive them, or Satan ſeduce them. Thus *Job* made a covenant with his eyes, and *David ſet a watch before his mouth*, and *Paul kept down his body*, and all out of a godly jealouſie, leſt though they had gone ſo far in the way of holineſs, their feet at laſt ſhould be turned out of the way.

Having thus explained the phraſe, *Created to good works*, let us conſider what they are; for there is a wo to him that calls evil good, and good evil. *Joab* thought he did well to be angry: It is a great degree to do good works, when we know what they are: And

1. What works are good works. First, *Thoſe only are good works which are commanded by God, and conformable to the rule laid down in the Scripture.* So that as the definition of ſin is, *That it is the tranſgreſſion of the Law*, thus the definition of a good work is, *That it is a conformity to the Law of God.* The word of God is the Rule, the Canon; and as the Artificer can draw no good line which is not commenſurate to the rule, ſo whatſoever thou doſt which is not agreable to Scripture, which is not anſwerable to that pattern, it is not a good work how glorious ſoever it be: this is an excellent thing to be inſiſted

ed on: As that only is True Doctrine which is agreeable to the Scriptures, ſo that only is a good work which is anſwerable to the ſame rule. The Scriptures are a rule of faith, & of manners alſo: and as we ſay in matters of religion, *Non credo, quia non lego*, I do not believe it, becauſe I do not read it in Gods word, ſo *Non ago, quia non lego præceptum*, I do it not, becauſe not commanded. And this cuts off moſt of thoſe works from being good works, which are ſo magnified in Popery: what are their good works, for which they call a man a religious man, a ſpiritual man, a perfect man? Are they not vowed poverty, chaſtity, & blinde obedience, with many other ſuperſtitious uſages? Now as the Phariſees thought their waſhings, & humane commandments in religion good & glorious works, when yet our Saviour diſdaineth them upon this reaſon, *Who hath required theſe things at your hands?* Even ſo all thoſe good works of ſuperſtition, will-worſhip, traditional cuſtomes, though dignified with the title of good works, yet are to be rejected, becauſe not required: So that as counterfeit coyn is ſo far from being owned as currant mony, that he who is found guilty of the making of it, is adjudged to death. So all counterfeit worſhip & ſervice of God, which hath not the ſtamp of the Word upon it, is ſo far from being acceptable with God, that ſuch without repentance & reformation are condemned to eternal death. Herein certainly people ſouly miſtake; they judge things to be good by the cuſtome of them, by the pleaſure & profit of them, & not by the rule of goodneſs. How could vain, & prophane ſports be accounted good works, if men did look into the Scripture for their goodneſs? Thou ſayeſt, *It is good for me to do thus, to live thus, to take up ſuch a courſe of life*, but doth the Scripture ſay, it is alſo good? Thus as for want of this rule we take up many things for good, which are not good; ſo again, we reject many good works as folly, needleſſe, not requiſite, becauſe we do not ſtudy herein. To live ſtrictly, to be ſingular to the common waies of the world; to keep up holy family-duties, theſe things we look not upon as good works, becauſe they are contrary to our corrupt affections & luſts. Eſpecially how hardly can we be perſwaded that it is a good work to confeſſe Chriſt in the midſt of a crooked Generation; that it is good for us to love Chriſt more than Father, or Mother, or life it ſelf, that it is good to take up the Croſs and follow him. How hardly do we perſwade our ſelves theſe are good works? That may be a good work which is grievous and evil to fleſh and blood: In matters to be done, How often do we judge the goodneſſe of them, by the ſafety and advantage? If *Paul* had thus conſulted with fleſh and blood, he would not have thought it a good work to preach up that to his great danger, which once he ſo vehemently oppoſed.

Secondly, *Good works are ſuch actions as we are enabled to by the grace of God.* God is ſaid *to be the Author of every good, and perfect gift*, James 1. No man unleſſe enabled and ſanctified by the ſpirit of God can do the leaſt good work; as a beaſt is not able to act the things of reaſon: For *the imaginations of a mans heart are onely evil, and that continually*, Gen. 6. ſo that there is not room for the leaſt good therein. How then muſt man plunged in ſinne ſay, he is not good, neither can do good? The tree muſt be good, elſe the fruit cannot be good; and thus a man muſt be ingrafted in Chriſt, and partake of his fatneſſe, elſe all is but a wilde Olive, and wilde Grapes. And upon this ground it is, that the Orthodox maintain that opinion againſt Papiſts, That all the works of unregenerate men are ſins, as they come from them. Though *Amaziah* and *Jehu* do thoſe things which are right in Gods eyes for the matter of them, yet in reſpect of circumſtances, they exceedingly fail, & ſo they are made ſins to them. Whereupon is that neceſſary diſtinction, That an action may be ſaid to be good materially for the matter of it: Thus when a wicked man prayeth, heareth, he doth that which is good for the matter, or formally, that is, when they are done upon ſuch principles, in ſuch a manner, and to ſuch an end as God requireth. So that to do a good work there is requiſite the help of Gods ſpirit, to lift us up. As *Zacheus* was too low of himſelf to ſee Jeſus, he was fain to go up into a tree: ſo we are too too ſhort to reach unto

2. Such actions as we are inabled unto by the grace of God.

to any good work; it is above our reach till the ſpirit of God lift us up. Oh that unregenerate men did receive this Truth as ingraffed in their ſouls; I have lived thus long, and have not done one good work, yet I have been without Chriſt, deſtitute of his ſpirit, and ſo a branch ſeparated from the vine: Oh how little, or no hope as all have I! What ſhall I do? Have pity upon me all ye that know me, and pray for me: not one good work in all my life time! but a continual ſinning hath run through my converſation. And this every unregenerate man muſt ſay, though not prophane, but very civil and ingenuous, yet if not a new creature, he is not created to any good work. We are created to it: our free will or moral education cannot prepare us for them; ſo that though the name of good works be often in our mouths, yet the actions themſelves are rarely performed, becauſe few are endued with the ſpirit of God. Hence that is called the holy Spirit, becauſe without it there is no holineſs; as there is no light from the heavens but by the ſun, the ſtars ſhining, as they ſay, by its light.

3. And that have the concurrence of all circumſtances

Thirdly, *Good works are ſuch which have the concurrence of all circumſtances*: There muſt be a good cauſe, a good manner, a good end, and if any one of theſe be wanting, it is not a good work. *Bonum eſt ex integrâ cauſâ*: *Uzzah* did not a good work, for God was ſo diſpleaſed, that he ſtruck him dead ſuddenly for it, though he had a very good intention, and all becauſe the manner was not good. *Cains* Sacrifice was not doing well, for then he had been accepted, as God told him, becauſe his perſon was not good: So that it is eaſie to commit evil, but difficult to do that which is good, becauſe a man muſt every time hit the mark; if he fails in one circumſtance, if one ſtring be broken, the muſical harmony is ſpoiled. Oh what a rouſing Truth is this? How ſhould this chaſe away all ſecurity, all truſting in thy good heart, & good works? For where are they? God indeed looked on all he did, & ſaw they were exceeding good; but mayſt not thou look over all thou didſt ever ſince thou waſt born, and ſee all exceeding evil? You think you do good works, but it is ignorance; you know not how many things are required to a good action, & one dead fly ſpoileth the whole box of oyntment. This bitter herb maketh death in the duty, which otherwiſe would bring life. This made the Pſalmiſt pronounce of every man by nature, *There is none that doth good, no not one.* What an uncharitable cenſure doth this ſeem to be in humane reaſon? *None doth good*, not one in all mankind till quickened & enlivened by grace. I beſeech you lay this deep in your hearts; *I am good for no good work*. I am wholly evil, and all that I do is wholly evil. *Paul* that had ſome good in him, becauſe of the mixture of evil, cryed out, *O miſerable man that I am, Who will deliver me?* how much rather have I cauſe to bid all comforts ſtand aloof off, and to be alone, crying out *Who will deliver me?* ſeeing I am nothing but evil, nothing but ulcers & ſores all over me. There is nothing will ſooner drive you out of ſelf-love, make you amazed at your ſelves, & cauſe you to cry out, *Help Lord, elſe we periſh*, as to think, not one good work hath ever been done by us yet.

Pſal. 14. 3.

4. A good work muſt flow from a good heart.

Fourthly, *Good works muſt flow from a good heart within.* From a purified Fountain and ſweet, do iſſue ſweet ſtreams: When *Moſes* vehemently required of the people of Iſrael, *to obey the commands of God*, which was nothing but to do good works; the people preſently made a ready promiſe, that they would do all: But mark what *Moſes* replyeth, *Oh that there were ſuch an heart in them*; this is all: It is not for thee to ſay and promiſe, *I will ſet upon a good life, I will be diligent in good duties*: But oh that there were ſuch an heart in you. Hence our Saviour compareth the good heart of a man *to a good treaſure from whence all things flow*. Thus that great promiſe of regeneration firſt begins with the heart, *I will take away the heart of ſtone and give an heart of fleſh; and I will write my law in the inward parts*, Ezek. 36. and what then? *Then I will make them to walk in my commandements*: Thus alſo the commandment, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and ſoul*, &c. As the wickedneſſe of an evil man lyeth moſt in his heart, ſo the goodneſſe of a good man is moſt in the heart. Now this particular alſo is not attended to men never

never looking any further than the work they do, Is that a Duty? Is that commanded? but not attend to, with what inward rectitude & purity of ſpirit they do theſe things. The difference of the third and fourth hearers lay not in externals at firſt, but that one had a good and honeſt heart, which the other wanted; and although men look to the outward good works, yet God looketh moſt to the inward good heart: Therefore the hypocrite doth no good work, though he ſeemeth to the world full of good works, becauſe his heart is not good. Our Saviour inſtanced in this, and preſſeth it much upon the Phariſees, ſaying, *they were wolves within, and noiſome ſepulchers within, though painted without.* Think therefore thou hearеſt God ſpeaking unto thee that of *Solomon, My ſon, give me thy heart* Prov. 23.26. thy good heart, elſe thoſe good works are but a blaze, there is no good foundation.

Fifthly, *Good works are thoſe, and thoſe onely which are done for the glory of God.* Let any action be in it ſelf never ſo neceſſary, ſo glorious, ſo profitable to others, yet if it be not for Gods glory, there is a wo to ſuch good works inſtead of an *Euge* or *well done.* The Phariſees prayers, faſtings, and alms, have a wo and threatning annexed to them in ſtead of a promiſe. *Whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God:* now vain-glory and ſelf-applauſe, is a worme that quickly breeds in the beſt fruit, in the choyceſt actions: The godly at the day of judgement do not know the good works they did; as the ſilk-worm hideth her ſelf within the curious ſilk it works, whence was that Motto upon it, *Operitur dum operatur, She is all over covered whilſt ſhe works:* The ſame ought we to be in all the holy duties, and moſt heavenly actions we perform; *Operimur dum operamur:* upon this reaſon *Auſtin* ſaid *All the glorious actions of the heathens were but* ſplendida peccata, *gliſtring ſins,* becauſe they corrupted their love to their countrey by vain-glory, and ſo they did, as he ſaid, *Unam cupiditatem aliâ ſanare, Heal one ſin by another.* 5. And be done to the glory of God.

Uſe of Exhortation, To take up that of the Apoſtle, *Let every man try his own work.* The word ſignifieth ſuch a tryal as the Goldſmith uſeth about his Gold, whether it be right or no: He hath his Touch-ſtone to diſcover it. Let this be your care, thouſands and millions of works you have done in your life time, bring them all to the Touch-ſtone, the Scripture, the rule of goodneſs. It is not an eaſie matter to be found doing but one good work: Inform and inſtruct your ſelf better about the Doctrine of a good work, how much the Scripture requireth; and certainly if there be any ſparklings of conſcience, it will make thee tear all the works thou haſt done. For what? doſt thou call thy ungodlineſſe, thy prophane courſes, good works? Doth Gods word command theſe? Doth Gods Spirit enable thee to do theſe? Oh blinde man, hoodwinked by the devil, that doſt not ſee thy ſelf all over plunged into evil! But it may be thou thinkeſt thy prayers, holy duties, thy civility, thy charity, good works, and indeed theſe are good for the matter of them, but as thou doſt them who art not regenerated, who haſt not the ſpirit of Chriſt dwelling in thee, who haſt corrupt and ſinful ends, they all are thy evil works; and come in the catalogue of thy other ſins. Thy duties not done by a gracious heart, through gracious power, to a gracious end, in a gracious manner, are ſins to thee as well as thy other ungodly wales. I know the proud and ſelf-flattering heart of man loveth not to heare this, cannot endure that all its gold ſhould be diſcovered to be droſs. But it is not what thou thinkeſt, and what others think about thy good works, but what Gods ſpirit pronounceth in his word: how great will thy confuſion be, if that which thou calleſt a good heart, a good life, and good works, all good, God ſhall diſcover to be an evil heart, an evil life, all evil! God cannot be deceived, but thou art eaſily. *Uſe.*

SERM. XLIX.

Setting forth divers distinctions, and Axioms to clear the Doctrine of good works.

EPHES. 2. 10.

For we are his Workmanship created to good works.

Divers explanatory rules to be considered of about good works.

GOod works (you have heard) are the inspirable and necessary fruit of this *New creature*. I hath also been informed you, what a good work is. I shall at this time lay down some distinctions, or necessary Axioms to clear this Doctrine about *Good works*, and so proceed, to application.

1. The Scripture speaks sometimes in dispraise of them.

And first, *This is worth your observation, That the Scripture speaketh sometimes in praise and worth of them, sometimes again by way of diminution, and debasing of them.* When good works are compared with the righteousnes of Christ, or have relation to justification, then they are rejected as unable for any such use. Thus the Prophet saith, *Our righteousnes is like a menstruous cloth.* Isa. 30. 22. How loathsom is that? and so are our holy duties, if *God should enter into judgement with us. Justitia nostra est indulgentia tua, Domine, O Lord, our righteousnes is thy indulgence:* Our justification consists in pardon; therefore we have no perfection to justifie us, but imperfection to be forgiven us. Thus the Apostle also, *He doth account* (and that is an act of judgement and deliberation) *all things but dung and dross in comparison of the righteousnes by faith in Christ*, Phil 3. 8. So then when the best works we do are considered in the Court of justification, there they are damnable, and have so much dross in them, that God doth reject them as insufficient. They are not good but bad works in that sense: Therefore a man in justification is looked upon as a sinner, without a righteousnes answering the Law, though at that time also he doth repent and believe. *But then at other times the Scripture speaks of good works in respect of sanctification, and as they relate to the glory of God, and are an ornament to our holy profession.* And in this sense the word of God do often commend them, and exhort to them. So that if thou hast got so much skill as to know in what sense the Scripture debaseth them, and in what sense it commends them, bless God for that knowledge, and look upon it as a stat to guid thee. The Apostle in this Chapter, *attributing our whole salvation to grace*, lest he should be thought therefore to exclude good works, and it were all one whether we were prophane or godly, he addeth, *that we are created to good works.* Take heed of Popery to make thy good works a ground of justification; take heed of Antinomianism, to deny the presence of them.

2. Good works are to be extended as far as Gods commands.

A second rule is, *That good works are not to be limited to one kinde, but are to be extended as far as the Law of Gods commands.* Thus the Obedience to the first commandment is a good work, to the second, & so to every one; for the Law is a rule of good works, & as the Logicians say, *There is no created being, but it is reduced into*

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one of the ten predicaments: So there is no duty or good work commanded of us, but it is contained in one of the Ten words, as *Moſes* calls them: A word is there uſed for a Precept, as often in the Hebrew. This is good to be obſerved, that ſo we may be conſcionable and abounding in every good work. Good works are works of piety, works of righteouſneſs, works of charity: Every work that comes from a good cauſe, commanded by the rule of goodneſs, performed in a good manner, to a good end, is a good work, whether the object matter be God or man; and howſoever uſe hath almoſt appropriated the phraſe *Good Works*, *to thoſe of charity*, yet the Scripture extendeth it to all the good fruits of a godly life: And in the Scripture ſenſe, no man can do one good work, which hath not a principle to do all. Godly obedience is copulative; and he that doth a good work, becauſe God commands it, will do all, becauſe God commands it. This would make us not like *Herod*, *to do many things*, but like *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, *To walk in all the Commandments of God*, Luke 1 6 Thou prayeſt and heareſt, becauſe this good work God commandeth: Oh thou fool, Doth not God, alſo command thee to be chaſt, to be ſober, to be heavenly minded? The graces of God are chained together, he that hath one, hath all: And therefore it is to be wondered at, to ſee what hypocriſie is in a mans heart, to be affected with ſome good works; he could have no peace in his conſcience if he ſhould omit them, and yet can totally neglect others, without any remorſe at all: If thou hadſt committed murther, the guilt of blood would torment thy conſcience, torture thy ſoul. Why ſhould not uncleanneſs, curſing, do the like? Doth not the ſame God that ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not Kill*, ſay alſo, *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery*.

Thirdly, *Another rule about Good Works is that of* Auſtins, *founded alſo upon the Scripture, good works do not go before a juſtified perſon, but follow after*, Bona opera non præcedunt juſtificationem, ſed ſequuntur. This Text doth clearly aſſert this Truth, *We are ſaved of Grace, not by Works*, becauſe we are created to them, being his Workmanſhip. Is it not in Divinity, as the Philoſophers ſay in Morality, *Bona agendo ſumus boni*, *By doing good works, we are made good*; No, we are by grace made good, then we do good: As the Fountain muſt be before the ſtream, and the root or Tree before the fruit. Thus our Saviour, Make the Tree good, and then the fruit will be good. Thus *Abel*'s perſon is firſt accepted, then his performances: This Truth is of great concernment, it being inbred in men to look more to an outward good work, than the goodneſs of their perſons and natures. They do not imitate God, who is good in his nature, and then doth good in his Actions; ſo ought we to be good, and then to do good. Therefore by this rule thus ſetled upon Scripture, it is an undoubted Truth, That no man till juſtified and regenerated, is able to do any good work: He is a leper, all is unclean, and every thing he toucheth he maketh unclean to himſelf. This ſhould make us ſit down on the Dunghill with *Job*, abhorring our ſelves, when there is none of all mankind of himſelf can do good, no, not one What Doctrine may make us loath our ſelves, and ſeek out for a new creation, and engraffing into Chriſt, if this doth not?

3. They go not before juſtified perſons but follow after.

Fourthly, *The next rule is*, *That then in Scripture things are ſaid to be*, *when they are made manifeſt, and apparent*. And this rule will open the ſenſe of all that diſcourſe in the Apoſtle *James*, where he diſputeth it by ſeveral Arguments, *That we are juſtified by works*. In ſo much that it hath much exerciſed the learned, how *Paul* and *James* are to be reconciled; For *Paul*, he expreſly proveth that juſtification is without works; and that *Abraham* was juſtified by faith only: And *James* he ſaith, *Abraham was not juſtified by faith only*, *but by works*: Now Two things reconcile theſe Brethren that ſeem to differ. Firſt *Paul*, He proveth that Faith only juſtifieth; And *James* that this Faith which juſtifieth is not alone, ſeparated from *Good Works*. *Paul* proveth what it is that juſtifieth, *viz.* Faith; And *James*, what kind of Faith, *viz.* a working lively

4. In Scripture things are ſaid to be when they are made manifeſt.

ly faith. *Paul* argueth against a Pharisee that thought his works would justifie him, and *James* against a Carnal Gospeller that thought faith alone, in the meer profession of it, was enough to save without a godly life. And secondly it may be thus composed; *Paul* speaks of the nature of Justification in it self, and *James* of the manifestation of it. A thing in Scripture being said to be then done, when it is discovered to be so: And thus when you read in *James* in several places, *That a man is justified by good Works*, that is, that he is manifested to be so. As the Apostles similitude evinceth, when he saith, *As the body without the soul is dead, so is faith without works.* Now as the body doth not give life to the soul, but fetcheth all from it, and doth outwardly declare what the soul doth; so doth a godly life manifest and declare who are justified, and who not. So that it is in vain to pretend a good heart, where there is not a good life. And this is the reason why God in the Commandements requireth the outward work, because that doth demonstrate to the world the frame of the heart.

5. We must distinguish between good works in the truth of them, and in the perfection of them

Fifthly, *We are alwayes to distinguish between Good Works, in the truth of them, and in the perfection of them.* The Godly are created to the Truth of Good Works in this life, but to the perfection of them in the life to come. As he said, *I believe, Lord help my unbelief*: So it is true of every other Grace; Lord, I love thee, help my want of love: Lord, I am humble, help my want of humility. No man goeth beyond *Paul*, who when he would do good, found evil present with him. And the Apostle declareth a perpetual opposition and conflict between the flesh and the spirit: So that the godly cannot do the good things they would; so that this truth will direct two sorts of persons; First, those that are ignorant, full of self-flattery, and self righteousness; they are apt to take a shadow for the substance: every thing that glisters for Gold, whatsoever is good for the matter of it, to take it for good in all the circumstances of it. And then Secondly, There are the Godly ones who are ready to conclude nothing is good in them, because not perfectly good. They think this action comes short of that perfect rule, and is not answerable to the glorious Majesty of God: and therefore they do not own that goodness in them which God owneth in them, and hereby walk not in that thankfulness, chearfulness, and exemplary joy as they ought to do.

6. The New Creature is as diligent as if works would save him, and yet as fully relies on Christ as if there were not the least good in him.

Lastly, *This is the true character of a new creature, That he is as zealous and diligent of good works, as if they were to save him, as if there were no Christ, no grace to rely upon: And yet on the other side he doth as fully and really rely upon Christ, and his grace, as if there were not the least spark of any goodness in him.* This is a Scripture and admirable temperament. To joyn those places of Scripture together. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling*; and yet when you have done all, say, *We are unprofitable servants.* When we have done all, if that were possible, how much rather must we say so, when we come far short of all! That which doth so puzzle and corrupt erronious heads, he can practically reconcile, *viz.* God promise to give, and mans duty to do. He so believeth in Christ, that yet he is not barren of godly and holy works; and he so practiceth these, that his faith is not taken off from making Christ all in all. To some men we may say that of *Luther*, *Take heed not only of thy evil works, but of thy good also, viz.* do not trust in them, be not proud of them; To others, that of *John Husse*, *Ubi opera non apparent ad extra, ibi non est fides ad intra, Where Godliness is not in the fruit, there Faith is not in the root.* Where the body doth not move or stir, there is no soul within.

Now because I did not intend to dwell long on this part of the Text, and because the comfort and profit of a good work, lieth not in the Doctrine and knowledge of it, but in the practice and exercise, I shall therefore be large in the Use, and so conclude this point.

Use. First, *Is it a necessary fruit of a new creature to walk in good works? Then*

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the evil and ungodly deeds of most in the Christian world, sheweth that they are in that old damnable condition they were borne in. If we consider the general conversation of most men, What deeds of darkness, and of sin and Satan may be found in them: That which *Salvian* complained of the lives of Christians in his daies, may not we also take up? *Præter pauciſſimos quoſdam, quid eſt aliud omnis cœtus Chriſtianorum, quam ſentina vitiorum? Besides a very few that fly sins, and endeavour to keep themselves unspotted from the world, What is the whole company of Christians, but a sink of all vices?* You may sooner finde men *reos malorum omnium, quam non omnium, You may sooner finde men guilty of all sins, than of some only,* And *Facilius majorum criminum, quam minorum, And sooner men guilty of the greater crimes, than of the less;* yea, he addeth, almost all the whole Church is brought to such a reproach and scandal of manners, *ut in cuncto populo Chriſtiano genus quoddam ſanctitatis ſit, minus eſſe vitioſum, That in all the Christian world it is a kinde of holiness to be lesse vitious.* Doth he not speak as if he lived in our times? For except some few in every Congregation, which are like the Gleanings to the harvest, are not people generally ignorant, prophane, ungodly, so that it is a kinde of great holiness to be less wicked than others? His Oaths not so dreadfull, his malice not so rancorous, his drunkennesse not so beastly: If men be lesse wicked, we are apt to judge them virtuous men, such a deluge of sin doth overflow: But oh the patience of God who beholds and seeth all this ingratitude, rebellion, and hostility against his Majesty, yet forbeareth to take present vengeance.

Now there are many arguments why you should take heed of these evill works.

First, *Thy evil deeds of sin, brings Gods evil work of punishment.* Is there evil in the City, or in the Land *saith the godly Prophet*, and I have not done it? *Amos* 3.6. *viz* an evil of punishment: But why? Because men have first done their evil works. Thou that thinkest Gods judgements of Plague, Famine, and the devouring sword to be very grievous and evil; Why dost thou not consider thy evil waies, which have procured these things? Your iniquities with-hold good things from you. And the Prophets are alwaies diligent in the midest of Gods judgements brought upon a people, still to remember them of those iniquities, which have been like the vapours mounted up to the heavens and afterwards congealed, fall down in terrible Thunder and lightening: Oh therefore if thou findest not God so good to thee or the publick, as thou desirest, consider it is the evil of thy waies that brings all calamities. 1. Why we should take heed of evil works.

Secondly, *Therefore let thy life be free from all evil works, because thy profession of Christianity obligeth thee to it,* How can an holy profession, and an unholy life accord together? How can darknesse and light be reconciled? When God whom thou serv'est is holy, Christ by whose name thou art called is holy, the Ordinance whereby thou drawest nigh him are holy; when all this is holy, How is thy conversation so wicked and unholy? For a prophane man full of evil deeds, to pray and hear, is as loathsom, as for the sow wallowing in the mire, to come and rowl it self in a pleasant garden. That place is observable, 2 *Tim* 2. 19. where the Apostle having spoken of some wretched Apostates from the Truth of Christ, he addeth *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure.* As men who build glorious places lay a sure foundation, so God being to build an eternal City, he layeth a deep and firm foundation. Now as their custom was to write some short and select sentences upon their foundation stones, as appeareth out of *Zachary*, so saith he, God hath set two Sentences upon his foundation: The one is, *The Lord knoweth those that are his*, i. e. he will effectually preserve them from falling away. And the other is, *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.* Observe this, This sentence is one of the choice ones that God will have inscribed: Let every one that names Christ, takes his profession on him, *depart from iniquity.* Take heed then of being Thistles in Christs garden; of being Tares in his wheat: This 2.

is to mingle heaven and earth, yea heaven and hell together: either therefore lay aside the name of a Christian, or the works of an Heathen, and one who knoweth not God. *Quid in meo estis; non mei? What do you who are not Gods, in Gods vineyard?* Why are you that are Goats among Christs sheep? Oh consider what reproach ye are to the holy name of Christ.

3. Thirdly, *Consider the Titles which the Scripture giveth evil works, and those titles will demonstrate the nature of them.* They are called *The works of the devil,* What can be a more horrid aggravation than to say, Thy lusts, thy ungodlinesse they are of thy self, and they are of the devil too? It is the devil in thee, and by thee, who provokes thee to such waies. Thus our Saviour bid *Peter, Get thee behinde me Satan, get thee behinde me Divel,* Mat. 16 23. Why? was *Peter a Devil?* No, but because what he did came by the Devils instigation and temptation; therefore he useth that phrase. Thus *Peter* saith to *Ananias* and *Sapphira, Why hath Satan filled thy heart, to lye against the holy Ghost?* Act. 5.3. and the Jews or Pharisees are said to be *of their Father the Devil, for his works they do:* and Christ is said *to come into the world to destroy the works of the Devil.* Oh then remember thy self, by whom, and from whom is it that thou art so prophane and ungodly? Is it not from the Devil? Doth not that uncleane spirit ruling in thee, provoke thee to all uncleanesse? Thou wouldst judge it an uncharitable censure to be called as *Simon Magus* was *Thou childe of the devil:* but yet every man living in that ungodly and unholy way is so. Neither doth this excuse them, as if they were justified, and all the blame to be laid on the devil, no, for he works upon thy corrupt disposition within. If thou wert not first tempted by thy own lust, the devil could not be a tempter to thee. If thou wert not stubble, his fiery darts would not enflame thee. Consider then all this, you who wallow in all mire and filth of sin. If the devils were to act visibly upon the earth, and had bodily members to work withall, they would do as thou dost: And further also remember that he who thus enticeth thee to all sin, will be a tormenter afterwards unto thee, & will be an accuser unto God against thee, for that which he hath excused unto thee; throw them then away, *they are the Devils works.*

4. Fourthly, *Again they are the works of darknesse, as good works are the works of the light.* A wicked man is in darknesse, and knoweth not whither he goeth. *They are works of Darknesse,* Ephes. 5. 11. partly because it is for want of light and knowledge that they are committed. If thou didst know what the Scripture commands, if thou didst know the will of God, and the happinesse promised to the contrary thou dost, thou wouldst never live as thou livest. Again they are works of darknesse, because committed without fear and shame, men do not think God seeth them, that the revengeful eye of God is upon them. Oh the horrour & confusion that would be on their souls if this were attended to. And lastly they are works of darknesse, because they will be rewarded with utter darknesse. Thy sin and thy punishment will be proportionable. Thou lovest darknesse, and therefore thou shalt be thrown into utter darknesse. Oh that wicked and ungodly men should be no more amazed at their dreadfull estate. *In the next place, they are called the works of the flesh, as good works the works of the Spirit,* Gal. 5 Or the flesh, because they come wholly from us corrupt & carnal; there is nothing of the Spirit of God in them, they are sparks from that fire and brimstone in thy bowels: they are so many drops of poyson vented from thy venemous nature: and as they are thus works of the flesh, so they work corruption as the flesh it self is corruptible. *They that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption,* Gal. 6.8. *Again they are vain works,* as the scripture calls them, 1 Pet. 1. 18. They are empty of that they promise: thou lookest for pleasure, profit, advantage by them, but they bring the clean contrary: they have a glistering skin, but a sting in the tail of them. With what curses and indignation wilt thou bid them be gone, which now thou dost so embrace? All that momentany pleasure What is become of it? What is that drop of hony to that Ocean of Gall thou must for ever drink in hell?

Use 2.

Use 2. Are new Creatures created thus unto good works? then excerciſe thy ſelf to them, be frequent in them. Is it good that I do? Is it according to Scripture that I live? Is my life good, according to the rule of goodneſs? and when you would make inquiſition into your ſelves, and pronounce a ſentence accordingly, take heed of ſelf-flattery, ſecurity and eaſe; but arraign thy ſelf at Gods Tribunal; compare thy life and the word together: That ſayeth, *ſuch a life is good, ſuch actions are good:* Is it thus with thee, or the clean contrary? Oh conſider, That God judgeth not as man judgeth. He judgeth according to the inwards; he tryeth the heart and reins; and accordingly judgeth thy actions which come thence. All the Titles you have, Chriſtians, Believers, Saints, Do not theſe engage to a godly life; Theſe ſhew what you ſhould be, elſe you are trees without fruit, and ſo to be cut down for the fire. *Now be moved hereunto,* Firſt, *becauſe good works have a great deal of preſent comfort and eaſe with them.* If thou doſt well, there is joy and ſweetneſſe in the conſcience: But to evil deeds there is joyned a ſting of the Conſcience, horror of ſoul, fear of damnation; and though that may pleaſe for a while, yet all thy ſins lie at the door like a band-dog, ready to riſe up and tear in pieces; whereas there is much joy and peace to him, that liveth a godly life.

2. *Godly and holy works are a neceſſary effect of inward grace, and a teſtimony of thy Predeſtination.* In whoſe life you ſee nothing but wickedneſs, there for the preſent, till a change be, appeareth nothing but tokens of damnation: It is not being an Orthodox man, it is not being a ſound Proteſtant, without a pure and heavenly life, that doth avail to happineſs. *Ariſtotle* made happineſs to conſiſt in action, and ſo doth the excellency and perfection of Chriſtianity. Oh then ſee what evidences, what marks there are in thy life for thy eternal bleſſedneſſe. This ſubject may be concluded with thoſe two verſes, *Rom.* 2.9,10. that are like ſo much thunder and lightning from *Paul's* tribulation and anguiſh (ſuch as a man knoweth not what to do in) upon the ſoul (not body only) and upon every ſoul, no man by his greatneſs may look to eſcape that doth evil, of the Jew firſt and alſo of the *Gentile*. We may ſay, of the Chriſtian firſt, and then the Heathen, becauſe the Chriſtian ſinneth againſt clearer knowledge and revelation of a command, and ſo doth not only that which is *malum*, but alſo what is *vetitum*: but how precious is the 10. verſe, to him that doth well.

SECT. VII.

Of the ſanctifying Work of the Spirit under the Notion of Grace.

SERM. L.

Of the Hearts being eſtabliſhed with Grace, and in what ſenſe it is ſo.

HEB. 13.9.

For it is a good thing that the heart be eſtabliſhed with Grace, not with meats, that have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

IN the former part of this Epiſtle, *Paul* (for we take him to be the Author of it) doth like a kinde father crack the ſhell of thoſe Jewiſh Ceremonies, and give the kernell to believers; he opens the ſpiritual ſenſe and meaning of all thoſe typical prefigurations, making them ſhadows only of Chriſt to come; ſo that as the bloſſome fals when the fruit cometh, thus they vaniſhed, when Chriſt aroſe: and becauſe they were onely ſhadows, he thereupon argueth their inſufficiency for any ſpiritual effect, making *Moſes* in all his adminiſtrations no more then the Prophets ſervant with his Maſters ſtaff, that could not raiſe the dead man: But in the latter part of the Epiſtle, he enjoyneth many practical and plain Duties; as in this Chapter *verſ.* 7. he exhorteth them to follow the faith of their ſpiritual Governours and Teachers, which is to be ſuppoſed, as *Paul* in the like caſe, while they follow Chriſt. This duty he enforceth from a two-fold Argument.

1. The joyful and profitable end of their Paſtors converſation:

2. That *Jeſus Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, and to day, and for ever.* Chriſt that helped his ſervants in former times, will ſtill help them. Chriſt is ſtill the ſame, though

though we be not thoſe worthies that went before us: an excellent point of comfort.

In the next place he dehorts from the contrary ſinne. Be not carried about with divers and ſtrange Doctrines; carried about, as light, empty chaff is with every winde; divers, that is, different Doctrines one with another, for all errours diſagree among themſelves, as well as with the truth; ſtrange Doctrines, becauſe brought in againſt the ſenſe and meaning of the Scripture: now to make this Dehortation prevalent, he declareth that grace in the heart is farre better than any learning in the head, by the Propoſition in the Text, it is good, the poſitive is for the comparative, it is better to eſtabliſh, or have the heart eſtabliſhed (the word is the middle voice) by grace, that is, the inward works and gifts of Gods ſanctifying Spirit, than with meats, that is, diſputes and controverſies about the difference of meats: you know how that Queſtion troubled the Church of God in her infancy. Some indeed expound meats of the Legal Sacrifices, for the Jews thought themſelves made more holy by eating thereof. Inſomuch that ſome are brought in pleading this at the day of Judgement, *Have we not eat in thy preſence?* Others relate it to thoſe banquets, and dainty feaſtings, the *Nicolitans* entertained their Diſciples with: but the firſt expoſition is to be preferred. By grace alſo ſome underſtand the Doctrine of faith; others the grace of the Goſpel, and the ſenſe of it in our hearts. But the phraſe, *Eſtabliſh the heart with grace*, doth carry it for ſome gift of God wrought in the ſoul, confirming and ſettling it in the truthes and commandments of God, by faith and obedience, which we call ſanctifying grace; ſo that as I have handled the work of godlineſs under the notions of regeneration and a New Creature; ſo I ſhall out of this Text ſpeak of it, under that uſual and frequent name of grace, the work of grace in a mans heart; but there is one profitable and neceſſary Doctrine lieth in the way, before we enter into the bowels of that Point. That whereas the Apoſtle dehorting from following ſtrange and divers Doctrines, doth urge as a ſpecial help and remedy hereunto, to get grace in our hearts, whereas in probability we ſhould have thought, he would have preſcribed, to ſtudy controverſies, to ſpend our time in diſputes, that ſo we may finde out the truth, he adviſeth not to ſuch a courſe, but to ſtudy the exerciſe of grace, and to have our hearts eſtabliſhed with practical godlineſſe, as if an heart buſied and diligent in the practical power of grace, were the beſt bulwark in the world againſt all falſe Doctrines. Obſerve then,

That its far better to have the heart filled with the power of grace, than the head with diſputes and controverſies in Religion.

Its better to have faith ſetling thy heart upon Chriſt, than to diſpute whether faith juſtifie. Its more comfortable to be a Saint, than to argue, Whether Saints only are members of a viſible Church.

For opening this, I ſhall firſt ſhew, What it is to have grace eſtabliſh the heart, and then give the grounds of the Point. Only you muſt know, that as grace is here ſaid to eſtabliſh the heart; ſo in other places this effect is attributed to God, 1 Pet. 5.10. The Apoſtle there prayeth that God would ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle them: their God doth it, and here Grace; for its uſual in Scripture to attribute the ſame effect to the inſtrumental and principal cauſe; Grace doth only eſtabliſh the heart of a man formally, as the inſtrument of Gods Spirit; and indeed grace in the heart being alſo a creature, though of a ſupernatural excellency, needeth it ſelf a daily ſtrengthning and preſervation from God. Hence the Apoſtle when he exhorteth us *to put on the whole armour of Chriſt*; when all this is done, he concludeth, *Praying alwayes*, Epheſ. 6.18. A Chriſtian in all the ſpiritual ſtrength muſt pray as earneſtly, and depend as ſolely upon the power and might of God, as if he had no grace at all.

In what ſenſe inherent grace eſtabliſheth the heart.

This premiſed, let us conſider in what ſenſe inherent grace may be ſaid to eſtabliſh and ſettle the heart: And this it doth ſeveral wales:

Firſt,

1. *By rooting us upon Chriſt, and building us upon him*; by which means the gates of hell cannot prevail againſt ſuch an one: Where grace is in the heart, there alſo Chriſt dwels, and grace is but the fruit, Chriſt is the root, *Col.* 2.7. Grace is like the navel ſtring, eſpecially faith, whereby the ſoul is united to Chriſt, and fetcheth nouriſhment from him. Our Saviour makes a difference of two builders in Chriſtianity, both raiſe up and edifie; have a profeſſion, an outward form of Religion, but one buildeth upon ſands, and another upon the rock. Now he buildeth on ſands, whoſoever taketh up the way of Religion upon any worldly, carnal or corrupt principle: If it be built upon education, cuſtom, formality, this is like a ſtone not faſtned to the corner ſtone, and ſo a ſudden tempeſt will hurl it down; therefore *Epheſ.*3. when the Apoſtle had prayed, that they might be ſtrengthened in the inward man (the word ſpoken of in my Text) he addeth, *Rooted and grounded in love*, in the love of Chriſt? till therefore thou art homogeneous with Chriſt, as it were, and doſt love him becauſe of holineſs and godlineſs ſake, thy heart is looſe and uncertain: If the tree had no rooting in the earth, it would be as ſubject to fall as any leaf it beareth: If the ſhip be not anchored, its carried with every wind; ſo unleſs grace ſettle thee upon Chriſt, and thou cleave to him, there is no temptation but will hurry thee this way and that way: Even a reed that is apt to be ſhaken with every wind, if tyed to a rock, ſtands unmoveable; ſo thy heart naturally falſe, deceitful, inconſtant, and full of treachery to God, if faſtned to Chriſt, then as Chriſt is the ſame yeſterday, and to day, ſo art thou; As the times did not, nor have not changed Chriſt, ſo neither will they thee, when grounded on him; if therefore you ſee men leaner in the ways of godlineſs than before, not ſo much in the practical exerciſe of Grace, it's becauſe they run as ſheep among the brambles and bryers of diſputes, and loſe their wool, they do not keep cloſe by faith to the live Tree, which would convey ſweet fulneſs: Happy therefore is that Chriſtian, who daily goeth out like that woman to touch Chriſt that ſo he may finde vertue come from him to heal him: If thou haſt bottomed thy ſelf upon any thing but Chriſt, thou art not a pillar in the temple of the Lord, which cannot be removed, as is promiſed to the godly *Rev.* 3.12.

1. By Rooting us upon Chriſt.

2. *Grace eſtabliſheth the heart, by fixing it to one object*, ſo that the main ſtream and current of his heart runneth that way: Its the great corruption in our natures that we would ſerve two maſters, God and the Creature: we are divided between theſe two, and ſometimes God and Religion hath our heart, and ſometimes the world and earthly comforts have our hearts: Now grace comes and fixeth the heart upon God; whereas before the ſcales were even, or rather that towards the world did weigh down, now grace weigheth heavieſt: This the Scripture calls halting between two, and the Apoſtle *James* Δίψυχος ἀνὴρ a double minded man, *Jam.* 1. or a man with two ſouls, he is even ſorry he hath not a ſoul for God, and a ſoul for the world alſo: But this is a notable effect of grace, to make the heart cleave to the Lord; as the Scripture often calls it, even as glew makes things to adhere to one another, ſo that they become one. A man of Diſputes and Notions meerly in Religion, is like a ſhip toſſed in the ſea, without Pilot or Anchor? whereas a man ballaſſed with Grace, and anchored on Chriſt, is not in danger of ſhipwrack: Oh then let not thy ſoul be like a Meteor, toſſed up and down, but like a fixed Star in its Orb; chuſe Chriſt for thy portion ſo as to leave the world, take up *Davids* diſpoſition, *My heart is fixed, my heart is fixed*: Hence the godly ſoul is ſaid to be maried unto Chriſt, becauſe it leaveth all other objects, and chuſeth him onely.

2. By fixing the heart to one object.

3. *Grace doth eſtabliſh the heart, becauſe it removeth inconſtancy, and enableth the ſoul to perſevere*: Its not ſo much grace, as perſeverance in grace that crowneth a man. *Adam*, though he had all good things beſtowed on him, yet becauſe he did not perſevere, he loſt all his happineſs: Now this is a diſtinct work of

3. By r[illegible] incon[illegible].

grace,

grace, eſtabliſhing the ſoul, from the former, becauſe here the ſoul doth for a while cleave to God, but then loſeth its hold again: The Iſraelites are a perpetual inſtance herein, who humbled themſelves, and turned unto the Lord, but their hearts were not ſtedfaſt within them, and their righteouſneſſe was like a morning dew, which made *Moſes* ſay upon their good promiſes, they made, *O that there were ſuch an heart within them*; thus alſo the temporary Believer in the parable, who received with joy the word of God, and believed for a while, *Matth.* 13. preſently revolted. The reaſon why men have a flux and a reflux of their faith and repentance, is becauſe (as they ſay of the motions of the ſea) they follow the moon that is ſubject to change; they are carried out to good things, not from an induring principle, nor hath grace taken deep root in their ſouls; Therefore *Modo aiunt, modo negant*; ſometimes they affirm, and ſometimes they deny. This inconſtancy, is a fruit of the former uncertainty, and want of fixation upon God; as the Apoſtle *James* ſheweth, *A double minded man is inconſtant in all his ways*, therefore compared to the waves of the ſea, that ſometimes are mounted up to heaven, and then preſently vaniſh down again towards the earth. Stedfaſtneſs and conſtant evenneſs in the ways of God, breeds much joy, and is many times accompanied with comfortable aſſurance; whereas an heart ſometimes up, and then down, in the ways of grace and duty, is alſo inconſtant in his comforts ſo that hereby he doubts of himſelf, and knoweth not what will become of him. If thy righteouſneſſe be but a morning dew, ſo is alſo thy conſolation, it will quickly vaniſh: Oh then how comfortable is it for grace ſo to ſettle thy heart, that thou art not ſubject to ſuch changes and variations as others are!

4. By making the heart ſincere and upright.

4. *Grace doth in this reſpect eſtabliſh the heart, becauſe it makes the heart ſincere and upright*, in all its endeavours and addreſſes to God. The hypocrite, who is moved to duties from falſe and carnal grounds, he is up and down, and turneth as the wind of his own intereſt driveth him. Thoſe that make gain godlineſs, they muſt winde and turn as gain moveth them. *Judas* not having a ſincere heart, betrayeth Chriſt and his ſoul for worldly advantages: Oh then how much better were it, while thou art thinking of this, and diſputing of that, to labor for integrity, uprightneſs to ſee thy ſoul be carried out to godlineſs for godlineſſe ſake. Hypocriſie will make thee a *Camelion*, turn into the likeneſs of every object thou comeſt nigh: And as *Ariſtotle* ſaith, It is fear that makes it ſubject to ſuch changes: ſo in an hypocrite fear of the loſs of ſome worldly comforts and contents, makes him become any thing to every body; ſo that this is the beſt ſtudy and conſcience, this is the beſt queſtion, how I may get an unfained heart, an heart without guile or falſe and ſelf-ſeeking ends. If thou hadſt the tongue and parts of men and Angels, it would not afford thee ſo much comfort as a plain, ſimple and ſingle heart towards God; to be able when thou dyeſt to ſay with *Hezekiah, Remember how I have walked before thee in a true and faithfull heart*, 2 King 20. 3. is of more conſequence than thoſe who ſaid, *Remember we have propheſied in thy name, and wrought miracles in thy name*: It is good then, when the Profeſſors of the Goſpel meet together, and conſider, How may we be true Iſraelites in whom there is no guile? we have much ado with our hearts, they are ſo apt to deceive, to ſupplant, to make falſe Syllogiſms, as the Apoſtle ſaith, that we can never be wary enough: A clear conſcience full of ſincerity, is *dulcis nutricula ſenectutis*; a ſweet nurſe in old age, like yong *Abiſhag* put into old *David* to keep health and life in him.

5. In uniting all the powers and faculties

5. *Grace doth eſtabliſh the heart, in that it uniteth all the powers and faculties together in the ſervice of God*: That as it makes the heart chuſe one object onely, ſo it conjoyneth all the ſtrength of the ſoul one way, to cleave to it: Thus love is with all the heart, all the ſoul, all the minde, and all the ſtrength, and *David* prayeth earneſtly for this, *Unite my heart to fear thy name*, Pſal. 86. 11. All diſtractions and diviſions, weaken not only in a Kingdom, and in the Church,

but

but in a mans duties and approaches to God; therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, *I would have you ſerve the Lord without diſtraction*; ſee how divinely the Apoſtle preſſeth that point, 1 Cor. 7. 32. I would have you ἀμερίμνους, be without dividing cares: The heart muſt not be like the Levites wife, cut in many pieces; and *verſe* 35. *That you may attend upon the Lord without diſtraction.* εὐπάρεδρον an excellent word, it ſignifieth leaving all things, and ſetting our ſelves only to this buſineſs, and ἀπερισπάστως, not to be diſtracted and violently taken off from it. The Heathens cuſtome was to ſay, *Hoc age*, in their ſacrifices; and it is a Proverbial ſpeech, *Liberet me deus ab homine unius tantum negotii*, deliver me from a man that hath but one buſineſs in hand, for he is likely to be a deſperate enemy: Herein then is the admirable power of Grace ſeen, that the heart is collected and united, all his Love, all his Faith, all his Joy runs the ſame way; not but that he followeth his worldly imployments, but with ſubordination, and he doth them comparatively, as if he did them not. This is the work and ſtudy of Chriſtians, that God hath called them to.

6. *Grace doth therefore eſtabliſh and ſettle the heart, becauſe it makes a man go forward on apace*, and to get up into an higher pitch of holineſs; now, there is no ſuch remedy againſt unſtedfaſtneſs, as to grow in Grace. The Apoſtle *Peter*, when he bids believers take heed of falling from their ſtedfaſtneſs, he directs them to this as a ſpecial Antidote, *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. It is a neceſſary thing in Chriſtianity, not to content our ſelves with low principles, but to propound to our ſelves the higheſt expreſſions and degrees of Grace: Thus *Paul* forgot all behind, and did preſs forward ἐπεκτεινόμενος, ſtretch out himſelf to reach and lay hold upon eternal life: Alas, the way of Grace is ſo exact, hath ſo great a latitude, that there is work enough to exerciſe thy ſelf therein all thy life time, and yet at laſt think thy ſelf but a Dwarf comparatively, to the Giant thou ſhouldſt be; Why then art thou ſo careleſs and negligent? Haſt thou all the faith thou canſt have? All the heavenly mindedneſs thou mayeſt have? Canſt thou go no further in godlineſs? Look upon *David* and *Paul* in their courſe of godlineſs, and thou wilt cry out, Oh draw me, I am but the ſhadow of a godly a man: There is ſo much perfection in the way of holineſs, that I tremble at my imperfections. 6. It makes a man ſtill to go on and grow in holineſs. Phil. 3.

7. *Grace doth eſtabliſh and ſettle the heart, by the joy and heavenly conſolation which many times flow from it*: that as bread is called the ſtaff of a man, it nouriſheth and maintaineth him in ſtrength, and wine makes glad the heart of men, all which produce much natural ſtrength; ſo Grace accompanied with the ſenſe of Gods love in the Goſpel, and joy therein doth very much confirm a man. Hence the joy of the Lord is ſaid to be the godlies ſtrength, *Neh.* 8. 10. and where grief and a wounded ſpirit is, there are weak hands and feeble knees. As a piece of timber while moiſt and full of ſap, is not able to bear up any weight; thus a godly man devoid of comfort and ſpiritual joy, is like fruit eaten with many worms, every blow will make it fall to the ground; but godlineſs with the comforts attending it doth revive and keep up the ſpirits of men, inſomuch that Grace doth put ſtrength into the Martyrs, and enabled them to conflict with all miſeries; and it may juſtly be thought, that the want of the experience of this ſolid and unſpeakable joy in the Holy Ghoſt, makes men ſeek out for comfort in other things, for all life is for ſome pleaſure and joy, and if it hath it not one way, it will try another way: Now thou takeſt ſo much delight in Diſputing, in Queſtions, in Controverſies, becauſe, it may be, thou haſt not the ſolid experience of the beſt joy which is, in the ſpiritual exerciſe of godlineſs: So alſo another he takes no delight but in the encreaſe of wealth and temporal greatneſs, becauſe he cannot ſay with *David*, *Lord, thou haſt put more comfort in my heart, than they had when their Wine and Oyl encreaſed*, Pſal. 4. Oh then when a Chriſtian can ſay to every temptation, that would draw him off from minding the ſavoury things of godlineſs, 7. By Joy and Conſolation.

Why do ye tempt me to my loſs? I cannot be better. No exerciſe can equalliſe this, then is he excellently ſettled in godlineſs.

8. By preparing it for every good work.

8. *Grace doth eſtabliſh and confirm the heart, by preparing and fitting it for every good work*: For the ſame Hebrew word ſignifieth both to prepare and eſtabliſh, or faſten. Hence the Characteriſtical difference between the good Kings indeed, and thoſe that appeared ſo, and were hopeful only, lay in this, that the one prepared or ſetled his heart to ſeek the Lord, and not the other. The Apoſtle *Heb.* 13. 21. prayeth, *That God would make them perfect to every good work*; the Greek word ſignifieth, to ſet their joynts together, as it were. That as in a man whoſe arms or legs have their bones diſplaced or broken, there is no ſtrength for their proper office, till healed and joynted again: Thus a man deſtitute of the help of Grace, is wholly luxated, all his bones are disjoynted, and Grace that repaireth him, and confirmeth him, by fitting every part and faculty of the ſoul, for its proper operation. How much better then were it, in ſtead of whetting thy wits, and preparing thy ſelf to argue and diſpute, thou wert furbiſhing thy heart, and making it ready to every gracious performance.

9. By being defenſive and offenſive.

9. *Grace doth confirm and ſettle the ſoul, in that it is both Defenſive and Offenſive. Defenſive*, againſt all that outward ſtrength which combineth againſt grace in the heart: The Apoſtle ſaith, *We wreſtle not with fleſh and blood, but with Principalities and powers in high places*, Epheſ. 6. 12. Implying, that the greateſt ſtrength in hell and earth is imployed againſt the godly; now grace only conquers this. *Reſiſt, ſtedfaſt in the faith*, ſaith the Apoſtle; and *Epheſ.* 6. you may ſee how particular graces are compared to particular defenſive weapons, ſome to an *Helmet*, ſome to a *Breaſt-plate*: That as ſin is ſaid to make a man naked in the Scripture, *Exod.* 32. 15. It expoſeth him to all judgments, and he hath not ſo much as one goard to keep him from the ſcorching heat of the Sun. So there is a πανοπλία, an univerſal Armour, to cover all the parts of a man by Grace; therefore our graces are called *The weapons of light*, Rom. 13. 12. and take we heed, leaſt as *Saul* in his ſleep had his weapons of war taken from him, ſo thou by careleſneſs and negligence doſt not dull and blunt the edge of thy graces. As they are defenſive, ſo they are *Offenſive* alſo: Hence the Scripture commands us to kill, to mortifie and crucifie ſin, which is done by grace within us. The people of God are in a continual combate and conflict, an humble heart with a proud, and a dull heart with a willing quickened heart. Here is fire and water together, Twins ſtruggling in his womb, 1 John 5. 4. *Whatſoever is born of God, overcometh the world*; Grace therefore being the ſeed of God in the heart, doth at laſt conquer all adverſe power of ſin and Satan; ſo that *Sampſons* ſtrength in ſubduing enemies is not ſo wonderful, as the gracious ſtrength of a godly man, in conflicting with luſts. *Heb* 11. The people of God are ſaid *of weak to become ſtrong*; and indeed if you conſider the inward temptations from Satan, and the outward perſecutions in the world, you would think that they were made of braſs and iron, that they can endure ſo much: O the ſpiritual fortitude and courage of the Martyrs, tranſcending all the humane valour and gallantry of the Romans, that it ſhould not be any longer ſaid, *Agere & pati fortia Romanum eſt*, but *Chriſtianum*.

10. By faith.

Laſtly, *As all Grace doth ſtrengthen and confirm the ſoul, ſo eſpecially faith, that is moſt admirable to this purpoſe*; therefore faith is called the ſubſtance or ſubſiſtence of things, *Heb* 11. and it is called reſting and rolling thy ſelf upon ſome prop and ſtay, when otherwiſe we would fall to the ground: Thus of *Abraham* it is ſaid, ἐνεδυναμώθη τῇ πίστει, *he waxed ſtrong and mighty in faith*, and this made him not to conſider difficulties, but Gods promiſe; he conſidered not his dead body, and *Sarahs* dead womb, as κατανοήσας, he did not dwell in his conſiderations upon it, otherwiſe he thought of it in his mind, as appeareth, *Gen.* 17. 17. See the word, *Heb.* 11. 1. Take it in thoſe two acts of aſſenting to the Truth, and applying Chriſt, or relying on him, how doth it ſtay and ſupport the ſoul!

Thus

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, Iſa 26.3. Therefore the Apoſtle ſaith, *Above all take the ſhield of Faith*; above all graces, nouriſh and quicken Faith The Scripture ſaith, unbelief, diffidence and diſtruſt, doth make a man *μετεωρίζεσθαι*, to be carried up and down like a Meteor; *διϰρίνεσθαι*, to be like a man, where two wayes are, and knoweth not what to do; *Mat.* 14.31. and *διϰρίνεσθαι*, *Rom.* 4.20. Now to both theſe, Faith is preſcribed as the only remedy that it engthens the ſoul; give me a man with ſound faith in the Doctrine of Chriſt, and a ſtrong faith in the promiſes, and this man will ſtand like a Rock in the Sea, when all errours and ſins will be daſhed in pieces.

Uſe 1. Is Grace the only ſetler of the heart? Then marvel not if men without grace, be carried up and down as ſo much thiſtle-down and chaff when the wind bloweth, that they change according to all occaſions, ſelf-intereſt, particular profits, that they have as many colours as the Peacocks tails. Alas here is no foundation laid, he is a man without a bottom, he is a cloud without water, he is a Land-flood without a fountain; he is a Cyſtern, only having what is outwardly put into him, there doth not rivers of living water flow from his belly; only rooted grace, only eſtabliſhing grace will avail a man: This is the Oyl; profeſſion, parts and outward duties are but the Lamps. Take the ſweeteſt flower from the root it dieth preſently. pull off the fruitfulleſt branch from the ſtock it withers preſently; and all thy glorious parts and abilities without this foundation of Grace will quickly dye.

Uſe 2. To humble the beſt of Gods children, for how much weakneſs, diffidence, inconſtancy hypocriſie and puſalanimity is in them? Oh if thy heart were alwayes eſtabliſhed and confirmed by grace. then what were able to hurt thee; to diſcourage a Chriſtian in the power of his grace, is like *Noah* in his Ark, a Beaſt in his Den, a Dove in the Rock, ſure and ſafe enough: Oh thou therefore who art ſo ſubject to covulſion fits in Chriſtianity, ſubject to ſwoons and qualms, think not that riches, honours, greatneſs, can be a ſtaff ſure enough to lie on, it muſt be only Chriſt received and dwelling in our hearts by Grace; all ſin in thee is thy weakneſs, thy imbecillity; thou ſhouldſt be aſhamed thou haſt ſhewed thy ſelf no more like one that is born of God. The Romans had a Temple dedicated to Fortitude, they made that a Goddeſs, ſo that the Heathen Hiſtorian obſerved, that was deſtroyed before *Rome* was taken (that is his ſuperſtitious Idolatry) but we Chriſtans have ſtrength in God; *Be ſtrong in the power of his might, which is ſtronger than all.*

SERM. LI.

Shewing why Grace in the heart, is better than unneceſſary Diſputes in the head; together with Rules how to manage Diſputes and Controverſies, without prejudice to Grace.

HEBREWS 13. 9.

For it is good to have the heart eſtabliſhed with Grace, and not with meats, &c.

THis Text hath already informed us of this neceſſary truth, in theſe times eſpecially, wherein men deſire to diſpute ſubtilly, more than to live exactly; *viz.* That it is better to have the heart eſtabliſhed with Grace, than the head with unneceſſary Diſputes in Religion: Having therefore manifeſted what it is for Grace to eſtabliſh the heart, let us proceed to give the reaſons of this Doctrine. The *Corinthians* were very zealous of thoſe gifts and abilities, which brought them applauſe and eſteem among others, but negligent about love to God and mens ſouls, which is an effect of ſanctifying Grace; therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, *I will ſhew you a more excellent way*, 1 Cor. 12. 5. And certainly, though it be laudable to enquire and try all things in the matter of Religion, yet there is a more excellent way, *which is to hold faſt that which is good*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 21. Theſe and the like enſuing particulars, are the grounds and reaſons of the Doctrine.

Reaſon. First, *Becauſe the proper end and uſe of all Doctrinal Principles, is to lead and guide the heart into a practical exerciſe of Grace*: Therefore all the while a man doth imploy his head, and his heart not ſanctified, he falls ſhort of the end of all Religious principles; *If ye know theſe things*, ſaith our Saviour, *happy are ye if ye do them*, John 13. 17. Happineſs lieth not in the knowing of them, but doing of them. Divinity is practical, even as the art of Medicine; for a man doth not attain health by reading *Galen*, or knowing *Hippocrates* his *Aphoriſms*, but by the practical application of them to remove his diſeaſes: Hence you have that notable expreſſion, *The acknowledgement of the truth, which is after godlineſs*, Tit. 1. 1. If thou doſt not acknowledge God, Chriſt, and all other matters of Religion after godlineſs, thou miſſeſt the mark: But yet we ſee this vanity upon men, that they know only to know, as it is ſaid of one people, that they had money only to tell it, they made no other uſe of it. To eat meat, and not to digeſt it, is like getting knowledge, and not follow it into practice. Knowledge is ſo ordained for, and relating to practice, that all wicked men are ſaid not to know God, becauſe though they have a general knowledge, yet they improve it not in a particular

cular application. If then *Solomon* obſerved it as a great vanity in the world, that God gave ſome men riches, and yet they had no power to uſe them, *Eccleſ.* 5. 19. how much more is it to have great intellectual abilities, and continual exerciſes of the underſtanding & in the mean while to have no power to make uſe of them for the good of their ſouls: to be often eating of the Tree of knowledge, but never taſt of the Tree of life. The very Heathens, though they had but ſome few ſparks of a true knowledge about God, having no other Book but that of Nature to learn by, yet in how grievous a meaſure are they puniſhed by God, becauſe they did not live according to their knowledge, neither did they glorifie God as they knew him, *Rom.* 1. So then, though thou ſheweſt thy ſelf a rational man, and not a Beaſt, in that thou ſearcheſt into the grounds and reaſons of thy Divine hope, yet it is but labour in vain. If theſe eyes to ſee, be not alſo accompanied with feet to walk in the Commandments of God.

Secondly, *It is far better to eſtabliſh the heart with Grace, than reaſon with Diſputes, becauſe the more quick and apprehenſive a mans underſtanding is, if his heart be not ballaſted with godlineſs, it is the greater enemy and froward adverſary unto God.* The Apoſtle calls the wiſedom of the fleſh, enmity to God, *Rom.* 8. 7. ſuch as is not or cannot be ſubjected to the will or truths of God: Thus the wiſe of this world, have the myſteries of Religion hid from them, and they are revealed to Babes: A working head, without a working heart and hand in the wayes of God, is like a ſword in a mad mans hand. The greateſt oppoſition to Chriſtianity, was from Philoſophers, which made *Tertullian* call Philoſophers the Patriarchs of Heretiques: Therefore the firſt thing the Goſpel doth, is to captivate the underſtanding, and to bring down every high thing that exalts it ſelf againſt God, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. Oh then, thou doſt not chooſe the better part in Religion, when thy intellectuals are continually exerciſed and whetted, but thy heart and life is barren of all goodneſs: It is true, nothing revealed in Scripture is contrary to right reaſon, though it be much above it; but corrupt and carnal reaſon can no more receive the things of God, than a Dwarf can meaſure the Pyramides: So all the while thou art encreaſing knowledge, if Grace be not accompanying, thou art but nouriſhing an enemy againſt God; corrupt underſtandings have prejudiced mens Salvations, as much as looſe and diſſolute lives; therefore ſaith *John Baptiſt* to the Phariſees, *Think not to ſay in your hearts*, &c. Their reaſonings and diſputes within, kept off the power of Gods Word upon them; What brought in all that Angel Worſhip, and deſertion of Chriſt as the head, but that men were puffed up in their filthy minds? *Col.* 2. 18. 2.

Thirdly, *Therefore it is better to get Grace in the heart, than Notions in the head, becauſe all brain-Knowledge and Diſputes may be perverted to an ill and ungodly end;* only Grace in the heart cannot be abuſed: It is true, the profeſſion of Grace, and the outward appearance of it may be abuſed to ungodly deſignes: The name and reputation of piety, may be a colour for iniquity; but real piety it ſelf can never be over-ruled for any ſinfull end, becauſe it is the nature of Grace to make a man refer all things to God. *Jehu* had but the outward body of Religion, not the ſoul, therefore his intentions were carnal and earthly, while his pretentions were ſpiritual and heavenly: But where true Grace is, there is not divers ſeeds ſowen together, but his inward and outward man are both alike; but it is not thus with Knowledge, Opinions and Diſputes in religion. This light may be like that of a blazing Star, which is nouriſhed only by ſlimy and loathſom exhalations, Several wayes, and to ſeveral corrupt ends may all this Diſputing be abuſed; As 3.

1. How Diſputes may be abuſed to corrupt ends

Firſt, *To gain applauſe and eſteem*, to be admired by ſome followers; Thus the Phariſees, they did all to be ſeen of men; this the Apoſtle calls *Puffing up in their filthy minds*: This the Apoſtle expreſſeth, when he ſaith, *Knowledge puffeth up, but Charity edifieth*, 1 Cor. 8. 7. It is a very hard thing if God hath given a

man golden Talents, not to fall down and worſhip them: If therefore theſe Opinions and Diſputes are fit fewel, to beget pride and vain-glory, and to make men look after victory over others, more than the truth; how much better had it been for thee to be exerciſing thy ſelf in godlineſs, and to walk humbly with God! The pride of parts and Opinions, is far greater than that of Cloaths or Beauty, or any other earthly thing, becauſe we judge thoſe excellencies of the mind, above any temporal excellencie; therefore conſider with thy ſelf, what is the iſſue of all thy inquiſitions and debates into Religious Truths, is it to make thee more ſelf-conceited, more boaſting and confident in thy ſelf? The ignorance of a ſimple man, will not be ſo great a damnation, as the pride of a knowing man. Labour then for that which will keep thee low, humble and ſelf-debaſed, and this Grace only in the heart will accompliſh: Worms do not ſooner breed in ripe and ſweet fruit, than Pride and Self-confidence doth in knowledge and intellectual abilities.

II. Secondly, *Another corrupt end of Parts and Diſputes in Religion, is to be ſelf-willed, and ſtiff-necked, not willing to yield to any*; like the Motto upon the Roman god *Terminus*, *Cedo nulli*; and this is that which makes a man an Heretique, when a man after ſeveral admonitions, doth obſtinately and wilfully adhere to that opinion which he hath choſen, and will not, as Religion which is from above, would encline, *Be pure, peaceable, and eaſily to be entreated*, James 3. 17. The Phariſees they were frequent in Diſputes with Chriſt, and deſpiſed the people, as thoſe that knew not the Law, when they had nothing to ſay, and their mouths were ſtopped, yet they would adhere to their former way. Its true indeed, conſtancy and ſtedfaſtneſs in the truths of God is neceſſary: *Herein* (ſaith *Luther*) *we ought to be more Pertinacious than Stoicks*; and it was a Proverbial ſpeech in *Galen*, when men would expreſs a difficulty, *You may ſooner change a Chriſtian from Chriſt*, they were ſuch hold-faſt men: But this doth no wayes excuſe erronious pertinacy, or ſelf-willed obſtinacy in falſe wayes, or in doubtful diſputations: Its like removing a Mountain out of its place, when we would perſwade a man againſt that Tenet or Opinion he is engaged in.

III. Thirdly, *Thoſe Diſputations and Opinions may be carried on, for carnal and temporal advantages, for covetouſneſs and filthy lucre*; as we may ſee it was in the Phariſee: And the Apoſtle diſcovers the end of the falſe Apoſtles, that they thought gain was godlineſs, 1 *Tim.* 5. 6 and the love of money made many ſuffer ſhipwrack in their faith: How then can that be beſt, which may be proſtituted to the worſt and moſt ignoble reſpects? It was *Paul's* comfortable Proteſtation, *That he had not uſed a cloak of Covetouſneſs*, 1 Theſ. 2. 5. The reaſon why the falſe Apoſtles vented their vain Opinions was, that they might not ſuffer perſecution for the Goſpel of Chriſt. And thus *Auſtin* defined an Heretique, one that took up any falſe way *Alicujus temporalis commodi gratiâ*, for any temporal advantage and profit. How then can the quinteſſence and ſafety of Religion be laid in that, which may be ſubſervient to ſuch ſinful luſts of the ſoul.

IV. Fourthly, *It is better to get Grace, than to be exerciſed in there Diſputes, becauſe many times head-Diſputations, are uſed for to make Parties and Schiſms in the Church*; To draw many Diſciples after them, and ſo to ſtand a divided body from others. The Apoſtle, how careful was he to prevent ſchiſms and diviſions? therefore he dayly preſſed love, and to think the ſame thing, and to ſpeak the ſame thing, commanding all things to be done in charity, and nothing through contention and vain-glory. It would be a ſad ſtory, to tell you what rents the Leaders of any falſe Opinions have made, which could not be cured in ſome hundreds of years afterwards; and which is the greater wonder, while the Apoſtles were alive, who were infallible Judges, and could have determined any doubt of Religion, yet in their dayes weeds did come up in Chriſts Garden, and the envious one did ſow tares among the good wheat.

V. Fifthly, *Therefore it is better to exerciſe our ſelves in Grace, than in Parts, becauſe a man*

a man may take a great deal of delight in his Opinions and Notions, and be as inordinately in love with them, as the Adulterer is with his unlawful object. The Scripture many times uſeth this expreſſion, *To go a whoring after the imaginations of their own hearts*: When the falſe Prophets and ſeduced people committed any Idolatry, they took a great deal of pleaſure and content in their imaginations and carnal reaſonings, ſo that there may be contemplative fornication as well as real. Men may fall into inordinate love with the conceits of their own brain, as unclean men with a beautiful face; or as *Pigmalion*, grow inamoured with his own face; ſo that a man may think he preacheth for God, liveth and dyeth for God, when all the while, it is but for the appehenſion of his own mind, which is like a *Dalilah* to him: A fearful thing it is thus to be deluded, but it is a judgment foretold, that ſhall befall thoſe, who receive not the truth in the love of it, *That they ſhall be delivered up to believe a lie*, 2 Theſ. 2. 11.

Fourthly, A fourth general ground, *Why it is better to mind Godlineſs than Diſputes, is becauſe at the day of Judgment God will proceed according to our works we have done*; not ſo much the knowledge and parts we have had: It will not be, what haſt thou known chiefly, but how haſt thou lived? thus the Scripture ſaith, *we muſt be all manifeſted at the tribunal, to give an account for what hath been done in the fleſh*, 2 Cor. 5. 11. Oh then, how ſhouldeſt thou ſpend thy time moſt about that wherein the great queſtion will be at the day of Judgment: God will then make inquiry how fruitful thy life hath been of Love, Humility, Temperance, Sobriety, and other good fruits of the Spirit. Would it not be a vain thing in a ſervant, who expects his Maſters coming daily, that will call him to give an account of his Stewardſhip, and he ſhould all the while imploy himſelf in bables, and unneceſſary imployments, not at all tending to that work which his Maſter doth moſt expect, what ſtripes may he juſtly look for? Seing then the end of thy calling is holineſs, and thou art created to a godly life: Oh look to have this Oyl, beſides the Lamp of knowledge, leſt thou art ſurprized by horrible confuſion, when the Bridegroom comes. 4.

Fifthly, *In Knowledge and Parts there is not a true ſatisfying, and filling of the heart with ſpiritual content*; but Grace only brings Chriſt into the heart, and makes God our portion and inheritance, in having of whom there is only happineſs. *He that drinks of me*, ſaith Chriſt, *ſhall never thirſt more*; John 4. 41. Eating and drinking of Chriſt is more than to diſpute about him, to make controverſies in Religion about him: It is by ſaving Grace to be incorporated into him, and to receive Vivifical influence from him. *Solomon* doth not only diſcover vanity in riches, and temporal advantages, that they give no true content to the ſoul, but alſo in knowledge and learning, that hath a greater vexation with it; therefore he concludes, *Of making Books there is no end*: The ſum or perfection of all is, *Fear God, and keep his Commandments*. Eccleſ. 12. 13. Of Controverſies and Diſputes there is no end, there comes jars and contentions endleſs about them, but the ſum of all is, to get the fear of God in our hearts, and to keep our ſelves unſpotted from the ſins of the world: This hath made even ſome Papiſts, who have imployed their whole time in Controverſal Divinity, to cry out of it as an heavy burthen, thinking they have loſt the ſweetneſs of Religion thereby: As *Suarez*, who wrote ſo many Tomes of Diſputes; yet ſaid, He prized that time which was ſet apart for the ſearching and examination of his Conſcience, in relation towards God above all the other time he ſpent. It was a witty alluſion of *Iſidorus Peluſiota*, As the Iſraelites, who did gather Manna, were to go out of the Camp where war was, for the Manna did not fall within the Camp, ſo thoſe that would gather the Manna and Sweetneſs of Religion, muſt go out of the Camp, where ſpiritual war is by Religious Diſputes. As in eating of the Paſchal Lambs, they took the fleſh, and feaſted on that, but threw away the bones; ſo thou art to take that in Religion, which will feed and nouriſh thy ſoul, but caſt away hard unprofitable Controverſies. 5.

But

Queſt. But you will ſay, Is it unlawful to enquire and Diſpute in matters of Religion? Is not this to plead with the Papiſts for Ignorance, and to make that the Mother of Devotion? Doth not the Apoſtle bid us *Try all things?* Are we not to ſearch the Scriptures? Are we not forbid to believe every Spirit, but to try it? 1 *John* 4. 1. Muſt we not grow in knowledge as well as Grace? If the Heathen make no ſearch, how can he turn Chriſtian? If the Papiſt do not enquire, how can he become Proteſtant? Why are Reformations ſo much magnified, if ſo be we muſt ly down in an old ignorance, or take up all things upon truſt? Is not this to make blinde men lead blind, and ſo both to fall into the ditch?

Anſw. I ſhall therefore handle this caſe only, and ſo make application: And firſt, it cannot be denied, but that it is a duty not only upon Miniſters and learned men, but all Chriſtians, men and women, to read and ſearch the Scriptures, and not to take any Doctrine upon the Authority of men, and becauſe the State is of that Religion, or becauſe our Anceſtors and Forefathers did ſo, and believed ſo, *Qui deſerit rationem propter authoritatem humanam, incidit in inſipientiam beſtialem*, ſaid *Durand.* This muſt be acknowledged, and the ignorance, lazineſs, and ſottiſhneſs of moſt people is to be ſharply reproved, who ſee with other mens eys, believe with other mens faith, and do not reſt aſſured in matters of Religion, becauſe God ſaith ſo, the Word delivers ſo, but becauſe men ſay ſo. Are not thoſe *Bereans* ſaid to be more notable than others, *Act.* 17. 11. becauſe they examined the Apoſtles Doctrine, and looked whether it was conſonant to the Scripture or not, and yet this is the general ignorance and ſtupidity of the whole body of Chriſtianity; If they ſhould be required to give an account of their faith, or their wopſhip of God, they could give no better anſwer, than that ignorant woman did to Chriſt, *Our Fathers worſhipped here, and art thou better than they?* John 4. Our Fathers believed thus, and are we wiſer and holier than they: This is not faith, for faith is a gift of God, wrought by his Spirit in our hearts, whereby we believe matters of Religion, for a Divine Motive and Authority, even becauſe God hath revealed it in his word; But wo be to us, becauſe of that ſupine and damnable ignorance which is in moſt men: This therefore muſt be granted, that it is our duty to grow more in knowledge, and not to reſt as Babes in the principles of Religion, as the Apoſtle preſſeth, but to grow and be ſtrong men, and to have our ſences exerciſed to diſcern between good and evil, *Heb.* 6. But here is the difficulty, and the great wiſedome required, how to uſe our parts in finding out truth, ſo as not to prejudice Grace in our hearts; for the Apoſtle ſaith in the Text, *It is good or better to have the heart eſtabliſhed with Grace, than with Doctrines about meats*; he doth not abſolutely forbid the Diſputes about them, for we know this controverſie was much diſputed about, and even in the Councel at *Jeruſalem*, after there was much diſpute, there was a determination of it for all Churches: Therefore take theſe Rules.

1. Rules how to diſpute about Religion without prejudice to Grace in the heart.

First, *Labour to know and improve thy parts, but ſtill in reference to Grace*; Let all knowledge tend to practice; count all that knowledge & Diſpute barren & unprofitable, which doth not leave thee in a better frame of heart, more godly, more humble, more zealous: When we know truths, as they are in Jeſus Chriſt, then they make us to put off the old man, and ſo be renewed more and more in our ſpirits, *Epheſ.* 4. 1. Do not then ſtart queſtions, as children many times ſtrike flints, to ſee how the ſparks fly out, but they make no fire to warm them with: Thou ſtarteſt queſtions, but they do not kindle a fire in thy boſome.

2. *Begin in a right manner*: Firſt poſſeſs thy ſelf well, and be rightly inſtructed in the firſt principles and fundamental points of Religion. The Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, though he would not have them ſtay in the firſt principles, yet he ſuppoſeth they had not fully learned them: This hath made many miſcarry in their diſputes about truth, they took upon them to teach others, before they were well taught themſelves: They never were well Catechiſed and inſtructed in the fundamental points of Religion, and ſo they build an houſe without a foundation.

And

And therefore inſtruction in the rudiments and firſt principles of Religion is very neceſſary for all; do not then affect high and ſublime things, before thou haſt attained to the main and neceſſary ones; and its Gods goodneſs that thoſe points which are abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation, be plainly and clearly revealed in the word of God.

3. *When thou art gon beyond principles, and endeavoureſt to improve thy talents, then ſtudy not curious, ſublime and impertinent queſtions, but ſuch as tend to edification of thy ſelf and others.* There came a man and propounded this queſtion to Chriſt, *Whether many ſhould be ſaved;* This was a curious queſtion, for what was that to him? let him look to his own ſalvation; therefore our Saviour did not directly anſwer him, nor directly repel him, but ſaid, *Strive to enter in at the ſtraight gate, for many ſhall ſeek, and not be able to enter.* The Souldiers ſhewed their goodneſſe, when they came to *John Baptiſt*, and inſtead of impertinent queſtions, asked this *What they ſhould do in their particular calling to be ſaved;* ſo that inſtead of many general or ſublime queſtions, be thou inquiring, what thou art to do as a husband, or a wife, or a ſervant in thy relation to glorifie God. 3.

4. *While thou tryeſt all things, labour to be humble, and meek, and practiſe ſo far as thou haſt attained unto.* The humble and meek he will teach his way: *And he that doth my fathers will, ſhall know whether the doctrine be of God or not,* John. 7.17. If therefore thou doſt not love that truth, which already thou art convinced of, but keepeſt it as a priſoner within thy breaſt, fear leaſt God give thee up to blindeneſſe of minde, and hardneſs of heart. 4.

5. *Do not lean to thy own underſtanding, but honor and eſteem thoſe helps and guides God hath appointed in his Church:* It was *Hierom's* ſpeech, *Nunquam me ipſum docui magiſtrum;* I never taught my own ſelf: And the *Rabbins* ſay, He that is a ſcholar to himſelf, hath a fool for his maſter. The Apoſtle giveth many exhortations to this purpoſe; and therefore bids them obey thoſe Guides and Paſtors God hath appointed in his Church, which he therefore dignifieth with the title of Lights; Although they are not infallible, yet God hath appointed this method for our teaching and inſtruction, and therefore at the very ſame time, when he giveth a command *To try all things*, he ſaith *Deſpiſe not propheſying.* 5.

Laſtly, *Conſider thy own ſtrength*, If thou art weak in faith, and ſubject to miſtakes, then do thou of all men take heed of Diſputes: Its the Apoſtles advice, *Rom.* 14.1. *Him that is weak in faith, do not receive to doubtful diſputations.* Theſe things deſerve a larger handling, but I preſs to the Uſe; And 6.

First, Its of caution and admiration; do not thou from hence, becauſe Grace is better than parts, ſit down in thy ignorance, and never make iniquiry and ſearch into matters of Religion: This is an univerſal diſeaſe; How few are asking about the principles of Religion? ſeeking for more knowledge, but as blinde men ſwallow flies; ſo they believe any Doctrine propounded to them: This argues, many Chriſtians have nothing but an Humane faith, for a Divine faith hath knowledge for one main act of it. Oh the ignorance that covers the face of the Chriſtian world, as the waters do the ſea! whereas the promiſe is, that in times of the Goſpel knowledge ſhould abound. *Uſe* 1.

Uſe. 2. If Grace be better than Knowledge, then let this exhort you, not for to reſt in your parts, in being a proteſtant, and you are able in ſome meaſure to defend the truth of it againſt the Papiſts, but ſee above all things, how grace and godlineſs is in thy life: What if thou canſt tell what Sanctification and Regeneration is, if thou thy ſelf art not Regenerated? What if thou canſt read many Chapters in the Bible, but thou doſt not live according to the Commands therein? & certainly, if godlineſs be thus better than knowledge, how much rather is it better than wealth, or outward honor and greatneſs? O then, ſeeing Grace is the only neceſſary thing, why is it looked upon as the only ſuperfluous thing? Its according to thy godlineſs that thou wilt finde death and the day of judgement comfortable to thee. Now thou haſt thy hearts deſire, takeſt *Uſe* 2.

content in worldly comforts, but this will not be always; thou wilt have other thoughts when arraigned at Gods Tribunal.

SERM. LII.

That there is a Work of God upon a mans heart which is called Grace, and why inward holineſs is called Grace.

HEB. 13. 9.

For it is good to have the heart eſtabliſhed with Grace, and not with meats, &c.

THe former Doctrine being diſpatched, we now come to treat upon that which I chiefly intended this Text for. *viz. That ſubject matter which doth eſtabliſh and confirm the heart*: For Grace here is made the ballaſt, the *pondus*, the weight that doth eſtabliſh and ſettle the ſoul. Now howſoever the word grace be of divers ſignifications in the Scripture, and it is very neceſſary to underſtand it aright, becauſe miſtakes in this, have cauſed all thoſe dangerous errors in Popery: For wheresoever we read *that juſtification and ſalvation is by grace*: they underſtand it preſently of ſome good thing in us, and ſo take us off from looking on Chriſt, to reſt in our ſelves; but we are juſtified as ſome Philoſophers ſay we ſee, *intus recipiendo, non extra mittendo, By receiving from God, not giving any thing to God.*

The ſignification of the word Grace.

Briefly therefore to inform you, take notice that Grace hath its leſs principal and more principal or noble ſignifications; leſſe principal, as when it is uſed for the *external glory, comlineſs, or levelineſs of a thing*. In which ſenſe it is ſaid, *The grace of the flower periſheth*, or *for thankfulneſs and gratitude*, 1 Cor. 14. as the Latiniſts ſay, *Habere gratias*, the Alms and Charity alſo of Believers, is ſtiled χάρις, *Grace*. But the more noble ſignifications are for *Active Grace*, or *Paſſive* Grace: active Grace, I call that love, and free mercy of God without us, whereby we are juſtified and accepted to ſalvation: In this ſenſe Grace is ſaid to juſtifie, and we have remiſſion of ſins by grace, *i. e.* by the favour and love of God only, not any thing that we have done. This true explication overthroweth the main pillars of Popery: and in this ſenſe where you read of grace in the New Teſtament, it is moſt frequently uſed.

2. There is *Paſſive* Grace, and that twofold, either for to be accepted of God to be in grace & favour with him, as the phraſe is of ever to finde grace in a mans eyes. And thus the Virgin *Mary* is ſalured, χεχαριτωμένη *Greatly favoured and beloved*, not full of inherent Grace, as the Popiſh writers groſly pervert this place. Or ſecondly & laſtly, Grace is uſed for thoſe holy qualities infuſed into the ſoul, and that heavenly help God vouchſafeth to us in our way to heaven Thus faith is a grace, repentance is a Grace, zeal is a grace, *&c.* The Papiſt takes the word Grace in this ſenſe altogether; but we ſay. this is not the moſt noble uſe of the

the word; and the grace of the Gospel so often magnified, is not any thing within us, but Gods favour and love without us: Yet we deny not, but those holy qualities within us are called grace sometimes in the Scripture. Indeed there are divers too rigid, who contend that the word Grace, when it relates towards a heavenly sense, is alwayes taken *for the favour of God*, and that it never signifieth godliness which is in us, or done by us. But there are some places, though not many, wherein is clearly demonstrated this use of the word as it betokens something inhering, and abiding in us, as 2 Pet. 2. ult. *Grow in Grace, and the knowledge of Jesus Christ.* To grow in grace must needs be understood of those holy gifts of Gods Spirit in us, which are daily to be improved: So *Sing with Grace in your hearts*, Col. 3. 16. And again, *Let your speech administer Grace to the hearers*, Col. 4. 6. And if it be acknowledged by all, that the common gifts of Gods Spirit, such as prophesying, working of miracles; yea, and offices in the Church, are calld χαρίσματα, and χαριζόμενα, why should it be thought hard those sanctifying gifts may be also named Graces? And in this sense grace is taken in this Text; for that holy work of God upon the heart, whereby he doth establish and confirm it in godly wayes. From this sense we observe,

That there is a work of God upon a mans heart, which is called Grace. *Obs:*

This point is of admirable use; For without grace here, there can be no glory hereafter. And this grace of God is rarely to be found: There go many counterfeits for this precious jewel: We are apt to call any moral virtue, any ingenuous and civil conversation with the excellent Title of Grace. It is therefore a subject worth the treating on, to shew what are the effects and symptomes of this grace upon a man; for nothing in the whole world is so desirable as Grace: No created excellencie comes nere to grace. A rich man without grace, is like a dead carkass with glorious garments upon it. A learned man without grace, is also like a dead corps with sweet flowers strewed over it. It is the absence, or presence of grace that makes a man happy or miserable: Oh therefore that before this subject be ended, it might turn you all into the likeness thereof; That as fire turneth every object it worketh upon into its own nature, so grace might make every heart gracious. That the Word might be the seal, and your heart the wax to receive that Divine impression: That so ye may be as *Paul* saith, *An Epistle to be seen and read of all men*; that all men may behold and admire the grace of your lives, which is wrought by the word of Grace. To imprint this upon you, I shall discover first the proper Grounds and Reasons why it is called Grace, with the noble effects thereof.

Only in the first place I must necessarily remove a false ground, or effect attributed to it, and that by all Papist Writers, who say, *Therefore this inward holiness in us is called Grace, because it makes us perfectly accepted, and gracious with God, so that thereby we have a right to eternal happiness.* Hereupon they speak most of Grace as that which doth *Gratum facere, Make a man accepted unto God* from the inward condignity and worth of it. This is to take away the true child, and to put a dead one in the room: To take away Gospel-grace, Evangelical grace, and to put something done by us in the room of it. For although it be true, that the godly actions we do are above humane strength, and we are enabled thereunto by the power of God only; and are therefore called *Grace*; Yet they are not done so perfectly and purely, as thereby to make us accepted with God. This is good to know, that so we might give all glory to Christ, and be debased in our selves. It is a great piece of wisedome in Christianity not to confound grace justifying, and grace sanctifying: Grace justifying is an action of God, grace sanctifying is a quality wrought in us: Grace justifying is perfect, grace sanctifying hath much imperfection cleaving to it. Now that no grace in any godly man doth make accepted to eternal life, appeareth

1. Why grace within us cannot justifie us.

First, *From the reliques of corruption in every man, though regenerated, as we see in Paul, whereby he dare not trust in himself, but in Christ only.* He finds evil when

he would do good; for which reaſon the beſt Saints have begged earneſtly for pardon, and have been afraid with *David*, leſt God *ſhould enter into judgement with them, and ſo they not be juſtified.* Pſal. 143. 2. *Nehemiah* when he mentioned thoſe high acts of grace which he did, yet prayeth often, *Remember me O Lord, and ſpare me*, Neh. 13.

2. Secondly, *Grace within us cannot juſtifie us, becauſe the Scripture layeth that wholly on God and Chriſt.* God the Fathers grace, as the efficient cauſe of it; and God the Sons merits, as the ground of it; and by faith we are to put it on as a garment: So that we are ſtill in a paſſive ſenſe ſaid to be juſtified, and not in an active to juſtifie our ſelves, unleſs in that ill ſenſe as the Phariſee is ſaid to juſtifie himſelf. None doth ſo Divinely, and admirably prove this point by ſeveral arguments, as *Paul* in his Epiſtles doth, inſomuch that one would wonder how any Popiſh writer can make Commentaries upon his Epiſtles, and not be convinced of their errour. So that our happineſs and the ground of all our peace, lyeth not in what we have done, but what we have received, and in what Chriſt hath done for us. This Doctrine is like the honey *Sampſon* found in the dead Lyon, in Chriſt crucified, which we are to inſtruct all burthened ſinners in. *Bellarmine* comes off at laſt with his *Tutiſſimum eſt*, It is moſt ſafe to reſt wholly upon Chriſt, not our righteouſneſs, I know it is hard to call godlineſs grace, and not to think that it muſt be all in all; and how prone we are to leave the Fountain, Chriſt, and to run to the Ciſterns, our own Graces, every mans heart can eaſily ſuggeſt. This ſtumbling-ſtone being removed out of the way.

1. Why inward holineſs is called Grace.

Let us in the next place take a view of the true reaſons why it is called Grace, as alſo the properties of it.

And firſt, *It is called Grace, becauſe it comes freely from the grace of God.* The effect is dignified with the Title of the cauſe; it is called Grace, becauſe it comes of Grace. It is true, all good things come from God: *Every good and perfect gift is from him, the Father of lights*; as all light is from the Sun mediately, or immediately: Yet we do not call the good things of nature, Grace, as *Pelagius* did, becauſe they come from God in a general way, as the Author of nature, this in a more ſpecial and appropriated way, as the Author of Grace: So that if thou haſt Grace in thy heart and life, the very name of Grace ſhould make thee humble, thankful, lowly in thy own eyes. If it be Grace, then it is not by thy natural ſtrength and power: If it be Gods gift, it is not thy ability. Oh then admire the goodneſs of God: If thou haſt an heart to love God, to believe in a promiſe, to minde heavenly things, ſay, *This is Grace.* It is not nature, nature hath no power to do thus, nor no will to do thus: No power, for godly actions are wholly above the ſphere of humane power; humane power and humane actions are commenſurate, but a humane ſtrength, and Divine actions have no congruity. And as nature hath no power, ſo alſo no will, or inclination to it, but rather delights in the clean contrary.

2. Secondly, *Godlineſs in the heart and life is called grace, not only becauſe it is beſtowed freely by God upon us, but becauſe we were unworthy, and deſerved the clean contrary.* It is the judgement of *Parew* a learned Divine, that the Image of God ſtamped on *Adam*, though it was the ſyſteme of all Godlineſs, yet it could not be called grace; and therefore reproveth *Bellarmine* for ſtiling his Book, *De gratiâ primi hominis*, Of the grace of the firſt man. It was indeed godlineſs and holineſs (ſaith he) but it was not grace; becauſe though it was freely beſtowed on *Adam*, yet he being not in a ſinful condition, but that Original righteouſneſs was a perfection due to him (as the Orthodox in a ſound ſenſe maintain againſt the Papiſts,) therefore it could not be called grace. I will not determine this; but to be ſure now ſince man hath fallen, that work of God ſanctifying our natures, healing our corruptions, is grace, becauſe it is vouchſafed unto us, lying in a clean contrary, and oppoſite condition. Thus not only Grace juſtifying, and evangelical was admirable to *Paul*, when he had been the chiefeſt of many ſinners, but Grace ſancti-

ſanctifying alſo. That God ſhould make ſuch a blackmore white, ſuch a noyſome weed a pleaſant flower. How great was that regenerating grace which made ſuch a change? Lye down then in ſpiritual ſhame and confuſion, Oh thou godly ſoul, and ſay, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Grace let all glory be given:* For what was there in thy former life time, that ſhould merit at Gods hand to make ſuch a change? Waſt thou not ignorant as others, it may be, prophane as others, ſeeking for happineſs in the bowels of the Creatures as others? How often doth *Paul* minde converted perſons, with their former vain converſations, that ſo the remarkable change made by grace upon their ſouls might be the more welcome.

Thirdly, *This work of godlineſs is called Grace, becauſe it is arbitrarily beſtowed by God upon whom he pleaſeth, and when he pleaſeth:* Whom he will he calleth. *Paul* is raviſhed with the unſearchable depths of Gods wiſedome in diſpencing his Grace, eſpecially God uſeth not to give his Grace, where there might any outward excellency ſeem to diſerve it, for that grace might appear out of meaſure gracious: He ſelects thoſe objects, that have the leſt ſhew, and that are moſt contemptible in the eyes of men. Therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, *He hath not called many noble, many wiſe, many learned*; For if he had taken that method, men would have thought God had been affected with ſuch humane excellencies, and therefore received the rich rather than poor, the learned rather than ignorant; this alſo is an overwhelming conſideration of Gods love. Who art thou that God hath given grace to thee, and not to many thouſand others? It may be God hath choſen thee, one out of all the family, all thy kindred, yea, all the town where thou liveſt. Did God lay Angels aſide, one whereof was able to do more ſervice to God, than millions of men, and take thee? Oh grace! Again, hath God laid many noble men, many great men aſide, and given grace to thee a poor mean man? Oh unſearchable riches of Grace! Further, hath God lain many men aſide, who by their Sex could have been more active and vigorous for God, and beſtowed grace on thee a poor weak woman? Oh admirable grace! The Phariſee thanked God that he was not like other men; but he did it from a principle of preſumption and arrogance: But thou mayſt with humble thankfulneſs, and great fear and trembling, acknowledge the mercy of God, that he hath not left thee in thy filthy luſts, as he hath done other men. Chriſt aggravated Gods providence and care to the widow of *Sarepta*, that there were many widows in that place beſides her, yet the Prophet was ſent to her only. But here is a greater aggravation, how many men & widows are there in the place where thou liveſt, yet grace is vouchſafed to thee rather than others? This ſhould put fire in thy bones and bowels, it ſhould make thee active for God; for thou ſhouldſt think if God had called others, given grace to others, they would have been buſie and fervent men; they would have been zealous for his glory. Oh let me not requite the goodneſs of God after ſo ill a manner: By giving grace to me, and denying it to another of more learning, parts, boldneſs, and courage, he ſeemeth to loſe by it; others would have improved his talents better than I have done: Certainly this conſideration ſhould bee a goad in thy ſide, thou ſhouldſt ſay, Lord, it is fit that I ſhould do thee all that ſervice which others would have done, if converted, in my room. It is not fit thou ſhouldſt be a loſer by me. 3.

Fourthly, *It is called Grace, becauſe it enableth a man to do thoſe things which exceed all humane power.* In this ſenſe grace and nature are alwayes immediately oppoſite; for as thoſe common gifts of Gods ſpirit, working of miracles, ſpeaking with tongues, and propheſying, are called grace, becauſe not procured by humane induſtry, but vouchſafed by Gods benevolence; ſo much more the enabling of us weak and impotent ſinners, to do that which is holy and heavenly, may much rather be called grace. This point if rightly conſidered, would make men look upon grace as a more rare and admirable thing than men generally account it to be. Alas, thou liveſt as thou haſt been trained up, thou walkeſt according to thy education, thou comeſt to holy Duties as the cuſtome and manner is, but never thinkeſt 4.

until a man be prepared by grace from above, he can no more do any thing holily than a poyſonous Serpent can vent hony. Grace therefore is that, which if once infuſed into a man, ſo far as that is operative, makes him live not as a man, much leſs as a beaſt, but upon Divine and heavenly principles; hence it is that the godly are ſaid to be *partakers of the Divine nature*, and Chriſt is ſayd *to live in them* Epheſ. 3. Oh the heavenly Metamorphoſis and change which is wrought on a man by Grace: For how is it poſſible that a man ſhould love the glory of God, more than his own comforts, wealth, or life it ſelf, if a Divine power did not enable him? How could it be that a man ſhould find more joy in God, *than they have had when their wine and oyl encreaſeth*, did not Grace work thus mightily? All civility, morality, ingenuity, and humane piety, or devotion, is but a ridiculous Ape to true Grace.

5. Fifthly, *It is called Grace, becauſe it is the moſt choiſe and excellent perfection of a man in relation to his ultimate end, which is the enjoyment of God.* The glory, beauty, and excellency of any thing, is called the grace of it: And we in Engliſh ſay, *ſuch a thing is the grace of a man:* Now nothing may be ſo well ſaid the grace of a man as grace or godlineſs. It is not wealth, honour, greatneſs ſets out a man, ſo much as grace: There is ſcarce any perfection of ſenſe, but the bruit beaſts do in ſome ſenſe or other exceed a man; and as for intellectual abilities, the Devils do far tranſcend man; only grace puts a man in an higher degree than theſe can attain unto: only there is required a ſpiritual eye and judgment, to judge grace the moſt exellent thing. Certainly if ſolid reaſon might take place, thou wouldeſt quickly be convinced that grace is the choyceſt perfection by this Argument; that is the choyſeſt qualification which diſpoſeth a man to his choyſeſt end: Now wealth, health, and ſuch ſenſible mercies, they only prepare for a ſenſible, and animal good: Parts, Learning, and political wiſedome, they only fit for a civil good; but grace and godlineſs, they diſpoſe for a ſpiritual good, though not perfectly, much leſs meritoriouſly. If therefore every thing be prized for its inſtrumental uſe and ſervice, Why are not all things neglected to obtain grace? And howſoever with Heathens and Pagans this Doctrine may not be acknowledged, yet with you Chriſtians who receive the word of God, and profeſs a ſubjection to it, How can it be denied? Oh then think not thy ſelf better for any outward temporal mercy, but by his grace. Let that be thy firſt queſtion, Am I godly? You do not judge of an horſe by his outward trappings, and goodly ornaments, ſaid the Heathen: So neither may we eſteem of a man by the many outward mercies he enjoyeth, but the work of God upon his ſoul.

6. Sixthly, *Grace in the heart, is nothing but glory begun.* Grace is glory begun here, as glory is grace perfected hereafter, and this doth wonderfully extol the work of grace. Indeed here it is imperfect, and accompanied with many defects; there are worms in the beſt fruit, and ſo an unlovelineſs in us, as well as a comelineſs; and therefore though it be preſent in the hearts of Gods people, yet they dare not appeal unto Gods juſtice, nor can they endure his tribunal. Now we believe in part, love in part, and we may ſay of all our graces, as the Heathen of his knowledge, *His knowledge was not ſo much knowledge, as ignorance*; ſo neither are our graces ſo much graces as infirmities: But yet in time this imperfection will be aboliſhed, God will make thy love a glorious love, thy godlineſs glorious, when he ſhall adde his ultimate perfection to it. Grace here is like a childe in its infancy, and we ſpeak and know as Children, but in heaven we become like men.

7. Laſtly, The nature of grace inherent in us, lyeth in an irreconcileable oppoſition with ſin; they are contrary one to another, as light and darkneſs, bitter and ſweet.

A three-fold contrariety we may acknowledge in them.

1. 1. *An effective oppoſition, as between fire and water.* Thus the ſpirit luſteth againſt the fleſh; as the ſpirit of wine and poyſon conflict together. Therefore when

when ſi is at quiet in a mans life, and thou art ungodly, prophane, and there is no reluctancy, no oppoſition; this is an argument of little or no grace in thee. Oh conſider this all ye who lye down in ſin with ſecurity, there is no complaining in thy heart, no trouble in thy conſcience, no ſtruglings in thy breaſt, no ſtirrings in fervent prayer, *Lord help me elſe I am overcome.* Truely as the pſalmiſt ſaith of ſome wicked mens death, *They have no bonds, they are not in pain as other men,* ſo alſo in their life time they are not in that ſhame, grief, and trouble about ſin, as the godly ſometimes are.

2. *There is a formal oppoſition.* They are two immediate forms, (as it were) in the ſoul as health and ſickneſs, white and black; and howſoever it is a rule, that two contraries cannot be in the ſame ſubject, yet that is to be underſtood in the intenſe degree, otherwiſe as there is a *crepuſculum,* when its partly night, & partly day, ſo there is ſuch a temperament in every godly man, a twilight; ſome ſin and ſome godlineſſe. II.

Laſtly, *There is a moral oppoſition.* Where ſin doth abound, there it procureth at Gods hand either the denial, or withdrawing ſome meaſure of grace already beſtowed; and thus where grace is improved, there God hath made a promiſe to ſubdue ſin, to overcome thoſe rebellious Jebuſites that yet lurk in our land: ſo that if grace be in a man, it lieth not idle: This will quickly be diſcovering it ſelf, by crucifying and mortifying of ſin. Therefore the next thing to be done, is to ſhew the characters of a gracious man: in the mean while make this uſe: *If grace be of this nature, then it plainly diſcovers thoſe to be graceleſſe men that live in the wilfull committing of groſſe ſins, without repentance or reformation.* Oh thou of no grace, How is it that thou art not affraid, and aſhamed of thy ſelf? If grace were in thy heart, would it not be in thy tongue, in thy life, in thy converſation? If grace be the chiefeſt excellency of a man, ſets a man above all other creatures; then ſin which is the immediate contrary, muſt needs be the greateſt debaſement of a man: all wickedneſs is a ſhame, a reproach; it makes a man like a beaſt, like a devil. Oh then let all ſinners tremble, and be confounded at their woful eſtate; when God comes in glory to judge thee for thy life, What grace ſhall he finde in thee? Thou haſt deſired wealth, but not grace; thou haſt deſired to be great, but not gracious. III.

Uſe 2. *How vain a thing it is to hope for the grace of God, and his favour without us, if we have not grace within us.* You heard godlineſs is called grace, becauſe it comes from gods grace; it comes from his love: ſo that when he loveth graciouſly, he maketh gracious: ſin ſhall not have dominion over you, becauſe you are under grace. In vain therefore do men hope for grace juſtifying, where they do not finde it ſanctifying: In vain do they preſume that Gods grace will pardon their ſinnes, when it doth not deliver them from the power and dominion of it. Oh then, that men would not wilfully deſtroy their own ſouls by damnable preſumption. Thou hopeſt in Gods grace who art an inordinate liver, a prophane ſwearer, and riotous perſon: No ſhew me the grace that ſanctifyeth thee, and then I dare promiſe thee the grace that will juſtifie thee.

SERM.

SERM. LIII.

Characters and Properties of a Gracious Man.

HEB. 13. 9.

For it is a good thing that the heart be eſtabliſhed with Grace not with meats, that have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

THere is a choice and noble work of God called *Grace*, as you have heard: The next thing to be inſiſted upon, is, *What are the Characters and Properties of a man who hath grace.* For as all cauſes do manifeſt themſelves by ſome effects, ſo grace in the hearts and lives of men will diſcover it ſelf quickly by its operations. Think it not therefore too much, if we come twice or thrice in words of inſtruction, and exhortation, about this ſubject of grace: for as its not one ſhower of Rain that is enough to ſatisfie the parched earth after a great drought, but there muſt be continuall droppings; ſo neither is one Sermon ſufficient to inform and reform you in this matter, but there muſt be a frequent and vigorous application of this truth to your hearts.

The Character of grace in a man. 1.

The firſt Character of grace in a man, is, *To elevate and lift up his heart, ſo that in all his Actions, Religions, Civill or Naturall, he relates to God as his chief and ultimate end:* For grace being of a ſuperior, and more exalted nature than humane ſtrength and abilities, it doth thereby lift up a man to an higher end than otherwiſe he would aim at. *Whatſoever ye do, whether eat or drink,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *do all to the glory of God,* 1 Cor. 10. 31. As the ſuperior Orb carryeth all the inferior Orbs away in its own motion contrary to their particular inclinations; ſo grace infuſed into the heart overcometh all thoſe ſinful & ſelfiſh inclinations which are in us, and makes us more through God, to God. Grace in a man is like fire, which being of an active nature, doth change and aſſimilate every thing, turning it into fire, or very like it: Therefore even hard and cold Iron put into the fire looks like fire, and ſeemeth to be made fire: Thus godlineſs in the heart of a man turneth every thing towards God; Whereas before his Converſion God was not in his thoughts, his intentions, his deſires and affections, but he lived wholy of himſelf, and to himſelf. Now his eyes, his aimes, his reſolutions are fixed principally upon God & his glory. Thus *Paul* teſtifieth about the work of his Miniſtery, the diſcharge whereof might be ſubject to many corrupt & carnall intentions, that he performed it in godly ſimplicity, as of God, and to God, 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. Hence are thoſe expreſſions, to acquaint our ſelves with God, in all our ways to acknowledge him: and a godly life is deſcribed to be a walking with God; ſo that as the herb *Heliotropium* doth turn about & open it ſelf according to the motion of the Sun; thus where Gods commands are, Gods will is manifeſted, or his glory intereſted, there a godly man doth apply himſelf. O what a precious temper is this in all religious actions, not to be carried by vain-glory, and applauſe of men, but to eye God ſolely! Well did the Father call vain-glory, *The ſweet ſpoiler of ſpiritual excellencies*

cellencies, and a pleaſant thief, for ſo indeed it is. The Phariſees were not godly, though in prayers and in almes often, becauſe theſe things were not done to God but for humane applauſe: This is the Pirate, that many times robbeth us of our rich Merchandiſe, our ſpirituall traffique with God: Inſomuch that a man may be ſerving himſelf and his corrupt ends, when to the world he ſeemeth to be ſerving of God. As in religious actions, ſo even in humane and civill actions, the glory of God is the aime propounded; what the Apoſtle wou'd have ſervants do, not to eye their Maſter, but to do it as unto Chriſt; the ſame is required of us in all our civill imployments. Art thou a *Magiſtrate*? Are thy imployments in civill conſiderations? conſider not men, regard not merit; as he which ſhoots that he may hit the mark, takes a little time to unite his force, and fix his aime; ſo do thou gather thy affections together, and ſet thy ſelf on purpoſe to remember, that this is for God, and to God. Thou deſireſt to look further than humane Arguments would ſuggeſt; this one Scripture diſcovers few men have grace: for take them in religious Duties, there Cuſtome, Education, or pride, are the principles that ſet them on work, or in their civil imployments, and then ſelf-advantage, earthly greatneſs, temporall preferments are the Fountain to theſe ſtreams. But a gracious man is filled with a divine Spirit, over-looking thoſe inferior reſpects, his end being ſpirituall, and ſo raiſed above all earthly temptations; this being the proper work of grace, to put a man into ſuch a diſpoſition, as that he may have communion with, and enjoyment of God; for as a Beaſt is no wayes fit for any commerce with a man till he be made a man; ſo a man while without grace, hath no diſpoſition, or qualification in him whereby he may draw nigh to God.

Secondly, *A gracious man hath a nhigh eſteem and prize of the things of grace.* The Goſpel is the Goſpel of grace, *Acts* 20. 24. The Word is the Word of grace, *Acts* 14.3. God is the God of grace, 1 *Pet.* 1.11. The Ordinances are means of Grace, *Rom.* 3.24. Juſtification and Salvation are the effects of Grace, *Epheſ.* 2.5. Now a man of grace doth mightily deſire theſe things of grace; and it is an evident argument of one without grace, when he hath no dear eſteem, no precious delight in theſe ſpiritual things. When *David* makes ſo many ſweet raviſhing expreſſions about God being his Portion, his inheritance, all in heaven and earth to him; when he doth ſo admire the Ordinances, and the worſhip of God. What are theſe but the honey of a ſweet Bee, the manifeſtations of a gracious ſpirit? So thoſe divine ſtrains of *Paul, Epheſ.* 1. *& alibi*, admiring the grace of God in ſpiritual mercies, do tell all, what a gracious heart *Paul* hath within, that can adore ſuch priviledges. Whereas now come to an unregenerate man, he can no more eſteem theſe things than the Swine doth Pearl or ſweet Flowers. The man in the Parable when he had found this Pearl, he ſold all he had to be owner of it: And thus it is with a godly man, when once he hath taſted of the power of grace, he loves his luſts no more, his ſins no more: As when a man hath taſted Honey, all other things ſeem unſavoury; thus after he is godly, all his former wicked and worldly wayes ſeem like Garlick & Onions to this heavenly Manna; how devoid then of all grace doe men generally demonſtrate themſelves? where is their high eſteem of God and Ordinancies, of all ſpirituall priviledges? Alas, Preach of theſe things, and they ſay, Who will ſhew us ſome other good thing? Thus to the diſtemperate palate of a ſinfull man, the ſweeteſt objects give no reliſh at all. 2.

Thirdly, *Its a ſure Character of grace to make a man hunger and thirſt ſtill after more degrees of grace.* Therefore the godly man is deſcribed by ſeeking, *Rom.* 2.3 by deſiring, *Neh* 1.11. by hungring and thirſting, *Matth.* 5.6. becauſe his ſoul is never ſatisfied in the way of grace, but he hath an holy dropſie on him, the more he drinks of this water, the more he thirſteth after it: Objects that are pleaſing to ſenſe, they glut the faculty at laſt; ſo that an honey-comb is ſometimes loathed; but ſpiritual objects are ſo far from burthening the heart, & cauſing a diſ- 3.

dain, that the more they are enjoyed, the more they are deſired, & longed after. Every Chriſtian is compared to a Merchant, whoſe ſcope is to increaſe & advance his eſtate; to a Travailer, who conſiders not ſo much how many miles he hath gone, as how much of his journey is ſtill behind. Thus *Paul* he forgets that which is behind, *Phil.*3. & preſſeth forward to the mark before him; ſo that it is an evident ſign of a man in grace, when he goeth on to perfection, and thinketh not, I will live as the moſt do, I will not be ſingular, or go further than the multitude doth: Its a ſign thou haſt not taſted how good grace and holineſs is, & therefore thou deſireſt not more of it; & certainly, if grace to ſuch a degree be ſo good and comfortable, how much more is it to an higher degree! As the dog is ſluggiſh until he hath got the ſent of his game, and then he purſueth it violently; ſo it is here: A man that hath not apprehended the powerfull excellency, and ſweetneſs of grace, he is very remiſſe and negligent in all indeavours after it; but he that hath once felt this fire in his boſome, deſireth to make it ſeven times hotter. Oh then if a drop of this grace be ſo precious, what is an Ocean of it?

4. Fourthly, *Grace doth eſpecially, and in the firſt place cleanſe away the filthineſs of the Spirit, and Heart-pollution.* Thus the Apoſtle putteth theſe two together, *Perfecting holineſs, and cleanſing our ſelves from all filthineſs of the ſpirit*, 2 Cor.7.1. For grace (you heard) was the immediate contrary & oppoſite to ſinne, ſeeing therefore the main ſtrength of ſinne lyeth in the heart, and a man is not according to his actions, but his heart; ſo the chief power of grace is in the heart; So that as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Sing with grace in your heart*: Thus pray and hear with grace in your hearts. The Phariſees that were ſo admirable for externall Religion, or Superſtition rather, wholy neglected the work of grace in their hearts; and therefore contrary to nature, when their ſtreams ſeemed clear, the Fountain was all muddy. When the fruit looked like ſweet fruit, the root was altogether bitter. The heart of a man is the Fountain, from whence iſſueth either life, or death; Its the ſouls Privy-Chamber, and the proper Throne for Chriſt to ſet upon. How uncomely were it in an houſe, to have all the out-rooms & entrance lye garniſhed, and ready ſwept, but the inmoſt places altogether foul and ruinous: no leſs folly is it, to look to thy externall converſation, that it be clean and unblameable before men, but the inward frame of thy heart to be like a noiſome Sepulcher. He therefore that is gracious is afraid of ſinne in his heart; *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*, Pſal.66.18. Though all the world cannot judge him for outward impieties, yet becauſe God ſeeth the unbelief, pride and unſavourineſs of his heart, this doth exceedingly afflict him. But oh what ſtrangers are men to their own hearts! who take the Pſalmiſts Counſell, to commune with their hearts, and be ſtill? who embrace that duty ſo often commanded, *To ſearch and try the heart*? Never call that grace in thy life, which is not firſt rooted in thy heart. Or ſay then, O Lord, all the work lyeth within, help againſt inward luſts, againſt inward diſtempers.

5. Fifthly, *Grace doth there eſpecially inable a man to do thoſe duties, where fleſh and blood would ſooneſt contradict.* When we are commanded to deny our ſelves, & take up the Croſs to follow him, when commanded to cut off our right hand, & to pull out our right eye; theſe things are paradoxall to fleſh & bloud; they cry out, Theſe are hard ſpeeches, who can bear them? But grace, that is ſeen eſpecially in curing and healing ſuch weakneſſes; for where Nature is ſtopt, & can go no further, there grace doth properly diſcover it ſelf, Where nature ſuggeſts this to be done as ſafe and good: Grace adviſeth, But this is a ſinne, this is againſt Gods glory. When *Joſeph* was in that inticing temptation, had he attended to the allurements of the fleſh, he had been over-whelmed: but grace ſuggeſting the fear of God, and his preſence, and how great a ſinne it would be againſt him, that preſerved him as admirably as the three Worthies in the fiery Furnace, who were not ſo much as ſcorched. We may ſee an excellent inſtance of nature and grace in *Abrahams* obedience, and his faith; his obedience, when God commanded him to take

his

his only Son *Iſaac*, and offer him a Sacrifice: Every word was enough to make Nature reſiſt and gain-ſay; His Son, only Son, *Iſaac*, whom thou loveſt, to offer a Sacrifice. Oh what violence is here to nature! but ſee how potent grace is; which no doubt checked all the reaſonings of nature, as *Job* did his wife for ſpeaking fooliſhly. Again, in matter of faith in the promiſe of God, there its ſaid, *He conſidered not the dead womb of Sarah*, Rom. 4. nor his own body, *as good as dead*, but reſted on the promiſe, and therefore had hope againſt hope, hope in the promiſe, againſt hope in Nature. Thus when as nature hath its fear, grace hath its fear above that; where nature hath its hope, grace hath hope above it; and how prevalent grace is above nature, is apparent in that neceſſary qualification in every Diſciple; *He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, cannot be my Diſciple*; & thereupon when one deſired to bury his Father, before he followed Chriſt, which ſeemed to be a requeſt of Civility, and natural affection; ſhould he ſuffer his Father to ſtink, and rot above ground? is it not againſt nature to leave him unburied? yet our Saviour rejecteth him with this, *Let the dead bury the dead*, Matth. 8. 22. So then where grace is in a man, there it conquers naturall inclinations: affections and deſires; inſomuch that he puts off a man, when he puts on a Chriſtian. Oh then do not think, that when once made gracious, ſuch humane naturall Obligations will be ſuch ſnares to thee, as they have been: It will not be graces excuſe to ſay, I have bought a Farm, or married a wife, and ſo cannot come; but therefore the rather come.

Sixthly, *Where grace is, there it doth not deſpiſe little ſinnes, but is afraid to commit them.* 6. Its far from ſaying, as he of *Zoar*, *Is it not a little one?* He dares not ſwear petty Oathes, nor uſe idle words; for to grace no ſinne is little, becauſe its againſt that great God of heaven, who hath ſeverely puniſhed even little ſinnes. *Adams* firſt ſinne, which hath involved all the world in ſo much miſery, and made the firſt ſpark to kindle hell, was but little for the matter of it. *Moſes* his ſinne, for which God kept him out of *Canaan*, ſeemed very little comparatively: and *Elies* ſinne, was onely in the defect of grace, he did his duty but not with ſuch Zeal as he ſhould have done; yet for this Gods judgements were ſo great upon him. and his Family, that it made the eares of thoſe tingle who heard it. And as for *Saul* he committed many grievous ſinnes, but that for which God took occaſion to deprive him of his Kingdome, and to caſt him off, was but the not ſtaying long enough till *Samuel* came; and therefore ſetting upon the Sacrifice to ſatisfie the people who were impatient. Therefore where grace is, there cannot but be preciſeneſſe, exactneſſe, they cannot ſwallow a Gnat, much leſſe a Camell: It makes the heart tender, like the eye, which the leaſt crum of duſt doth greatly offend. As for that Phariſaical hypocriſie, to make conſcience about leſſe things and to neglect great, grace doth alſo abhor; for if a little ſinne not regarded, or ſlighted by worldly men, be ſo grievous to it, how much rather that which is of a more bloudy nature? and if ſinne cannot compell him to goe on a mile, how ſhall it doe two or three? Therefore both ſinne and nature are rectified by grace.

Seventhly, *A gracious man is full of humility, lowlineſs of minde, and thankfulneſſe.* 7. Where there is *gratia*, there is *gratitudo*; hence you heard the ſame word ſignifieth both, God reſiſteth the proud, but he giveth grace to the humble, *Jam.* 4. 6. ſo that lowlineſs of ſpirit is both an evidence of grace, & a means to preſerve & encreaſe grace. The very name grace puts them in mind of their unworthineſs, that they did nothing to cauſe God to do it for them rather than others; inſomuch as no Doctrines are more contrary to the work of grace in a mans heart, than thoſe of *Pelagians* and *Arminians*, who make the efficacy of grace ſuſpended upon the co-operation of our will. Oh! how can they diſpute againſt, or write againſt that grace of God which they have found ſo omnipotent upon themſelves, making them of unwilling willing, and of enemies friends to him? If therefore thou art a man of pride, ſcorn and vain-glory, know theſe are ſurer demonſtrati-

ons of the Devill reigning in thee, than Chriſt by grace. Obſerve Paul, a man indued with much grace, and who ſo magnifying grace as he? All the ſtreams of his ſanctifying grace run back again, and empty themſelves into juſtifying grace, the Ocean and Fountain whence they flow.

8. Eighthly, *Grace, where it is, makes a man diligent, fervent and conſcientious in all the meanſ of grace.* God knoweth that grace in our hearts is like ſmoaking flax quickly put out; he therefore hath appointed ſeverall Ordinances to quicken and inflame us thereunto, ſuch a prayer, hearing of the Word, and Sabbaths: now a gracious heart makes much of theſe, they are food and nouriſhment of the ſoul? how doth *David* long for them? Therefore men that live without the publick Ordinances, or private and family-duties, what argument can they have to conclude for grace in their hearts? for if that were in them and abounded, oh the zeal in all holy duties that would diſcover it ſelf, knowing that the heart would grow cold, if theſe coales of fire were not poured on it. Thoſe Plants would not grow, if there were not continuall watering.

The precious advantages or properties of grace. In the next place, conſider the excellent, and precious advantages or properties of grace. As,

.1 Firſt, *It is the only true nobility and perfection of the ſoul.* If the Poet ſaid of Morall virtue, that it was *ſola & unica nobilitas animi*, the ſole nobility of the mind: how much more muſt grace be? for this is *indoles divina non humana*, We are by it born of God, and ſo reſemble not man but God. The *Bereans* for ſearching into matters of Religion are ſaid to be more noble than others: for as ſinne makes a man baſe, unworthy, and therefore like the bruit beaſts, ſo grace enables a man, exalteth him, and makes him like an Angel, ye like God. The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour, ſaith *Solomon*, *Pro.* 12.26. wherefore the godly are compared to veſſels of honor in the houſe, and the wicked to veſſels of diſhonor, 2 *Tim.* 2.20. Oh then why do men eſteem themſelves according to their birth, greatneſſe, worldly advantages. Alas, its grace that is the glory of a man: wickedneſs in great men, honoured men, rich men, is but a noiſome dunghill covered with Scarlet.

2. Secondly, *Grace only hath the promiſes of this life, and the life to come, made to it.* So ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 4.8. Heaven and Salvation is promiſed not to men of parts, morality; but to men of grace. Look over any promiſe in the Scripture for pardon of ſinne, for joy and happineſs, this is given only to thoſe that have grace in them. Now to be a man without a promiſe, is to be like one in the old world, without an Ark, when the Deluge did over-flow: Let thy ſinnes lye like ſo many mountains upon thee, thou haſt no incouragement to call God Father till this grace hath made thee a child to him. Why is it, that men do not conſider this now? Who can tell thee all the woe and miſery that belongs to thee, while God ſets a fiery ſword to keep thee from every promiſe, as once he did *Adam* from the Tree of life? and for the things of this life, they are promiſed only to grace by way of mercy. Wicked men they have temporall, worldly mercies, but it is by Gods Providence, not by his promiſe; & therefore they are not mercies to them, but inſtruments to draw out and exerciſe their impieties the more: wicked men, if they have health and ſtrength, they are more imboldened in their wickedneſſe; if they have riches and large revenues, their luſts are thereby more active; ſo that to the gracious man only they become a mercy; ſo what can more induce thee to get grace than this, To conſider that hereby every thing will be a mercy to thee, all comforts, all afflictions, all relations; this grace turneth all waters into wine, this is the true Philoſophers ſtone, that makes every thing gold; ſo that we are to call things good or bad according to their operations in a way of grace, or ſinne. If the great things of this world make thee more vain, ſinfull, diſſolute, then they are bad things; if the ſad and miſerable things of this world make thee full of faith, heavenly-mindedneſſe and zeal, then they are good things; if thou art gracious, God will with-hold no good thing from thee; all

things

things are thine, whether life, or death, things preſent, or things to come.

Thirdly, *Grace will inable a man to all conditions*, to goe through variety and changes of all temptations, for they being gold can endure the fire, when the droſs melteth, they being corn bear the winnowing, when the chaff bloweth away. Thus *Paul* knoweth how to abound, and how to want, *Phil.* 4. 12. Grace makes a man of that ſtrong conſtitution that he can endure extream colds, and extream heats, as you ſee in *David* and others. 3.

Laſtly, *Grace is the great comfort to a man in time of diſtreſſe, dangers, and feare of death.* Not that a man may put truſt in it, ſo he is to worſhip God only; but as a teſtimony of his intereſt in Gods grace and favour: Thus *Paul* at his death is comforted from his grace, That he had fought a good fight: So *Hezekiah* when in thoſe publick ſtraits, and private ſentence of death upon him, what beareth him up, but that he had lived a gracious life? and thus did *Nehemiah* alſo. Oh beloved, think not to be always merry, jocund; know, one time or other diſtreſſes will ſeize you, howſoever you cannot eſcape the pangs of death: what then will wealth, friends, carnall pomp and greatneſs avail thee? Oh the teſtimony of thy heart upon good ground, that thou haſt lived graciouſly, been afraid of ſinne, walked according to the Rule, will be more joy to thee than all the world: whereas on the other ſide, at the time of death, to have thy heart tell thee, Thou haſt lived a Swearer, Drunkard, prophane Perſon, negligent of all good things, and now art falling into hell, and the hands of the Devill whom thou haſt ſerved, and whoſe work thou haſt done all thy life time: What horror and terror muſt this fill thee with? 4.

Uſe. Is grace thus excellent? Then oh, that you might be transformed into the likeneſſe of it! What will other things availe thee without this, if God hath given thee health, but no grace, riches, but no grace? Be no longer like Swine, to refuſe the Pearl for mire and filth: Have ſuch thoughts and eſteem of Grace, as if thou were a dying, and preſently to give up the ghoſt. If it be worth the having then, its worth the enjoying now. And woe, again woe to thee, who haſt mocked at grace as the greateſt folly, and counted the gracious man a mad man, becauſe he would not run into the like exceſſe as thou doſt: Thou wilt at laſt ſee him the happy man. Theſe things in generall you will acknowledge, but why do ye not apply them in particular? *Uſe.*

SERM. LIV.

Of the counterfeit of inherent Grace, viz. Natural honesty; *and why God hath continued in wicked men the use of Conscience.*

ROM. 2. [illegible].

Which shew the work of the Law *written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness,* &c.

HAving dispatched the nature, properties, and effects of inherent grace, I come (according to my Method) to detect two counterfeits of this, and they are *Natural Honesty*, and *Moral virtues*, for these two make a glorious shew, and seem to be like the two great lights in the world, if humane reason may be judge, and I begin with natural honesty out of this Text.

The Apostle in this Chapter brings in an heavy indictment and charge, both against Jew and Gentile, wrapping up all mankinde in their winding-sheet, as being dead in sin and iniquity; and whereas it might be objected *verse* 14. *That the Gentiles cannot be found sinners, because where no law is, there is no transgression:* He answereth this objection, informing us, That though the Gentiles were without a Law in some sense, yet not without it in another: They were without a Law written and promulged, as the Jews had, but not without a Law ingraffed in their conscience, whereby they had common dictates about good and evil: Which Natural honesty was a Law to them in many things; *And therefore they not having a Law, are a Law to themselves.* This being the summ of the Answer, he illustrates this work of God in mens hearts naturally.

1. By the Title, *The work of the Law*, i. e. The substance of the ten Commandments, which do summarily comprehend all duties to be done, and all sins to be avoided.

2. By the manner, *It is written in their hearts.* Though it be implanted, and ingraffed, yet the Apostle useth this expression of *Writing*, because the Moral Law was written on Two Tables; onley you must not take this expression like that of *Jeremy*, Jer. 31. as *Pelagius*, and others have done, where God makes a Covenant, *To write his Law in their hearts*; for that is a gracious writing *de novo*, whereby God [illegible]seth grace into his Children, enabling them to walk in his Commandments with all propensity and delight, from sanctified principles within. But here he speaks of that natural ingraffing which God hath made upon the consciences of men, whereby they judge good to be imbraced, and evil to be abhorred. It is true, there are learned men, and most of the Ancients go that way also, who expound this not of Gentiles, but believers and converted; for it may seem

ſeem to attribute too much to Nature, to ſay, *That Heathens do by nature the things of the Law*: but when you hear in what ſenſe they are ſaid to do it, you will quickly perceive that to be no ſuch great matter, as may put them in a capacity of ſalvation. I ſhall not trouble you with the interpretation of *Flaccius Illyricus*, much toyling about the ſenſe of this place, which makes ſo directly againſt his opinion about Originall ſinne,

Laſtly, This natural honeſty imprinted in mens conſciences, is deſcribed by an external effect, *They ſhew it*, viz. in the actions of their lives, *abſtaining from whoredome, injuſtice, and murther.* 2. By Internal effects, *The witneſs and workings of Conſcience*, ſometimes by acculation upon things ill done, ſometimes by excuſe and approbation, when well done. Interpreters finde ſome difficulty about the ſenſe of the greek words μεταξὺ ἀλλήλων In the mean while accuſing, or excuſing one another. That is, as ſome expound it, *They condemn one and another*, by reaſon of the natural light of conſcience left in them about ill doing, or well doing. But others, as it is in the Margent, render it *between themſelves*, in this ſenſe, Every man hath a court within in his own heart, where there are accuſations or defences according to the nature of the works we do, Every one hath a judge in his breaſt, and a Tribunal or terrible Bar in his Conſcience within, by which he is condemned or acquitted. This expreſſion I like beſt; only I would render μεταξὺ not *between*, or *the mean while*, but *Alternatim*, *By change and viciſſitude*, as the Greek word is ſometimes uſed: So that the Apoſtles meaning is, That there is ſuch a Law about good and evil in mens hearts, appeareth, in that all Heathens have had their Conſciences one while accuſing them, and at another time excuſing them; one while they have been terrified, and another time comforted and quieted in their Conſciences, according as they have deported themſelves. Now to the whole expoſition of this Text in the ſenſe declared, may be objected all thoſe places of Scripture which ſay, *We are dead in ſin*: And *Chap.* 3. 10, 11, 12. &c. that long deſcription of mans *Natural filthineſs*, where *none, no not one is ſaid to underſtand*, or to be righteous; eſpecially that famous place ſeems directly to thwart this, where it is ſaid, *That the imaginations of the thoughts of a mans heart are onely evil, and that continually.* But here may eaſily an happy accord be found out; for thoſe natural impreſſions and inclinations which are about good and evil, are imperfect and inſufficient to enable us to do that which is every way good in every circumſtance; and it is only of ſome particular notorious things, and it is only for the matter done, not the manner of it. Therefore though Heathens have done good things, yet they never did them well; and though they have abſtained from ſins, yet they never did it from pure and right grounds. Thus while they did the works of the Law, and their Conſciences were thus buſie and active within them, yet they were corrupted and defiled; And therefore as the Apoſtle argueth, *Their very mindes and Conſciences were defiled alſo*, Tit. 1. 15.

This may ſuffice for explication at this time; more may be added hereafter: for this Text doth contain admirable practical matter, being fruitful, and bearing twins as it were.

1. *That there is naturally implanted in mens conſciences, ſuch common notions and apprehenſions about God, and that which is good and evil; that thereby their conſciences are very active within them; and they forbear ſome ſins, and do ſome good things in their outward converſation,* *Obſ.* 1.

2. *Though theſe principles and dictates of conſcience within, carry men out to never ſo much natural honeſty, yet it is not Grace.* *Obſ.* 2: The works of the Law in a mans conſcience, may be conſidered according to a mans threefold eſtate.

I ſhall begin with the firſt: And for the underſtanding of it conſider, That we may ſpeak of the work of the Law in a mans conſcience, according to a mans threefold eſtate.

Firſt, *That of Perfection and innocency, wherein God made Adam before his Apoſtacy*: mans threefold eſtate.

ſtacy: And thus the work of the Law was perfectly engraven in *Adams* heart, both for knowledge to diſcern, and power to perform. This was a Star ſure enough to guide *Adam* to eternal happineſs. Adams ſoul was not made like a blank paper, for Virtue or Vice to be written on it, in a meer indifferency; but he was made after the image of God, which, was righteouſneſs, and true holineſs. It was an Image, the whole and univerſall reſemblance of God, and every Lineament was curiouſly, and accurately drawn. By reaſon of this, there was no duty to be done, but *Adam* knew it, there being no ignorance, imprudence, blindneſs, or folly in his minde; and hereby he had a propenſion, inclination, facility, and delight in what God commanded, no commandment being an heavy yoke to him.

But Secondly, *If we ſpeak of man turned an Apoſtate, and become a wretched prodigal, loſing that ſtock God ſet him up with*; Then though nothing of that holy image be left in him, yet his underſtanding and conſcience being faculties of his reaſonable ſoul, they abide ſtill, elſe he could not be a man. And although theſe are wholly corrupted, as to do any thing that is truely good, yet there remains in man fallen common notions and principles about religion and honeſty, which ſerve for many ſpecial uſes, hereafter to be mentioned: And altogether in ſome theſe have been defaced, and they have grown paſt feeling, and their ſenſe of God almoſt extinct, yet for the general theſe principles have been active in all men.

And Laſtly, *We may ſpeak of theſe Divine reliques in man, as reformed and enlightned by Gods word, and furbiſhed by ſupernatural direction*: And herein they are wonderfully furthering godlineſs; for grace doth not put out thoſe little ſparks, but enkindleth them to a flame: So that natural principles elevated and perfected by ſupernatural, carry a man forward to all real godlineſs. *Now my diſcourſe ſhall be limited to natural light and power, while we are corrupted in our ſinfull eſtate*; and in the examination of this, we may ſee diſcovered, that though nature hath many things laudable and commendable, yet ſhe is not to ſit in the Throne of Grace; but rather nature is graces foot-ſtool.

In the next place let us conſider why God hath left theſe notions (as ſo many ſparks of fire raked up in aſhes) in our hearts.

Why God hath left the notions of conſcience in man fallen.

1. That God might be known and acknowledged in all the world.

And firſt, *That hereby God might be known and acknowledged in all the world*: That though men by nature did but grope in the dark, when they enquire what God was, yet it was clear to them there was a God, whom they conceived ſupreme, and than whom nothing could be better. This the Apoſtle calls τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ *That which may be known of God, Rom.* 1. 19. Indeed this naturall knowledge of God is ſo confuſe, uncertain, and corrupted through carnall imaginations, that in the Scripture phraſe they are ſaid *to be ignorant of God and to be without God, and that God is onely known in his Church*: But yet that they attain to ſome kinde of apprehenſion of him, is plain by *Rom.* 1. where they are condemned *becauſe they did not glorifie God, as they knew God*. This is a ſure Axiome, That there is no meer naturall Athieſt in judgement; there may be an Athieſt in affection and deſire, wiſhing there were no God to govern and order all things, puniſhing men for their wickedneſſe; in which ſenſe the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *The fool hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God, Pſal.* 14. 1. But to be perſwaded in judgement, there are none ſo by nature, or very rare: *God hath ſet this Candle in the dark places of the belly, to keep men in awe, and to acknowledge a power above them*. Men that have not had the glorious Sunne of the world to walk by, yet they have had this Torch to go by in the night. And truly the improvement of this natural principle, that there is a God, might make every wicked mans joynts to tremble; for if thou canſt not raiſe it out of thy heart, Why doſt thou not glorifie him as God? Why art thou not afraid of him as a God?

2 That we may be the more inexcuſable.

Secondly, *Therefore theſe practicall principles of good and evil abide in us*, that ſo

ſo we might be the more inexcuſable: For when men have not lived according to that which the light of Nature would have directed them to, their condemnation will be very juſt, themſelves being Judges, and their own conſciences bearing witneſs to it. When therefore men live in ſuch ſins as Nature condemneth, ſuch are uncleanneſs, unjuſt dealings, lying and forſwearing; they do not need *Moſes* his Law, nor *Paul*'s Goſpell to condemn them; they have that in their own hearts which will accuſe and overthrow them. The Apoſtle many times provoketh to Duty by this, 1 Cor. 11. 14. *Doth not even Nature teach thee?* Oh how often may even Chriſtians be ſeverely rebuked? Doth not even Nature teach thee, that to Lye, Steal, commit Adultery, are horr'd ſins? How then canſt thou break this ſtrong bond in which Natural light hath tyed thee? To be condemned, becauſe we do not believe in Chriſt, would not be unleſs Chriſt had been propounded to us: We need ſupernatural revelation to ſome Duties; but the Duties enjoyned by Nature, they oblige us, though no Scripture had been written, no Miniſters did inform us; though none ſhould bid us fulfill them. Thou haſt a Doctor or Teacher in thy own breaſt, which condemneth thee for what thou doeſt, therefore art thou greatly inexcuſable.

Thirdly, *God leaveth theſe practical impreſſions upon us, that ſo what is good may be honoured and prayſed, what is evill may be matter of ſhame and reproach.* It is an excellent thing to conſider, that the things of piety, and juſtice, and all goodneſs, have a remarkable reverence in the hearts of all men. Who would not be thought to be pious, to be juſt, to be righteous? Now how could theſe come to have ſuch Authority amongſt men, if there were not ſomething in Nature to approve it? So wickedneſs, that is condemned and cenſured by all mankinde: Now no man is willing to be thought an ungodly man, an unjuſt man; and whence is all this, but ſtill from this work of the Law written in mens hearts? Hence are thoſe rules, *Omnis peccans eſt ignorans*, and *Nemo poteſt velle malum, quâ malum*, Evill is forward to come in Goodneſſes clothes, elſe it could not be embraced by any man. This makes much to juſtifie the Nature of what is good and right; for all men, though never ſo ſavage or barbarous, they do adore it in the general, though in the particular they have greatly miſtaken. 3. That what is good may be honoured.

Fourthly, *This Law is written in mens hearts, that ſo Kingdomes and Commonwealths, and all humane Societies may be preſerved*: For if there were not Dictates about God and righteouſneſs, Kingdomes would preſently be turned into robberies, and horrid confuſions. We admire, and that juſtly, the providence of God in bounding the waters, that they do not overwhelm the earth: But much more admirable is Gods power in preſerving humane Societies, that men are not Wolves and Tygars, committing all bloody outrages. What is the cauſe of this? No outward power or ſtrength ſo much, as an inbred apprehenſion about a God, and a ſtrong conviction of the Conſcience, what is righteous and juſt to be done; And therefore whenſoever this hedge is broken down, the very flood-gates of all wickedneſs are preſently ſet open; and bleſſed be God, that hath put ſuch a bridle in the mouth of man, Who by ſin hath made himſelf ſo bruitiſh. 4. That Kingdomes and Commonwealths may be preſerved.

Fifthly, *God hath left theſe ſacred remnants in us, that there might be a ground of converſion and regeneration*: For howſoever we are ſaid to be dead in ſinne, and our hearts are compared to ſtones, and we reſembled to bruit beaſts; yet that is in reſpect of any active capacity or ability, to do what is good, otherwiſe God dealeth with us in a way of reaſon and argument, anſwerable to thoſe Natural Dictates within. Thus when *Paul* preached of Temperance, Righteouſneſs, and the world to come, *Felix* trembled, becauſe there were ſome principles of reaſon within him aſſenting to thoſe Truths which *Paul* preached. Indeed 5. That there might be a ground of converſion.

the Papists foully mistake, who make regeneration to be nothing but the actuating and exciting of those inward principles by grace: As if a man should blow up and inflame some little sparks of fire covered under ashes: And by this means they make Nature co-operate with Grace; this contradicts those expressions where God is said to make an heart of flesh, *and write his Law in us*; for by these Texts it is apparent, That God infuseth the first power into us, and puts in a Divine strength, and doth not excite, or stir up our Natural strength: So that besides this Natural writing, there must be a Gracious writing, else we certainly perish. But yet these natural principles of Religion and Honesty, are good foundations to work upon; to preach to men and not to beasts. I speak (saith *Paul*) to wise men, 1 *Cor.* 10. 15. judge what I say. We preach to men that should have Reason, and Natural Conscience working in them: Now if so, How is it that thou art not converted? That thou hast not left thy sins? Set upon a way of strict Godliness? for let thy Natural Conscience worke; give it leave to argue; hear it say what it can; Doth not that close with the holy Truths we preach to you? Your affections (happily) do not, your love and desire do not, but your Natural conscience, that is terrified; that saith, this is Religion, this is just; therefore it must be done: That saith, thy ungodliness, thy lusts are sins, and therefore to be avoided. Oh hear what that Preacher in thy breast preacheth to thee sometimes: And (Beloved) this is the great advantage that the Ministers of the Word have while they rebuke sin, exhort to Duties: Though we make men our enemies, yet their Consciences are our friends: While your corrupt affections make you rage and fret at what is good, yet your Consciences they speak for it, and approve it. That therefore the word of God might have a subject to worke upon, something to close with, there are these fiery sparks of light and Truth burning in mens breasts: So that there is no man we preach unto, but if he would let his Natural Conscience be judge, and determine about his leaving sin, and doing good, the Verdict would be on the Ministers side. Here is the controversie, the word of God commands thee to cast away those sins thou livest in, it threatens thee with all the Curses in the Law. Well, thy corrupt heart pleads to the contrary, these lusts are sweet, are profitable, thou art accustomed to them; and then thou hast many carnal prejudices: To do so, would be to live strictly, precisely, singularly; and what repute that hath with the multitude, all know: So that it is against their good name and their credit, they conceive, to be so wary about sin; thus thy corrupt affections plead. Well then, put the issue of this debate to the Natural light of conscience, hear what that will say, and presently that will conclude, That which is good and righteous, is to be preferred before what is pleasant and profitable: That will say, God is to be obeyed before man: If you will go on, and live thus, and do thus, I must do my duty; I cannot but accuse you, terrifie you, arraign you; I cannot but give you many sharp wounds: And howsoever you may for awhile through pleasure, and pride, and earthly affections stop my cry, and stifle my voice, yet one day I shall roar so in thy ears, that for horrour thou wilt not be able to endure it. this is the very truth about every wicked man; and therefore think not to bear it out against the word; do not go about to stop the mouth of Natural Conscience. Thou mayest for awhile drown the noise of it, and study diversions; but Oh wo, and thousand times a wo when it shall tear and devour, and none be able to deliver.

6. That so men might abound in civil honesty and virtue.

Sixthly, *God hath imprinted these principles in us, That so men might abound in Civil honesty, and Moral virtues*: which although they are not true grace, they are but copper, and not gold, yet hereby men are less wicked, and so God is not so much dishonoured. *Camillus* is better than *Verres*: *Fabricius* than *Catiline*: Mens lives are not so much to the reproach of Gods name, and his exceeding great dishonour; for howsoever it be true, That these principles of Nature

do

do not encline us to good truly, and upon a right ground, yet by them we are curbed from acting all the wickedneſs our hearts would accompliſh; and ſo are thereby as Wolves and Tygars tyed up in chains. The Apoſtle ſuppoſeth this, when he ſaith of the Heathens, Rom. 1. *That they detain the truth in unrighteouſneſs*; That is, the natural knowledge which they had of God and righteouſneſs, would have provoked them to what is holy and good; but they violently detained this Truth; they kept it from being active, and burſting out like fire in their lives. Is not *Medeas* caſe, the caſe of many men, They ſee better things, and approve them, but they follow the worſt. Oh conſider thy ſelf, Doeſt not thou inwardly think there is a better life to be lived than I live; a better courſe to be taken for Heaven than I take: But ſtill thy ſins and corruptions turn thee out of the way. Oh it is to be feared that this is a reigning univerſal ſin; for men having lived ſo long under the Goſpel, cannot become ſo brutiſh and ſtupid in their imaginations, but that they know when they ſin, and when they do well, How then can they endure to live againſt Conſcience.

The cauſes of the Senſeleſneſs, Silence, and Stupidity of the Conſciences of moſt Men.

BUt you will ſay, If God hath left theſe principles in us, How comes it about that in many men they are aſleep? Do not all men almoſt run into thoſe ſins which the Law of Nature forbids? How is it that men ſwear, lye, commit whoredomes, and do injuſtice, if they have ſuch a School-maſter within to teach them? Who would not ſay by the lives of moſt men, That theſe are overwhelmed and quite buried? And if it were among Heathens, it were no great wonder; but that it ſhould be amongſt Chriſtians, is the great amazement: For they have not only this Natural light imbred in them, but ſupernatural light alſo revealed unto them. So that for men under the Goſpell, to become ſo ſottiſh and ſenſeleſs about what is good, and what is ſin, is beyond all expreſſion intolerable.

The grounds of this ſenſeleſneſs and ſtupefaction of Conſcience may be theſe.

Firſt, *Ill education, and long continued cuſtome in evill*, for theſe things become a ſecond Nature quickly; and the firſt Nature is obliterated as it were. Men that live conſtantly by great Noyſes, they regard them not; but ſtrangers are much diſquieted with them: So what men have been brought up in; they ſaw nothing but wickedneſs and prophaneneſs in their Parents lives, and in the families where they were taught; this takes away the horror of ſin: They ſee their Anceſtours, and learned men, and great men, they have made no matter of godlineſs, but ſinned as they pleaſed; this roots out all aw of ſin in the Conſcience: Some Heathens baniſhed out all Poets, and Comedies, and Tragœdies upon this ground, becauſe their gods were brought in, doing ſome wickedneſs or other: Now they well argued, That men would be much more hardened in their impieties, when they had their gods for a pattern. Ill education and cuſtome in ſin.

And thus it is here, Children, for the moſt part, and ſervants, they have no other God than their Parents or Maſters; and if they obſerve them to drink, and ſwear, and be naught, they immediately conclude, they may do it alſo: So that if you ask, How is it that ſo many men live without any ſenſe of a God, or Conſcience about ſin, enquire into their Education; ask how they

have been brought up: Did not their Parents, their Anceſtors, did not their Families they lived in abound in ſin; and then without Gods miraculous grace upon them, they cannot come to be of another judgement: And this is the reaſon, why the Scripture doth ſo often call upon Parents to teach their Children the fear of God, and to bring them up in his knowledge; for if that be neglected, thoſe natural ſparks of honeſty will quickly be put out. And much like to Education is Cuſtome, men habituated in evil wayes are paſt all feeling preſently. Thoſe who at firſt had ſome checks of conſcience, and akings of heart, when once plunged into ſin, they fear nothing, they feel nothing, they apprehend neither heaven or hell; but as the Salt water of the Sea when it hath over-flowed the Banks, and covered ſome grounds, leaveth ſuch a ſaltiſh, brackiſh diſpoſition in the ground, that it can never be got out again, or return to its former nature. Thus Cuſtome in any prophane way takes away all ſenſe and feeling, ſo far, that they never come to that ingenuity and tenderneſs of conſcience which once they had. How is it that once thou dareſt not omit prayer, private, or in family? That once thou couldſt not give way to unchaſt company? Thou couldſt not endure the company of ungodly men. But now theſe things are never any trouble to thee; they are no torment to thee. This a cuſtome, this is a prophane uſe upon thy ſpirit: Oh then put out the ſparks of fire before it be kindled; ſtop the leak at firſt, before the ſhip be filled with water; reſiſt the principles of ſin: Of all ſorts of people we have leaſt hope of doing good unto them, who are ſettled in a ſinful way; that can ſin without fear, or any regret of Conſcience: For theſe men have not that foundation in them, which we ſhould work upon: For our preaching doth good to thoſe who ſet Conſcience a work, that let Natural light cloſe with what is delivered.

SERM.

SERM. LV.

Shewing more Causes of the Senſeleſneſs, Silence and Stupidity of the Conſciences of moſt Men.

ROM. 2. 15.

Which declare the work of the Law written in their hearts, their Conſciences alſo accuſing, or excuſing one another.

THe laſt day we delivered one main cauſe of the ſilencing, or ſtupifying thoſe Dictates and Principles of natural light, which provoke to that which is good, though very imperfectly and defectively. *We now proceed to a ſecond ground; and that may be an imprudent and ſinfull conſideration of the government and adminiſtration of things below.* That it hath fared ill with thoſe that have done well; and on the contrary, that thoſe who have been very hainous in wickedneſs, have yet proſpered, and had great abundance; hath been a great tempeſt to put out that little ſpark in mens hearts: Which conſideration made the Poet ſay, *Sollicitor nullos ſæpe putare Deos*, He was tempted to think there was no God, when he looked upon the adminiſtration of things below. This ſate heavy on the Heathens ſpirits, whereupon they have made Tractates upon this queſtion, Why it ſometimes falls ill to a good man, and well to a wicked, as *Seneca* and *Plutarch*, wherein they have behaved themſelves in ſome meaſure well, gravely acquitting Gods providence; and had they enjoyed Scripture-light, they had eaſily waded through that deep: And it is no wonder that theſe blaſts have made Heathens ſtagger and reel too and fro, for we have the eminent Cedars in Gods Church almoſt overturned by it. *David*, a godly man, greatly exerciſed in ſeveral conditions, though alwayes finding God turning ſtone into bread for him, when he was in any wilderneſs, yet how pitifully doth he toil and labour under this temptation? *Pſal.* 73. that thoſe who were wicked they proſpered, they had their hearts deſire, they had no pangs, nor troubles; and this did ſo far prevail, that in a ſudden paſſion, he ſpeaks like an Atheiſt, *Verily, I have waſhed my hands in innocency, and have cleanſed my heart in vain.* Oh monſtrous ſpeech, and dreadfull to come out of a godly mans mouth: To ſay, it was a vain thing to fear God, a vain thing to walk juſtly and innocently, if he had done wickedly he ſhould have proſpered better. But this was only a ſudden motion, an imperfect ſuggeſtion of the fleſh, not a ſetled deliberate principle; therefore he quickly recovers, calls himſelf a fooliſh and ignorant Beaſt, goeth into the Sanctuary of God, and there underſtands aright; yea, and as a man in a great inward heat and agony, but getting ſome eaſe and reſpite, ſaith, *Truly God is good to Iſrael, even to the clean in heart*; ſo that this generous wine doth at laſt expell that noxious venome in it. In like manner we ſee *Jeremiah chap.* 12. 1. ſtaggering under this divine diſpenſation, though acquitting God; So that we ſee it is a great part of wiſedom to behold the marvellous doings of God on the earth, with a wiſe and pure eye; not to turn Atheiſtical, careleſs prophane, & concluding it is all one, whether a man be godly, or ungodly,

2. A ſinfull conſideration of the Government of the world.

ungodly, juſt, or unjuſt. The Pſalmiſt ſaith, *The fool hath ſaid in his heart there is no God*, Pſal. 14. 1. It is not *Jehovah*, in the original, but *Elohim*, none that judgeth, or governeth the world, taking notice of things done here below; and how great an encouragement this is to go on in wickedneſs, appeareth by that of *Solomon*, *Becauſe judgment is not ſpeedily executed upon the wicked, therefore is the heart of a man within him ſet upon folly*, Eccleſ. 7. 8, 11. Oh then if thou wouldſt have theſe principles of conſcience quick and active within thee, then do thou by Scripture-information conſider of all Gods adminiſtrations here below, knowing that even what is moſt crooked to thy apprehenſion, is yet ſtreight: As the ſtick in the water, though ſtreight, yet ſeemeth crooked, becauſe the water is not a fit medium to ſee by: So thou art aſtoniſhed at many providences of God in this world, and thou aſkeſt, Where is the Juſtice, the Wiſedome, the Equality of theſe things? But thou lookeſt through an unfit medium, and ſo they ſeem crooked to thee. Alas, the Scripture doth evidently inform us of juſt, and wiſe ends, why God ſometimes ſuffered his enemies to proſper, and godlineſs to be perſecuted, and his Saints made Martyrs for his Names ſake; ſo that the Word of God is the trueſt Glaſs to repreſent the face of all things here below, eſpecially that is ſatisfactory, that God hath appointed a day of judgment for the whole world, when all ſhall appear, and be judged for what is done in the earth; and as here below they do not complain that Malefactors are not executed before the Aſſizes, but patiently expect that time: So are we quietly to wait that great day, wherein God will ſettle all things according to their nature and deſerts. Let no man therefore harden himſelf in impiety, thinking I have been thus long a prophane, unjuſt, ungodly man, and I am well and luſty, nothing aileth, or troubleth me: Let not this cauterize thy Conſcience, for thou art but as the beaſt fatted for the Shambles.

3. Immoderate love of the world, or voluptuous courſes.

A third way to choak this work of nature, is plunging and drowning our ſelves into earthly things, or voluptuous courſes.

I. First, *Earthly things*: There are none ſcarce have leſs Conſcience about good and evill, leſs apprehenſion about God, than thoſe that like Moles are alwayes digging in the earth. *Judas* from a covetous principle within, betrayeth and ſelleth innocent blood. How could he commit ſuch an unnatural ſin, do that which the natural light of conſcience would ſo Condemn? It was Covetouſneſs. Which made the Apoſtle call the love of money, the root of all evil, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. as that which would put out all divine and humane light in a man. The Phariſees who were covetous, derided and ſcorned Chriſt; theſe *Terræ filii* are never *Cœli filii*, Theſe Children or Sons of the earth, are never capacious of heavenly light: It is the puniſhment upon many a man which 'twas on the Serpent, to lick the duſt of the earth, and to live upon that; ſo many men go to bed, riſe and walk wholly with earthly and worldly affections, into theſe they are even transformed, and made like clods of earth. Now ſuch men have very little apprehenſion upon ſin or godlineſs; were it not for the ſhape of their bodies, you might judge them beaſts, for they regard only the things of ſenſe. Thus as the glorious Sun is eclipſed by the interpoſition of the Moon; ſo do earthy thoughts, and earthy affections obſcure that petty light, which ſhineth in a mans breaſt; and certainly, if love of the world hath put out the Goſpel, and Scripture-light that ſhined in ſome mens breaſts, as the Scripture gives pregnant proofs of it; no wonder if it do wholly extinguiſh the light of nature. Take heed then of *Corah*'s judgment or a worſe, he was bodily ſwallowed up in the earth, but thou in thy ſoul and ſpirit. Is it not with thee as the barren heath, that brings forth nothing but Briars and Thorns fit for burning; ſo thy life produceth nothing but damnable matter, and what makes for eternal deſtruction. Be not therefore in this ſenſe, a worm and no man, one that is wholly bred of the earth and liveth in it. Though nature and grace preach to ſuch; though the word of God cry aloud to ſuch, yet they have no ears to hear.

II. Secondly, Men plunged in voluptuous riotous courſes, *living in beaſtly luſts*, either

either of uncleanneſs, drunkenneſs, or ſuch deceitful pleaſures: Theſe muddy ſtreams do quickly put out that candle in the inward parts: *Thoſe that are drunk, are drunk in the night*, ſaith the Apoſtle: ſins of pleaſures and intemperance, they are committed when men have put out all knowledge, that ſo they may neither be aſhamed or afraid of what they have done. As muddy bogs breed toads and frogs; ſo looſe and diſſolute lives breed all poyſonous and loathſome imaginations in a man: Therefore ſaith the Prophet, *Wine, and ſtrong drink, and Whoredome take away the heart*, Hoſ. 4. 11. How many men by debauched and luxurious courſes have made themſelves at the ſame time ſots in their bodily parts, and in their natural conſcience; and by their looſneſs have ſpent their conſciences, as well as their eſtates; and as they have ſcarce one penny left to maintain themſelves or children; ſo not one good thought left in their conſciences, to accuſe and condemn them for what they have done! Oh therefore who can complain bitterly enough of that bruitiſhneſs and beaſtlineſs, many men are plunged in by their looſe and intemperate lives, and even under judgements, and not ſo much awakened as *Balaams* Aſs was under her Maſters blows. Oh that this ſottiſhneſs were onely in *Sodome*, not in *Jeruſalem*, in *Gomorrah*, not in *Sion*. If then you ſee many men living without any dictatings of Conſcience about God, if you ſee them committing all manner of evill, ſo that they plainly declare they have no love of God written in their hearts, but of ſin and the Devill: Marvail not at this, but conſider, Are they not men wholly plunged in worldly things? or are they not confirmed in luſts and pleaſures of the fleſh; if ſo, you may as ſoon expect a Star in a loathſome dungeon, as any right principles in ſuch corrupt converſations; ſo that theſe are ſcarce to be reckoned in the number of men.

4. Frequent and habituated living againſt the dictates of Conſcience.

The fourth cauſe which over-whelmeth theſe Dictates of Nature, is frequent and habituated living againſt them. Conſtant Rebellion againſt the light at laſt puts it out: Men by uſe are not afraid of it. *E conſuetis non fit paſſio*, ſaith the Philoſopher; ordinary things we are accuſtomed unto, breed no extraordinary paſſion, or affection in us. As it is with ſupernatural light revealed unto us by the Word and the Prophets, a daily living under it, made the *Jews* deſpiſe it; and they did the more vehemently reſiſt it, by how much the more common it was; inſomuch that both the Prophet *Ezekiel*, and our Saviour Chriſt tells them, that if ſtrangers had enjoyed ſuch means of grace, they would have been wrought upon. As (I ſay) it is in ſupernatural light, thus it fareth with natural, the continual accuſations, and ſmitings of Conſcience, through cuſtome men harden themſelves againſt, and at laſt contemn them. Take heed therefore how thou doeſt thoſe things that thy heart condemneth thee for: For after thou art uſed to ſuch obſtinacy though God ſhould raiſe Thunder and Lightning in thy breaſt, it would not at all amaze thee. As thoſe that are Witches and Wizzards, at the firſt appalition of the Devil to them, may have ſome trembling and fear; but after they have given up themſelves familiarly to him, there is no amazement or horror at all. As firſt to do and live againſt the convictions of Conſcience, is a doleſull and dreadfull thing, but after they have once uſed to kick againſt this prick, they come to ſuch a dedolency, that they feel nothing at all. If the Apoſtle *Rom.* 14. makes it ſuch a grievous and haynous ſin to eat any meat doubting, or to do any thing doubting, whether it be a ſin or not; then how grievous a thing is it to do thoſe things, about which thou haſt no doubt, but clear convictions that they are ſins: As for example, take the unjuſt, deceitful man in his trade, Doſt thou doubt whether thou ſinneſt in lying, cozening, and over-reaching? Doſt thou ſcruple whether it be a ſin? No, but thy Conſcience plainly telleth thee, this was not lawfull, this was not juſt. So inſtance in any groſs prophaneneſs, Do you commit theſe things, doubting whether they be ſins? or doſt thou not plainly accuſe thy ſelf in what thou doeſt? Oh then think with your ſelves, if I did but doubt whether theſe things were ſins, I ought not to do them; but when I know they are ſins, when I ſee as clear as the Sun,

Sun, that they are iniquities forbidden by the Law of Nature, then how presumptuously wicked must I needs be? Thou therefore who dost constantly walk in ungodly, prophane courses, thou art a shame and reproach to heaven and earth; God from heaven, and God by all the Creatures doth condemn thee herein. This stupidity of Conscience the Scripture calls πώρωσις, which is, when men through much labour and manual exercise have brought such a callousness and senselesness upon the palms of their hands, that they feel no pain at all. Thus men by frequent repressions of the beams of this light, do at last become altogether stupid; as the Dogs that lie in the Smiths Forge, through custome, fear not those sparks of fire that flye about them.

We may conclude, *A fifth cause of the suffocating of these Natural Dictates to be a just judgement of God upon men, because of the abuse of Natural light*: When men have not lived as they have known, nor walked as they have known, God as a just judge hath delivered them up to their own unnatural lusts, which hath been more grievous than to be delivered up to Lyons and Bears, and to be torn in pieces by them. This is evidently set down, *Rom.* 1. at large; where the Heathens, not walking according to those implanted principles within them, but breaking the bounds which nature had set them, God gave them up to all manner of lusts, whereby they committed most unnatural crimes, which the Apostle there reckons up. Marvail not then to see men become like bruit beasts; say not, How can men be thus unnatural? How can they choak that light in their hearts? Think not much at these things, for many men live under Gods spiritual curse upon them; he hath delivered them up to their lusts and sins, to do all manner of wickedness without fear and trembling: A judgement of all judgements most terrible, yet it is often seen in the world: For were they not given up to such a spirit of slumber and security, they would be like so many *Cains* and *Judas*'s after their abominable iniquities, so many *Mager-missabibs*, whom fear would incompass round about.

6. A turning away from what Conscience speaks.

Sixthly, *Another cause that will dull, if not extinguish those principles of Conscience, is a wilfull turning away our thoughts and considerations from what they speak within us.* Men study diversions, and for fear of such sad melancholy thoughts, as they term them, they will go into merry company, take great imployments upon them, that will busie their heads so much, that they never hear what conscience speaks within, because of the croud of imployments without. Thus *Cain* full of trembling to shake this off, he travaileth, and buildeth Cities, and all to have a quiet minde. Thus as when the Prophets of God called to mourning and sackcloth, there was gladness, and making of all melody: So when conscience accuseth, condemneth, calls for repentance and reformation, they labour to make a greater noise that may drown this. It is true the acts and dictates of conscience are not subject to our wills, *Quoad specificationem*, as they say. A man cannot think that to be good which he detesteth, nor that to be evill which he would not; but against and contrary to mens wills and affections they say, this is good, and this evil: But *quoad exercitium*, in respect of the exercise of it; So they may wilfully turn away their thoughts from considering what is said to them. Thus as the Thief hateth the light, because his deeds are discovered thereby; so a wicked man dares not give heed to what Conscience saith, he runneth from it as much as he can, because it is wholly against the course of his life; so that if you never minde or consider what the Law of God in thy heart speaks to thee: It is no wonder if thou art never reformed: But if thou wouldst commune with thy own heart, and search it, bid all other things stand aloof off, thou and conscience will consider together, thou and conscience will examine together; if this were done, thy sins should not lodge a night longer with the.

7. Prophane jollity.

Seventhly, *A prophane jollity and a carnal merriment*, this also weakens the voice of natural conscience; some men are as afraid of any serious sober thoughts about God, and the day of judgement, as children are of the dark. This was their dispositon, who said, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall dye.* Oh prophaneness

phaneneſs, rather let us repent and mourn, and forſake our ſins, for to morrow we ſhall dye; but theſe ſwiniſh Epicures, they made the clean contrary uſe, We have but a ſhort time to live, we may not hold out till to morrow, therefore let us be merry while we may, when we are gone all is gone; we will take our pleaſures while we may have them. This jolly prophaneneſs, puts out all the eyes of Conſcience; now all his care and thought is, but how he may be merry, how he may be glutting and ſatisfying his luſts; as for the day of judgement, or thoſe ſad Sermons which his conſcience may preach to him, he deſireth to hear no more of them, he will make much of one while he may. But Oh! what is this making much? Its making up much wrath, much miſery, and much horror for thy ſelf: That which thou ſaidſt is making mirth, is indeed making nothing for thee, its the eternal perdition of thy ſoul and body.

Eighthly, *Neglect to ſtir up and quicken theſe natural Dictates, by all thoſe ſpeciall and ſupernatural helps which God hath appointed*; not that theſe can ever be poliſhed or made grace, for that is a new creation, as you heard, and comes into the ſoul wholly from above; but diligence and attendance upon the means, would make theſe more tender and vigorous within us: This may be amplified by the parallel of ſupernatural light; for if when God hath graciouſly ingraven this heart in his people, ſo that the Law of God becometh a delight unto them; yet even this work of grace may ſeem to be quite overwhelmed, ſo that there do not for the preſent appear any motions or breathings of Gods ſpirit in them, no wonder if in natural men, all things lie ſo huſhed and quiet, that nothing of this natural Law is declared. For an inſtance of the former defection, take *David* and others? Who could think that ever they ſhould commit ſuch bloody and hideous ſins as they did? Where was their grace? Where were the fiery darts of Gods ſpirit in their hearts inflaming them? Nothing but ſin & the fleſh appeareth in them, they are like a tree in winter, that diſcovers no ſap or life; like a man in a dead Lethargy, that manifeſts no breath: Now then, if the ſupernatural work of grace in a godly man, may be ſo ſtupified and overwhelmed, is it any wonder if theſe dictates of nature be ſilent? But as in the godly, theſe things are overtopt by their ſluggiſhneſs, and careleſs walking; ſo in natural men, whatſoever dictate may be to good, it wholly dyeth, as ſparks of fire dye, becauſe there is nothing to blow on them, and inkindle them. 8. A neglect to ſtir them up by the helps appointed.

Laſtly, *Therefore may there be no declaring of this Law in mens hearts, becauſe they do inordinately deſire to live without any controll or check*; Now theſe natural principles, they are a School maſter to keep men in awe; they are a judge to terrifie and keep men in fear. And as the Malefactor would willingly kill the Judge, if it were in his power, that ſo the Judge may not condemn him; thus the corrupt luſts and affections of men, make them deſirous to ſtifle conſcience, that ſo conſcience may not condemn or accuſe them. There is nothing that a wicked man is afraid of, as to be diſquieted in his ſins: Our tongues are ours (ſay thoſe prophane men) who ſhall controll us? Therefore that they may not ſtand in awe, and ſo be kept from ſin, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 4. 4. they labour to muzzle the mouth of conſcience, that it bite not: A vain and fooliſh attempt indeed, for when God makes this roar and rage in a man, all the pleaſures, ſports and paſſimes in the world, cannot allay the noiſe of it; but yet men will attempt theſe vain things. Fear of natural light, makes men hate it, and the hatred of it makes men put it out if they can. 9. An inordinate deſire to live without controll.

Uſe of Inſtruction. How inexcuſable all men are, who live in the committing of groſs ſins, ſuch as natural light forbids: Who can plead for thee? What canſt thou ſay for thy ſelf? Its no excuſe to ſay, I am no ſcholar, I am not Book-learned: Alas thou art new born with theſe principles, that to do unjuſtly, to live intemperately, are not lawful to be done: Think not to ſay, I cannot read, I am not able to peruſe the Bible, for if there were no Bible, no Miniſtery, theſe ſins are condemned by a Judge in thy own breaſt. You would think it *Uſe.*

impossible that even among Heathens any such impiety should be found, but among Christians to have it, who would not cry out, Be astonished, O Heavens, and blush, O Sun, that in the Church of God men should lie, forswear, be unclean, and walk in the hidden ways of dishonesty These go against natural and supernatural light, against the Bible the Book of God, and against their conscience that Vice-Roy God hath placed in their hearts: Think then how speechless thou wilt presently be stricken, when God shall inquire about these things.

SERM. LVI.

Shewing how prevalent Natural Conscience hath been in Heathens, in reference to good Laws, Books, Affections, Lives; And how it should stir up Christians to jealousie.

ROM. 2. 15.

Which declare the Law *written in their hearts, their consciences also excusing or accusing one another.*

WE have instanced in many grounds, which may justly be thought to blur, if not quite race out, that Law of Nature in us. The next thing to be undertaken is, to shew wherein men do demonstrate these dictates of Conscience, and how far they have been prevalent upon them to that which is good: And the discovery of these things, is an excellent way to raise blushing in the faces of many Christians, and to provoke them to jealousie, when they see that done in *Athens* or *Ethnical Rome*, which is scarce done in *Jerusalem*; especially those who are the people of God, and pretend to an higher supernatural light, must diligently beware, least they be outstript in those moral honest things, which the very light of nature teacheth some men. To the work therefore in hand; And

Wherein the Law of God in mens hearts is demonstrated.

First, *This Law of God in mens hearts, is demonstrated by these excellent Tractats and discourses, which many by the help of natural light onely have written*; wherein although they are as blinde as Bats and Owls, in the Sun-shine of the Gospell, in respect of any true gracious thing, yet they do wonderfully approve that which is good and righteous in the general, condemning and disswading from that which is evill. Thus the Moral discourses of *Seneca*, *Plutarch*, *Plato*, and some of the *Stoicks*, speak very high things about that which is vertuous, and that which is vicious; insomuch that many mens Divinity in their Sermons, or Contemplations and Devotions, have been nothing but the choice flowers pulled out of their garden. This (I confess) is justly to be blamed, and severely reproved

1. By the Books that Heathens have written

proved for Scripture-matter, either in things of faith, or things to be done, doth as much excell all those Notions, either in majesty or purity, as the Sun doth an *Ignis Fatuus*, or any Ignited Meteor. But I know not how it falls out, whether of the witty invention in them, or eloquent expressions, those Heathen Authors have delighted some, more than *Davids* Psalms, or *Pauls* Epistles; especially many of the Jesuits in their Religious Tractates, stuff their discourses with *Seneca's* Contemplations, or Moral Inventions. Now although it be true, that it were a great error to take *John Baptist*, though a great Prophet, for Christ, much more a *Seneca* or a *Plato* (though stiled Divine) for a Christ, yet if we speak of the sphære of nature, how far she hath been able to accuse vice, and plead for vertue, herein they have been wonderful; take *Tullies* Book *De Officiis*: If men and their publique conversation, did keep to that fidelity in words, righteousness in deeds, and love to the publique against all particular profit, it would make the lives of men very admirable, though not godly: And it is a great honor to those Books of the Heathens, that the Apostle himself doth sometimes alledge verses out of such Authors, and that for morality also; witness that sentence, *Evil words corrupt good manners*; which is sanctified (saith *Tertullian*) or made Ecclesiastical, as *Hieron*, by *Paul*, it being a verse of the *Comedian Menander*; and it is true by experience, that evil words and discourses, such as some *Corinthians* had, which did privately, by some reasonings fetched from Philosophy, endeavor to weaken the Christian faith about the Resurrection, do quickly infect mens lives: and as the Apostles, so ministers may sometimes upon fit occasions, use sentences out of those Authors, so that they do it not too frequently, or with affectation, or thereby disparaging the powerful simplicity and divine Plainness of the Scripture. The many Books therefore and Discourses, which men by the help of natural Conscience have made, to the ordering of mens lives in a vertuous way; are a sure demonstration of this Law written in their hearts.

2. By the Laws they have made.

Secondly, *The wise, just and righteous Laws which many of their Law-givers have made*, when they setled a Political Government, do plainly declare also this work of God in them. Its true, that such Law givers, besides their inplanted reason, had also acquired much experimental prudence, and haply some of them at least, had by hear-say, the Divine Polity and Government which *Moses* appointed the people of *Israel*: But with these, they had also those sparkling notions, of differencing justice from injustice, good from evil, else they could never have made such wholsome Laws; especially the Laws and Manners of the *Lacedemonians*, are much commended for Sobriety, Moderation, and Abstinence from all intemperate and luxurious courses; insomuch that *Erasmus* saith, *Diceris Germanè Christianos, si pro Lycurgo Christum nacti fuissent legum-latorem*, one would have thought them true Christians, if they had had Christ a Law-giver for their *Lycurgus*, though herein *Erasmus*, as in other places, is too bold: However, this comes wholy from that Divine impression men have left in their consciences, whereby they punish sin and exorbitancies, but reward vertuous imployments. It is true, in some things their wisest Law-givers have established notorious wickedness, but that doth not hinder the acknowledgement of their many other good Lawes. If then heathens have such thoughts about wicked actions, that they deem them worthy to be punished with all disgrace, contempt and reproach, yea some of them with death it self, and that in the most cruel manner. This doth evidently declare, that they had inbred principles about good and evil; and upon this ground it is, that the Apostle speaking of Magistrates, even Paganish, saith, *They are the Ministers of God to thee for good* Romans 13. That they are a terror to the evil, and not to the good; if thou dost well, be not afraid, but if thou dost ill, fear, because he doth not bear the sword in vain. So that this is a manifest conviction of the Conscience of every wicked man. If thou art a prophane, unjust, intemperate man, why art thou afraid the

Magistrate should see? Thou feareſt his eyes, Is it not becauſe of an implanted principle, That good is to be incouraged, and evill to be avoided? and the very fear of the Magiſtrates ſword, keeps a world of people from that actuall wickedneſſe, which otherwiſe they would be plunged into: So that if you look over all the Societies of men in the world, that have a Government, wherein ſome command, and ſome obey, you will conclude, All this proclaimeth to the world, men have thoughts there is a God, and that wicked actions deſerve juſt puniſhments.

4. By their acknowledgement of God.

3. *This Law is declared by an acknowledgement of a God, and the ſolemn worſhipping of him.* Their Polytheiſm or multitude of gods, though it diſcovereth horrible blindneſs and ignorance upon them, yet withal it argueth a ſenſe of Deity. The Romans had a πανθεῖον, a Temple for all gods, thinking themſelves herein Religious, that they did not refuſe the Religion of any nation: Their Temples, their Altars, their Sacrifices, their reverence to their Prieſts, the exceſſive charge and coſt they were at in keeping up their Religious Worſhip, though they beſpake miſerable madneſs and confuſion upon their ſpirits; yet they alſo demonſtrate innate apprehenſions about a God, and that Divine homage we owe to him. And as for ſome, who were called Atheiſts, its thought therefore they had that brand on them, not that they were againſt a God, but becauſe they derided the multitude, and the ſuperſtitious obſervations of the gods then worſhipped. Its plain, *Seneca* thought the Romans guilty of much ridiculouſneſs in their Divine Worſhip, and wrote a Book about it, as *Auſtin* ſaith, which is loſt; and although he thus was convinced of their vanity, yet he diligently performed that external Worſhip, *Tanquam legibus juſſam, non Diis gratam*; As a thing commanded by the Law and Cuſtomes of men, not at all acceptable to the gods. As they were frequent thus in Adoration, ſo they performed it after a grave and ſolemn manner; witneſs that cry of the Prieſts, *Hoc age*, minde this onely: and certainly the reverence, attention and diligence of Heathens to their Idols, will condemn the ſluggiſhneſs, dulneſs and drowſie irreverence, which Chriſtians ſhew to the true God, in their Worſhip of him.

3. The terror of Conſcience upon ſin committed.

4. *They declare this Law written in them, by the work of conſcience terrifying them upon any evil actions:* What fear and horror hath been upon heathens conſciences, though they have had no Scripture to accuſe them! *Hiſtories* declare, upon unjuſt, unclean and injurious acts, they have not been able to reſt or ſleep, and tear, Why is all this? but becauſe of their judge within; which hath made even Heathens ſo much admire a good conſcience, and ſet out the miſery of an evil one: Alas, we would think ſuch things ſhould be ſpoken of only among Chriſtians, & where the word that is preached, is the diſcernerer & diſcover of the thoughts and actions of all men; but even among them that never ſaw this Sun, there are divers ſayings, commending and admiring the bleſſedneſs of living ſo, as not being conſcious to our ſelves of any groſs ſinful ways: *Nil conſcire ſibi, &c.* To be conſcious to a mans ſelf of no evil, or unjuſt action, is that only thing which may make a man happy, *Hic murus aheneus eſto*; that is a brazen wall to beat back all darts; As the ſweet nurſe in old age, as *Pindar* calls it. Oh that Chriſtians ſhould do ſo many things, that raiſe up conſcience like a Lyon and Bear, to roar within them; when even Heathens have been afraid to make their conſcience their enemy and adverſary. If the fire hath ſo quickly burned the green tree, how will the dry tree indure? Oh think not theſe phraſes of Conſcience, and trouble for ſin, unquietneſs and terror in a mans breaſt, to be fictions and vain feare-Crows: No, men have had them, that have lived only in a wilderneſs, that had no other Book to read than that of the Creature; they have feared a terrible juſt God, ready to be revenged on them whitherſoever they went: And doeſt thou lye, and ſteal, and commit whoredom, and thinkeſt not that God beholdeth thee, with a ſparkling eye, full of vengeance?

Laſtly

Laſtly, *They declare this Law written, in that they have improved theſe natural ſparks, and have attained to admirable commendations, for many things done by them*: They did not all of them detain the Truth in unrighteouſneſs, but did admit of all the Culture and Tillage they could meet with, to perfect thoſe vertuous principles as they thought of. Hence ſome of them have thrown away all the wealth they had, that they might the better attend to Philoſophy; Yea *Socrates* would never diſpute about the Heavens or Stars, or other Sceptical matter, but wholly manners, how to rectifie them, and to make young men leave their vices; eſpecially we might give you inſtances of their great improvements in theſe things: 5. By the improvement of their Natural parts to admirable commendations.

First, *Their hearty love to the Publique*, preferring it above all particular reſpects and advantages. *Tully* would not have immortality it ſelf to hurt the Commonwealth: Another ſaid, he had rather be poor, ſo as the Commonwealth were rich, than be rich, and that thereby made more poor. They conclude, Juſtice and Righteouſneſs, were the only walls and defence of a Kingdome. Some of them, devoted themſelves to preſent death, as the *Decii* and *Curtii*, to prevent judgements to the Publique. Oh what a ſhame may many Heathens, upon record in Hiſtory, be to thoſe who ſtile themſelves Chriſtians! I. Their Love.

Secondly, *In Fidelity and Righteouſneſs*, both of words and promiſes, and all their contracts. *Romana fides* was a proverb, becauſe they faithfully would do what they had promiſed; their words were as good as oathes. One priſoner, a captive, had given his word, that if he might go to diſpatch his buſineſs, and get ſome way or other to redeem himſelf, he would faithfully return again, in caſe he could not; and not being able to effect it, he returneth again to his enemies, though he knew he was to be put to all cruelty. *Ariſtides* was called the juſt, becauſe of his righteouſneſs and faithfulneſs in all his dealings. But of how many may we ſay, even that are called Chriſtians, inſtead of ſuch an one the juſt, ſuch an one the falſe and unrighteous man. II. Fidelity.

Thirdly, *In all moderation and ſobriety, abſtaining from thoſe things that were fit objects for their luſts.* *Alexander* kept himſelf from *Darius* his Virgins, when he had conquered him by War: They were temperate in their dyets, avoiding occaſions of gluttony and drunkenneſs. The *Lacedæmonians* would have their children ſee a drunken man, that beholding his madneſs and beaſtlineſs, they might take heed of it: And as for the paſſions of anger and malice, how lowly in refraining of them, patiently bearing all contumelies and reproaches! I would, ſaid an Heathen, to one who reviled on him, that this man could rule his tongue, as well as I can my ears. I would beat and puniſh thee, ſaid another to his ſervant, but that I am angry. Thus we might go even into the wilderneſs, and gather many ſweet flowers there: We might tell you of wiſe and ſage *Apophthegmes*, of vertuous and noble actions, and all this while they had no hopes of an Heaven, or Eternal Glory to encourage them. Many of them, after their noble Atchievements for the Publique, returned home again without any wealth or advance, but onely glory; yea, and one or two of them contemned that alſo. But though they have done thus worthily, yet you muſt take heed of two errours, magnifying theſe their actions too high. III. Sobriety.

First, *Some have thought*, and that both of the ancients and latter ſort of Writers, that many of theſe Heathens have been ſaved; that men who in their generation did thus wonderfully, could not be damned. Though theſe Teachers are divided among themſelves; ſome ſay, the Law of Nature ſaved them, as Chriſt doth Chriſtians, ſo that they ſay, they were ſaved without Chriſt: Others ſay, Chriſt was immediately and extraordinarily revealed to them: But neither of theſe opinions have any ground in Scripture, which attributes no ſalvation but unto Chriſt, and the calling upon his name, which they did not. Cautions. No ground in Scripture for Heathens Salvation.

Secondly, *The other Errour* is, that natural men by improving their naturals, are thereby diſpoſed and prepared for ſupernaturals; that a man by well uſing

of this natural light, God will give him ſupernatural light: But God hath made no ſuch promiſe in the Scripture, and the falſneſs of it is declared in this, That we never read yet of any Heathen, who upon the good improvement of thoſe natural abilities, had Grace vouchſafed to him. I ſha'l in the next place come to the Uſe of this point; And

Uſe. First, Have Heathens without the Scripture, without the knowledge of Chriſt and his Word, done many things righteouſly and ſoberly? Then what ſhame and reproach is it to Chriſtians, if any among them be found unjuſt, ungodly, and living in all intemperance? Yet is not the greater number of thoſe that profeſs the Chriſtian Relgion, infected with ſome erroneous and groſs vices or other, which the Gentiles have abhorred? As Chriſt ſaid of the Centurion a ſtranger, *He had not ſeen ſuch faith in Iſrael*; and truly, we may ſay, That there is not to be ſeen ſuch faithfulneſs in mens words, ſuch temperance in their lives, no not among many Chriſtians, as have been among many Gentiles. Who can plead for ſuch who deal unjuſtly, ſpeak falſely, over-reach in their contracts? When men without the true knowledge of a true God, have been afraid to do it. You could not among all the *Lacedæmonians* have ſeen one drunken man, unleſs it was their Slaves, their *Helotæ*, as they call them; and now it is hard to finde a ſober, temperate man among many Proteſtants. Some of the Heathens have been ſo Religious about an oath, and fearfull about ſwearing, that they never would uſe it upon any humane or earthly buſineſs; yet he is accounted a man now not of any ſpirit or gallantry, that doth not imbroyder his Language with ſeveral Oaths. *Baſil* the Ancient, objected to Chriſtians in his time, that accuſtomed themſelves to ſwearing, the example of one *Clineas* a *Pythagorean*, who having a great fine laid upon him, to pay a great ſum of money, the which he might have eſcaped by taking an oath, yet he would not ſwear, but rather pay that money: Certainly, if God doth ſometime ſend his own people to the very irrational creatures to learn, to the Ox and Ant, no wonder, if they may ſometimes be taught by thoſe who have not ſuch means of holineſs as they have. Civility and Moral honeſty, theſe are to be found among the Pagans, and ſometimes we cannot finde it among Chriſtians; eſpecially the Heathens have condemned a man of a falſe heart that will ſpeak one thing with his mouth and intend another thing: ἐχθρὸς, &c. I hate him even to hell, that ſaith one thing with his mouth, and thinketh another thing in his heart, ſaith he in *Homer*: They loved a candid and ſincere ſpirit, as he that wiſhed there was a glaſs in his breaſt, that all the world might ſee what was in his heart: But O the hypocriſie, double tongue, double heart that many baptiſed perſons have. Why do not ſuch leave Chriſts ſheepfold, and go rather into the Dens and Holes of ſubtil Foxes? And ſo for intemperate, diſſolute men, Why do not they forſake Chriſts Fold, and go to the Stye of Swine, wallowing there in all mire and filth? Now conſider how many horrid and grievous accuſations the committing of ſuch ſins is ſubject unto.

First, There is leſs excuſe and plea to be made for thee: Haply at the day of Judgement, Heathens will plead, VVhy? They did not believe in Chriſt; VVhy? They did not receive the Goſpell, that it never ſounded in their ears, there was no preaching to them; or if ſo, the matter was ſupernatural, ſuch as fleſh and blood could not cloſe with, there was no proportion between that glorious object and the faculty: But what can you ſay? who have and do live in ſuch ſins, which the very children of Pagans would condemn: Can you ſay, Lord we did not know that to ſpeak falſely, do unjuſtly, live intemperately were ſins? We had none to tell us, that theſe were unlawfull wayes? No ſuch things can be pleaded by you; O therefore be at laſt awakened from this ſecurity, remember you are men, and not beaſts; remember God hath placed a Conſcience, to be a Judge in you: Oh do not ſuch things! thus all without thee, and all within thee will condemn thee.

Secondly,

2. As there is leſs excuſe, ſo they are a greater reproach and ſcandall to that glorious Goſpel which we receive: What? ſhall not the Goſpel of Chriſt, and the word of God teach us more holineſs, than the Turks *Alcaron*? Shall not the ten Commandments of God, oblige us to more purity than the twelve Tables of the Romans: O what a ſad diſhonour is this to the truth and knowledge of God, that among his people, ſhall be found doers of thoſe things, which natural light would abhor. Such are indeed ſpots & blemiſhes in our Congregations; ſuch are foul & deformed Monſters: *Let every one that nameth Chriſt, depart from iniquity.* What do ſuch weeds among his flowers? ſuch wolves among his ſheep? If thou wilt be drunk be ſo in the night among Pagans, not in the day among Chriſtians: The Church of God is not a fit place to vent ſuch unnatural impieties in; With what zeal and holy violence ſhould we perſwade theſe things in your hearts? As long as there are any prophane men, any unjuſt men, any groſs impieties committed by you, which nature would forbid, we ſhall not ceaſe to call on heaven and earth to be witneſſes againſt you; nay, every ſtone in the wall, and the timber in your houſes ſhall ſpeak againſt you: Why do ſuch unclean Lepers come near where any holy duty or ordinances are to be performed? As they call an Ague *Ludibrium medicorum*, the reproach of Phyſitians, becauſe they know not how to cure it; So let not that obſtinate ſenſeleſs diſpoſition in groſs ſins, be any more *Ludibrium Theologorum*, that with all our vehement exhortations we cannot heal thee of.

3. Sins committed againſt natural conſcience, make the more noiſe and terror in a mans conſcience, we do the more difficultly obtain a pardon of them; you ſee in *Cain*, upon his murther; in *Judas*, upon betraying innocent blood; and in *David*, *Deliver me from blood-guiltineſs, O God*, Pſal. 51. Theſe are deep and ſore wounds which will moleſt a long ſeaſon, and when healed, will yet leave a ſcar. O think not that merry paſtimes, and jolly company will eat out this dart, when once mortally and deadly ſhot in thy heart: ſins againſt ſupernatural light, ſuch as unbelief, diffidence in the promiſe, make not ſuch an horrid noiſe and tumult in thy ſoul, as theſe do: None can ſtill the roaring of theſe waves but God alone.

4. There is more ingratitude and rebellion in thee who doeſt thus, becauſe God hath vouchſafed greater light, given greater help and ſupport againſt theſe ſins, than the Nations of the world receive, inſomuch that thy condemnation will be far greater, than of thoſe who are brought up in Natures School onely.

Uſe. Have Pagans and heathens done admirable things? then what glorious and commendable things ſhould Chriſtians do, let not them outreach us: As the Apoſtle reckons up a catalogue of worthie Saints, who by faith wrought great and holy things, *Heb.* 11. ſo we may put in a ſcroul of the names of many Heathens, who without faith, and without the knowledge of God, have done admirable exploits within the ſphear of Nature: Be thou exhorted to waſh out thoſe black ſpots in thy life; Conſider that of the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 4. 8. *Whatſoever things are pure, holy, righteous, of good reports If there be any vertue, any praiſe, think of theſe things.* We are not now preſſing you to be like Angels in heaven, doing Gods will, but that you would not be out-ſtripped by Gentiles, which know not Gods will. If any man among you be found prophane, unjuſt, intemperate, let him cry out, *I am unclean, I am unclean, what have I to do, to take Gods word in my mouth, and hate to be reformed?*

SERM.

SERM. LVII.

Demonstrating that Naturall Piety, Honesty and Sobriety, which is in Heathens or any others, is not Grace.

ROM. 2. 15.

Which declare the Law of God written in their hearts, &c.

THis Text (as you heard) was fruitfull in bringing forth twins, two practicall observations. The first, *That God hath implanted in mens hearts naturally some principles about a God, and the approbation of what is good, and also the rejection of what is evil*, hath at large been handled. We come to the second, which is, *That all the worth and excellency which men by these natural principles, though improved to the utmost, can attain unto, is not grace.* The Scripture requiring Regeneration, and a new Creation, doth still intend a further excellency than naturall honesty, or naturall devotion can carry us unto; for as we told you, though men are here said by nature to have Gods Law written in their hearts; yet that is far different from that gracious promise in *Jeremiah*, where God is said to write his Law, and put his fear into their hearts *Jer.* 31. For that is a writing of the Law after the naturall stoninesse is taken away, & a tender fleshly pliable heart given unto them; so that should God write no more graciously in us, than what is at first naturally ingraven in us, it would argue no more that we had grace, than that the Devils and damned in hell have grace; for you must know these Dictates about God, and a Conscience about evill, is so inseparably ingraven in our hearts, that it is not taken out, no not from the damned in hell; but the great cause of all their torment and misery is, because that work of conscience is so quick and sensible in them, that being the gnawing worm which never dyeth: so then howsoever the last day, you heard the heathens described in their glory, and many admirable things done by them; yet now you shall hear their glory stained, their Sun in an Eclipse, many dead flies that doe wholly marre their Box of oyntment. Indeed as *Austin* observeth, A man that reads what excellent things they have done, cannot but have a kind of pity of them, and a secret desire that they might be saved, which (no question) were the grounds that made some positively affert their salvation; but in matters of Religion, not humane pity or affections, but divine Authority must be the star to guide us, and where we are unable to finde out the justice and mercy of God, there yet to adore them, it being as impossible for us to comprehend the wise and deep things of God, as a worm to understand the counsells and wise purposes of men. Come we therefore to prove and illustrate our Doctrine, viz.

Observ. *That whatsoever goodness, devotion or honesty, a man by natural principles obtaineth, it is not Grace.*

The

The work of godlineſſe in a man, is of an higher ſphear, and there is as great a difference between them, as between true Pearls and counterfeit. Onely I muſt remove one Objection, before I proceed to the point: for you may readily demand, *What is all this Doctrine to us?* What doth it concern us, to hear that Heathens may, or have done ſuch righteous things? Are we Pagans, and Gentiles? We are Baptized, and have given up our names to Chriſt, and therefore doubt not, but that our condition is far better than theirs: we believe in Chriſt, we reſt on him for ſalvation, we receive the Sacraments. Therefore this diſcourſe about natural light, and naturall power, ſeemeth altogether impertinent to us; the leaſt dwarf in Chriſtianity being higher than the talleſt Giant in Heatheniſm: What do you tell us of nature, who live under grace? *Object.* What is this doctrine of the Righteouſneſs of Heathens to us Chriſtians.

To anſwer this, First, it may be charitably and juſtly aſſerted, that there are many who have the titles of Chriſtians, that yet in knowledge and lives differ nothing at all from Heathens. They know no more than a very Pagan doth, & their lives are far worſe than many Gentiles. There are men among us that ſeldome or never frequent Church-Aſſemblies, that if they be queſtioned about God, or Chriſt, or the Holy Ghoſt, can give no better account, than if they had lived among the Indians, onely they have heard of a Chriſt; but what he is, and to what purpoſe appointed by God, they know not the leaſt iota or tittle of it: Its not any knowledge of faith they have about the Chriſtian Religion, rather than any other in the World, but onely the Kingdome wherein they live, and the Authority under which they are, enjoyneth ſuch things to be received, with the example of other their neighbours, eſpecially the imitation of their parents, and this is all that moveth them to the owning of Chriſt. Certainly, the faithfull Miniſters of God, may, or ought to ſay, *Rivers of water run down our eyes, becauſe many underſtand not the very foundation and firſt principles of Religion.* They are but mock-Chriſtians, they have a name and a badge of Chriſtianity upon them, but their ignorance and ſottiſhneſſe is ſo great, that it would make a man to be amazed at it. Do not therefore ſay, What is this to us? Oh it is too much to too many, who have ſcarce learned, whether there be a Chriſt, or an holy Ghoſt, or no. *Anſw.* 1.

Secondly, *This Diſcourſe is pertinent, becauſe though there may be many amongſt us, who have the knowledge of Chriſt, and underſtand the true Religion; yet they have not powerfull efficacy, or operation upon their hearts or lives.* The Word of God doth not direct, correct, or mold their lives, they attend not to that, but what good they do, or evill they avoid, is wholly from thoſe Reliques and remnants which God hath left in them. This is a chief point in Chriſtianity, to conſider, whether it be a naturall principle onely that carrieth thee to what is good, or a ſupernaturall; whether it be the Law written in us by God the Author of nature, or the the Law written in us by God the Author of grace. The Apoſtle ſpeaketh of the acknowledgement of the truth after Godlineſſe, *Titus* 1. 1. the knowing of truths as they are in Chriſt Jeſus, *Epheſians* 4. and *Coloſſians* 1. 6. The knowing of the grace of God in truth. All which is, when men living under the Goſpel, are by the power of it ſo changed and altered, that whatever good they do, or evill they avoid, they are in all inabled by a ſupernatural ſtrength vouchſafed unto them. Now its too apparent that moſt mens Religion, Affections, Converſations, are wholly built upon a natural Devotion, and a naturall righteouſneſs: they would have been ſuch devout men, and ſo juſt men, if they had never heard of Chriſt; if they live among the Heathens they would have been no better or worſe. I entreat you therefore to conſider what divine impreſſions the Chriſtian Religion hath made upon you. Art thou any more in all the duties thou doſt, than what thy mother-Piety, (as we ſay mother-wit) or thy mother-righteouſneſſe inableth thee to. Thou worſhippeſt God and Chriſt with the ſame humane affections and devotions as the *Romans* their *Jupiter*, or the *Epheſians* their *Diana*, onely thou haſt the true object of worſhip, and they have not. When our Saviour preached, that he was the true bread which came down from hea-

ven, presently some hearers cryed out, *Lord give us ever of this bread*, John 6.34. Here were humane affections, and a naturall devotion; they did not understand or graciously discern, what this *bread of life* was. It may be justly feared, that the Gospel or Word of God hath little power over mens lives, onely an humane, or naturall piety leads on men to doe what they doe; For if they were sanctified and moulded by the word, then that would carry them to all Gods commandements, they would have a respect to every duty; besides they would in a spirituall and heavenly manner be affected, and in a constant persevering manner: whereas naturall Piety is seen only in some straits and extraordinary difficulties, as the *Heathens*, who carried *Jonas* in their Ship, sought all to their gods, when they were in extream danger by a violent tempest. Therefore neither Sun or Water is so necessary (as they say) as this truth is; for this will only teach thee the true Characteristical difference between that which is humane and divine in thee. This will discover *Sibboleth* or *Shibboleth*.

Thirdly, *We have just cause to preach of this even to Christians, because they are outstripped in many things by the heathens.* They observed their Idols and false Gods with more fear and care, than thou dost the true. What a wonderfull speech was that of *Antoninus Pius*, and *Eugenius*, who being very clement, and excessive in forgiving those enemies that made warre against him, and being admonished that this clemency of his would undoe him, and imbolden adversaries the more against him, we read this Answer, *Nos non sic colimus Deos, &c. We do not so serve or worship the gods, that our enemies should overcome us.* Alas, what Christians may truely say so? How many times have the *Barbarians*, the savage and fierce nations of the world overcome the Church, and destroyed Christians, because they have served God loosly and negligently, *Vitiis nostris barbari fiunt fortes; Our wickedness and sinnes made the adversaries strong*; so that here is great cause to hear these things with attention; knowing we have too much Heathenism in us, we have little of the Gospel mould in us.

Demonstrations that no naturall excellency deserveth to be called Grace,

These things laid down, we come to demonstrate that no naturall excellency deserves to be called grace; and for the more orderly proceeding; as the Apostle divideth the whole work of a man in reference to salvation, into these three parts, *Tit.* 2. *To live righteously*, in respect of others; *soberly*, in regard of our selves, and *Godly*, in respect of God, I shall first detect the insufficiency of *Naturall piety*, then *Naturall Honesty*, and lastly, *Natural Sobriety* and temperance; wherein we shall wholly reject that position of some, making a three-fold Piety, *Judaica*, of the Jews, *Ethnica*, of the Heathens, and *Christiana*, of the Christians; for as *Extra Ecclesiam non est salus*; so it must needs follow, *non est Pietas*, without faith, it being impossible to please God, *Hebr.* 11. For their Piety and Devotion to God,

I. Naturall Piety and Devotion not grace. For,

I. It is blinde.

First, *How farre soever it may carry a man, yet it is accompanied with great blindnesse, ignorance, and confusion of mind; that whatsoever reverence, or affections they have towards God, yet such a darkness is upon a man, that he can doe nothing acceptably.* The Apostle *Paul* doth notably confirm this, by that Discourse he had, when at *Athens*, Acts 17.22. &c. *I found an Altar with this Inscription, To the unknown God: whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him I declare unto you.* They did ignorantly worship God, even those *Athenians*, that were renowned for learning, and intellectuall abilities; and *verse* 27 *That they should seek after the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him.* Its a full expression, to shew that all men naturally are like the *Egyptians* in a thick darkneſſe, that are forced to grope and feel with their hands, not knowing what to doe: & thus it is with every man, though a Christian, if he order not his steps according to the supernaturall light of the Word, he doth but grope, and is in great confusion about God, and Christ, not onely upon the Heathens Altars, but upon some Christians solemn worship may be this Inscription, To the unknown God. Thou prayest to an unknown Christ, it is an unknown Holy Ghost unto thee: Regeneration is an unknown priviledge;

viledge; faith is an unknown Grace; ſo that this naturall light about a God, is ſo confuſed, ſo darkned, that thereby he cannot any wayes expedite himſelf, or direct his wayes to pleaſe God.

Secondly, *This naturall piety and devotion, is exceedingly ſtained and beblurred by carnall and vain imaginations*, whereby they have been guilty of horrible and groſs Idolatry; ſo that their Piety hath been the greateſt abomination, and that commonly wherein men naturally judge themſelves moſt holy & religious in ſerving of God, there they have moſt diſhonoured him. Thus the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 1. ſheweth of the wiſe *Grecians*, that they became *vain in their imaginations turning the glory of the incorruptible and immortall God into an image of an Ox that eateth hay*, The *Egyptians* that were moſt famous for knowledge and learning, were the moſt abominable in their religious worſhips; ſo that all the Idol-worſhip in the world came from that confuſed darkneſs in mens thoughts about a God. And the ſame corrupted principle in Popery, yea and in Common Chriſtians, is ſtill moſt vigorous to have images and ſome corporall reſemblances of him we do worſhip. Thus we judge of God like a man, like our ſelves, and therefore attribute that to him, which we ſee is pleaſing to our fancies. Therefore know thou, that all that deſire which is in thee after a carnall and ſenſible worſhip of God by images and ſuch repreſentations, is but Heatheniſm in thee: Such kind of worſhip was brought in at firſt from the cuſtome of the Heathens; and the beſt pretence the introducers had for it, was, that thereby they might win the Gentiles the more eaſily to them. Oh then think not, this Sermon belongs to thoſe who live in the remote places of the world, who worſhip the Sunne, and Moon and Stars. No it is very proper for many among us ſtill, who delight in, and love all outward pompous and ſenſible Ceremonies, whereby the Heathens were wont to worſhip their gods. 2.

Thirdly, *This light and devotion men had in them by nature, was ſo farre from being gracious, that none were ſo bitter and malicious againſt the pure and ſpirituall Worſhippers of God and Chriſt, as they were.* Thus there are certain devout *Jews*, ſo called, *yet they ſtirred up perſecution againſt Paul*, Act. 13. 50. 17. 17. They were exceedingly affectionate & devout in their tradicionall worſhip they had of God; and ſo none greater enemies to ſpirituall worſhip than they: So true is that of the Apoſtle; *The wiſdome of the fleſh is enmity to God; and it is not, nor can be ſubject to him*, Rom. 8. 7. No greater adverſary in the world to the pure worſhip of God, than a mans natural reaſon, and carnal apprehenſions, deſtitute of Scripture-directions; all the falſe & ſuperſtitious worſhip which ever came into the Church (& ſhe was ſcarce ever free) did flow from this Fountain, a carnal and humane judgment, what was fit and orderly, what was pleaſing to God, and what was diſpleaſing. *Auſtin* obſerved this long agoe; and certainly, the ſimplicity, and pure ſpirituall worſhip of God is very offenſive & troubleſome to carnal apprehenſions. When therefore thou art to judge, what is the beſt worſhip pleaſing to God, and wherein he doth moſt delight, doe not conſult with thy own Methinks, or what Cuſtome and Education hath ingaged thee to; but to what the Scripture informs therein. The manner of Gods worſhip in publick we ſee, hath become the matter of ſad contentions for a long while. The Proteſtants calling that Reformation which the Papiſts abhorred, as deformation. Now certainly, if men would, as *Conſtantine* did in the Councell of *Nice*, cauſe the Bible to be the judge of the Controverſies, and not to go beyond, or on this ſide that direction, laying aſide all carnall prejudices and ſuggeſtions, &c. the ſpirituall worſhip of God would be readily imbraced. *Auſtin* admired *Socrates* his Speech that God muſt be worſhipped only that way, which he hath appointed. Oh therefore labour to ſubdue that remnant of Heatheniſm in thee, which is to adore God and worſhip him by carnal imaginations, light of reaſon, and not ſupernatural Revelation of Gods will: for ſtill we ſee how bitter naturall devotion is to true piety: none ſo cruel and bloudy as they who are carryed out againſt the true worſhippers of God; witneſs the Antichriſtian party, who like Wolves have accounted the Sheeps bloud ſweeteſt. 3.

4. Fourthly, *Although naturall light hath attributed unto God a Government in this world, punishing the wicked, and absoloing the righteous, yet they have done this with many doubtings, and much weaknesse, often speaking of Fortune and Chance, which they thought moderated every thing in the world.* That God hath a revengefull eye upon sinners, see how the *Barbarians* did acknowledge, *Act.* 28. For when *Paul* had a Viper fastned on his hand, they concluded after this manner, *No doubt this man is a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the Sea, yet vengeance suffers not to live.* And so *Jonas* Mariners, when they were in extream danger of Shipwrack, they thought it was, because some hainous Offendor was among them, with whom God was angry. Thus it was implanted in them, that there was a God who did behold and take notice of wicked men, and would accordingly bring them to judgement. Though they were thus at some times, yet at other times they spake much of a goddess Fortune, to whom they gave the reins of the government of the World; and therefore the Emperours had a golden Ball, which was Fortune, that was kept successively, as if the keeping of that would preserve their Empire: And they sacrificed *Fortunæ Viscosæ*, to Fortune Bird-limed, that she might not leave them, but make them alwayes prosperous. Now this corrupt opinion, that chance ordered all things, could not but strike out all true fear of God, and obedience to him.

5. Lastly, *Their Religion was nothing but Superstition*, their Εὐσέβεια was δεισιδαιμονία, a sinfull and wicked fear, after a slavish manner about God. God would be worshipped as a Father, in a Filiall Fear, *John* 4. not like a Tyrant, after a slavish manner: As some Heathens sacrificed to the Devils, *Ut ne noceant, That they should not hurt them.* The Prophet *Jeremiah Chap.* 10. excellently describeth this superstition, *Learn not the way of the Heathen, nor be dismayed at the Signes of Heaven, for the customes of the people are vain.* We have many Heathenish fears still among us, as the meeting of an Hare, the falling of Salt, *&c.* all which were customes among Pagans, yet retained among ignorant people with a superstitious fear.

II. Natural Honesty not Grace. *The second thing is their natural honesty and righteousnes*, which was indeed the chiefest flower in their Garden, wherein they seemed in their greatest glory. *Severus* the Emperour did most admire that rule, which he said he learned from Christians, *That which thou wouldest not have done to thy self, do not to another.* An excellent particular rule in all commerce between man and man: And although many of them did walk up to this rule, yet this natural righteousnes was not grace, because the end of all their actions was not the glory of God, and the salvation of their souls, but either vain-glory, or at best only the publick good, or comfort and ease in their Consciences, which unjust acts would disquiet: And therefore as the light of the Moon and the Stars is not able to dispell the night, but the light of the Sun only; so neither is the power of nature able to rectifie that crookednes and perverseness that is in all our wayes; it is the proper work of Grace only to do that: And the like we may say of all their actions of frugality, temperance and sobriety; these all like their acts of righteousnes, had but humane ends, the aim they shot at, was far lower than heaven; and therefore were not Grace, because that doth lift us up to God, aiming at, and beholding his Glory in all that we do. But because the next thing I shall speak of, is, their morall virtues, a step higher than those natural Dictates remaining in us, and am there to shew their insufficiency, I shall desist, and come to the use, which is of examination.

Use. Is it so, that Heathens have done thus gloriously, though their glory be much stayned? Then try, whether we be not outstripped by them or no: Do not they serve their false gods more than we the true? Because we are Christians, is therefore all Paganism banished from us? No, for there are these Heathenish things among us; First, Prophane and stupid ignorance: How many people worship they know not what, believe they know not what? having minds as blind

about

about any Religious things, as Bats and Owls: Who can bewail this darkneſs enough.

Secondly, If thou liveſt in prophaneneſs, in unjuſt and unrighteous wayes, here thou art worſe than an Heathen, they will riſe up and condemne thee; neither will the privildge of Baptiſme or the title of Chriſtianity be a protection to thee, from that wrath which is due to thy enormous wayes.

Thirdly, Our Saviour ſpeaks of ſome Heathens, that if the Goſpel were preached to them, they would be more affected, and teſtifie better ſigns of their love of it, and reverence to it, than thoſe who enjoy the means of Grace: *If the things had been done in Tyre and Sidon*, ſaith our Saviour, which were Heathenish places, *they would have repented long ago in Sackcloth and aſhes*, Mat. 11. 10. O it is a dreadfull and terrible thing to conſider, that even Pagans and Gentiles would manifeſt better affections, and more real reſpects to the Word preached, than many of thoſe do, who yet have the clear day of the Goſpell! O that God ſhould deny it to them, and vouchſafe it to thee, who makes no better uſe of it.

SERMON LVIII.

Of Ethicks or Moral Philoſophy, that it leads not to Salvation; And that the Moral Vertues of Temperance, Fortitude, Juſtice, Liberality, &c. are not Grace.

ROM. 2. 15.

Which declare the Law of God written in their hearts, &c.

I Shall at this time finiſh the matter I intended out of this Text, which was to ſhew, *That all the Moral excellency and worth, a man by nature can attain unto, deſerveth not to be called Grace and Godlineſs.* The onely thing conſiderable, that remaineth to be diſcuſſed, is, *Whether thoſe Moral vertues, the choiceſt Heathens are ſo exact in deſcribing of, and preſſing to, are Grace:* For there is nothing ſeemeth to be ſo like godlineſs, as thoſe Moral vertues, Fortitude, Temperance, Juſtice, Liberality, &c. And ſeeing the Scripture commands the ſame things, that thoſe Authors do ſo commend, it may juſtly be doubted, whether to have thoſe Moral Vertues that do ſo excellently civilize a man, and orderly regulate all his actions, that the Church and Commonwealth where he liveth, receiveth much good by him, be not enough to Salvation. This is a point of great concernment, for who doth not think if he attain to ſuch a wel-temperd life, that he is in the neceſſary way to ſalvation? For the better diſcovery of the truth in this point, conſider theſe things:

First, That the Heathens were right in this, in commending Moral Philoſophy above all other Arts, becauſe the end of it was to make men civilly good, and orderly

derly to govern their actions: Therefore *Seneca* said well, the other Arts are called *Liberal*, because they are worth the study of a free and ingenuous man; but this is called *Liberal*, because it makes a man free, and sets him at liberty from his passions and vices. All the Sciences lie in Contemplation and Speculation, but this endeavoureth to bring a man to the enjoyment of some good, which is his end. The former were only invented *Ut exercitia ingenii*, not *Remedia animi*, but this to be a medicine and cure of the soul. Hence when they compared all the Arts together, sometimes they resembled them to a field; Natural Philosophy they made the plants and roots that grew therein; Logick the hedge that enclosed the field; but Moral Vertue was the fruit growing thereon: At other times they compared them to an Egg; the yolk or substance was Moral Philosophy; the shell was Logick. Thus farr they did well, that they thought it more excellent to reform a mans manners, to better his conversation, than to know the motions of the Heavens, or dispute subtilly: Therefore they called it the musick of the soul, as that which did tame and quiet mens unruly passions, and regulate their crooked lives; and herein they will certainly at the day of judgement condemn many Christians, who labour more for knowledge, and how to get skill and understanding in those matters which have applause in the world, than to live soberly and righteously.

Secondly, Howsoever *Plato* and other Heathens, have laboured much in laying down Doctrines and Precepts for curing mens lives, yet *Aristotle* hath the more general approbation, for describing of Ethical Doctrine; Indeed *Plato* hath more Divine matter in his works, but *Aristotle* methodizeth it; therefore one said, that all things lay confused till *Aristotle* came, who put them into order. As the great Army of the *Medes* was confused and tumultuous, till *Cyoxares* their General regulated them. Yet the Fathers, they generally were most addicted to *Plato*, from whom also they sucked in some corrupt opinions, which their Christianity did not quite wash away; and because of their former life and opinions, it is an usual thing with them to call the Christian Doctrine, and the Christian Religion, Philosophy: But afterwards *Aristotle* began to be admired, whom *Averroes* called the Rule and Example, which Nature had found out, to demonstrate the ultimate perfection of a man; yea some Popish Writers have thought him a glorified Saint in Heaven: But whatsoever excellent Doctrine he might propound to make men civill, and externally vertuous, yet the Christian Religion doth reveal a farr more excellent and noble way; and therefore if we take *Solomon's* Proverbs, which we may call *Solomon's* Ethicks; how infinitely doth he transcend *Aristotle*, for though both may prescribe the same Moral duty, yet *Solomon* still carrieth us out to God, and sets up a sure light to direct our feet in a good and upright way.

Thirdly, That which we call *Ethicks*, or Moral Philosophy, is a Doctrine informing us how to regulate our actions, according to honesty and righteousness, that so we might be happy: For although Heathens miserably erred, and were confounded, about what happiness was, and the chiefest good, yet they all concluded, there was such a thing, and that the way thereunto was onely by vertuous actions: The nature of which they described to be in keeping of an excellent Mean, so that a man do not fail in excess or defect; and all this was to be done for Vertues sake, out of love to it; As for example, they made Temperance a vertue, but when and how? Even when a man had got an habit of this sobriety rooted in him; not excessive in any thing of pleasure, nor yet defective in any things convenient or necessary; and all this he doth not for applause sake, or to preserve his health, but out of a love to Vertue: This therefore they press, that he who would be happy, must be a vertuous man; and certainly, this may seem an high point, that they held none vertuous, but such who did vertuous actions, for Vertues sake: This laid down, it will be very profitable to know whether this be not Grace: Whether any men need to do any more: Would it

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not be well, if any amongſt us were thus far moralized? The anſwer is negative, All ſuch Vertues, let men attain to never ſo much lovelineſs and comelineſs in them, yet are not the Grace of God requireth of thoſe who would be ſaved: Their Temperance, their Meekneſs, their Juſtice, is far different from the Temperance, Meekneſs, and Righteouſneſs, which the Spirit of God works in us; therefore there are ſome Divines that ſay, the Scripture never uſeth Vertue in that ſenſe, as the Philoſophers do; neither (ſay they) is Grace ever called Vertue: But I cannot ſay this latter is true, for the Scripture ſaith, *A Vertuous Woman*, Prov. 30.10. that is, a gracious godly Woman; and the Apoſtle ſpeaking of the chain of Graces, ſaith, *Adde to faith, vertue; and to vertue knowledge*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. It is true, to deliver ſuch matter as this, as to love a good and honeſt action for honeſties ſake, ſeemeth to be very high, and we may juſtly queſtion, whether ever any Heathen was ſo vertuous in that reſpect; they were onely notions, delivered by men in Books, not realities practiſed in mens lives; but grant all this were ſo, and we have many men amongſt us who are admirably moralized, prudence and reaſon hath wonderfully civilized them, that they abhor any groſs ſins, as that which is againſt the nature of a man, and makes him become bruitiſh; but yet none of theſe are yet in a ſtate of Grace. And conſider well the grounds of this point, that at laſt thou mayeſt be provoked to true godlineſs.

1 Natural ſobrie y and temperance, with other natural habits not Grace.

First, *This civilized Vertue falls ſhort, becauſe it hath not been built upon a ſure, deep and humble foundation*; which is, the acknowledgement of our natural corruption, and the horrible ſtain that is now throughout the whole man: They were alſo ignorant of the ſinfulneſs of thoſe inward motions, and firſt ſuggeſtions to ſin, which *Paul* doth ſo bemoan and ſo bewail himſelf for, as a miſerable captive. Now if a man build never ſo fair an Edifice, upon a ſlighty and weak foundation, when any ſtorm ariſeth, all will fall preſently to the ground. All men indeed, have acknowledged Vertue hard and difficult to fleſh and blood, they placed it upon an high hill, to which it was hard climbing, but yet they did not make it impoſſible to fleſh and blood. Some of the Heathens conceived, the ſeeds and foundations of Vertue were in our nature, as ſparks of fire are in a flint ſtone, which are ſtricken out, though with an hard blow; but man is ſaid *To be dead*, not aſleep in ſin, *Epheſ.* 2. and our Regeneration is called a Reſurrection, not an awakening from evill wayes, Grace is not ſowed in an heart, as ſeed in the ground, which the earth brings forth by a natural power, and inbred ſtrength; but as *Sarah* did conceive, wholly by the power of God: Thus doth the heart of a man bring forth the fruits of Righteouſneſs. Here then is the certain ground of mens miſtakes, they lay not a ſure foundation at firſt; they think not ſin hath made ſuch a deep and inward wound upon a mans ſoul, and therefore they ſeek not out for ſuch a deep and inward cure: Oh know then! that although thy life be never ſo externally vertuous, yet if thou haſt not begun with this principle of Debaſement, all the work of Grace is to begin anew in thee.

Secondly, *This Moral Vertue is not Godlineſs, becauſe they erred in the manner alſo of obtaining it*: They looked upon Vertue, as that which was acquired by their own induſtry and cuſtomary actions; they call them acquired habits, not infuſed: They thought by often actions of Temperance, Meekneſs and Righteouſnes, to get the habits of them; but in Chriſtianity it is far otherwiſe, God firſt makes the tree good, then the fruit will be good; Firſt he infuſeth into our ſouls ſupernatural principles, enabling us to walk holily, and then we walk in his Commandments; this is called, *The taking away of an heart of ſtone, and giving an heart of fleſh*, Ezek. 32. and *Writing his Law in our hearts*, Jer. 31. ſo that when we are righteous, temperate, in a Chriſtian way, it is not becauſe we often accuſtomed our ſelves to ſuch actions before, but becauſe God firſt ſanctified our natures thereunto; whereas all Moral Vertue is obtained by a ſtudious and

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diligent exercise of our selves in such ways; therefore they called this Art or Doctrine, *Ethicks*, from ἦθος, Custom, because they did frequently use themselves to such manners; And how common is this amongst us? Have men been formerly given to such and such vicious & sinful courses? if they recover out of these, they do it by an humane power, they stint themselves in such and such a manner: All this is well done, but still they must look higher, they must expect and beg for grace, to be infused in their hearts by Gods spirit, not obtained by their own labours: Therefore men thus moralized, and no more, are never zealously affected with the grace of God converting them; they never are admiring, as you see *Paul* is, sometimes to ravishment, of the riches of Gods grace, and his unspeakable love to them: Nor have they such discovery of grace in them, as to be often speaking of, and affected with the original of it.

3. Thirdly, *This Moral Vertue is therefore insufficient, because it is not guided by a sure and standing rule, which is the word of God:* For seeing that is true, which is affirmed by them, That vertue is in a golden Mediocrity, moderating against excess and defect; there must be some standard or immoveable rule to go by, that we erre neither on the right hand or the left. Now that which they prescribed, was onely the dictate and resolution of a prudent man, *Sicut vir prudens judicabit*, As a prudent man shall judge: But alas? no man can be a rule to a vertue, but vertue must regulate him: This were to have the Sun follow the Clock, as they say; therefore these did onely grope in the dark, not knowing how to order their steps; they were like ships in the sea, without any Pilot. But to that which is truly grace and godliness, the word of God is a sure rule; that onely regulateth our actions, that informeth us how to moderate our passions, how to bound and limit our affections; as also, what motives and attractives should inlarge our desires to what is good: Therefore the Word of God is so often called a *Light* and a *Lamp*, Psal. 119. and the Apostle calls it the *Rule*, Gal. 6. 16. according to which we must direct and order our steps: That is not grace, which the thoughts of a wise man shall determine, but what Christ and the Word of God shall conclude; and indeed, hence arise all mistakes about Godliness, that the Scripture is not made the Judge of it. That which to our apprehensions, to our prudential thoughts we think to be right and Religious, that presently we imbrace, and go no further: But the nature of true godliness, is as much above thy thoughts, and beyond thy expectation, as any mystery of Faith. A man would as hardly believe that Grace is such a supernatural mysterious work, as the Doctrine of the Trinity, or Christs Incarnation is incredible to a Natural man: Look therefore to have true Grace, a farre other thing, than thy Natural Prudence would conclude

4. Fourthly, *This Moral Vertue is not Grace, because suppose the utmost and highest which they attained in this way, viz. To have a vertuous action, for vertues sake, not for vain-glory, or self-ends, but meerly because vertue is lovely, and comely, and consonant to right reason*: Yet because they staid in this, and did not refer all to God, placed their trust and happiness in this, and not in God; therefore these Vertues were indeed Vices. Hence the Apostle 1 *Corinth.* 6. 1. calles all their Magistrates and Governors in their publique Courts, unjust: *Do any of you go to Law before the unjust, and not before the Saints*: Though they had a Civil Justice, and were a terrour to the wicked; yet because this was not referred to Gods glory, the Scripture calls them *unjust*, but you see, the godly who have true Grace in them, and the fruits of Gods Spirit, yet rest not in this, look not to be justified or made happy hereby, but go out of them all to the favor of God through Christ: Thus *Paul accounteth his righteousness dung and dross, in comparison of the Righteousness by Faith*, Philip. 3. 8. *Paul*, furnished with so many gracious abilities

abilities, yet as a meer Bigger, runs to Gods Grace for covering, left his nakedneſs appear: So that if our Graces, which yet are wrought in us by Gods Spirit, may have no confidence put in them; much leſs may thoſe Civil Vertues: And for this reaſon, *Auſtin* puts thoſe glorious Vertues in the Catalogue of Vices. Thoſe vertues, ſaith he, which a man ſeemeth to himſelf to have, by which he hath power and dominion over vices, unleſſe they be referred to God, they are vices rather than vertues; for although of ſome they are then thought to be true and honeſt vertues, when they are referred to themſelves, and not deſired for any thing elſe, yet even then they are ſwelling and proud, and therefore are not vertues but vices: For as that is not fleſh but above fleſh, which makes fleſh live, ſo that is not of a man, but above man, which makes man to live happily: thus *Auſtin*. So then this Civil vertue can make none godly, becauſe it makes a man ſtay in himſelf, and reſt in thoſe apprehended perfections, not at all going out to God; whereas Grace in its proper effects, ſtill makes us to eye God, and look out to him.

Fifthly, *As a Conſectary from the former, therefore this Moral Vertue is not godlineſs, becauſe it is not a life of faith, which yet is the ſoul and heart of all godlineſſe. The juſt ſhall live by faith*, Romans 1. 17. Now this life of faith is not onely in Juſtification, whereby we lay hold upon Chriſt for his Righteouſneſſe, that ſo Chriſt may be all in all; but alſo in Sanctification, whereby Chriſt dwelling in our hearts, we receive Power, Life and Motion from him, to walk in all godlineſſe: Thus *Romans* 11. *By faith we ſtand as branches in the Olive Tree, and receive of its fatneſſe*: The life of Grace in a godly man is not an entire independent and abſolute life of it ſelf, but a partial dependent one, ſuch as the branch is of a tree; or a member of the body; or the childes life in the womb. As therefore when the root is withered, the branches muſt; or as ſweet flowers pulled off their root, preſently loſe their life and fragrancy; ſo doth a godly man, if he could be ſeparated from Chriſt. But civil vertue is not a life of faith, depending upon another; its a life of works, wherein we are a kinde of abſolute Lords, not fetching power from without us. Hence it is, that theſe moraliſts are never much in prayer, earneſt in ſupplications; they pleaſe themſelves with cuſtom and formality, and lazie devotions not feeling the conſtant need of Chriſt, and the daily ſupply which they ſhould have from him; yea, they are wholly ſtrangers to the life of faith, they know not what it means; they have no exerciſes or temptations in it: Therefore do not thou judge of thy good condition by thy Morality, by thy external Righteouſneſſe, but by thy faith; Doſt thou know what it is to believe? to lie ſucking at the breaſts of Gods promiſe daily? to be drawing out of the wells of Salvation continually? This is the great part of Grace. 5.

Sixthly, *This Moral life is not a gracious life, becauſe here is nothing of Chriſt in it*, who yet inableth only to what is godly, and makes that godlineſs acceptable: *There is no other name to be ſaved by, but by Chriſt; and no other way, but by faith in that Name*, Acts 4. 12. Therefore Chriſt calls himſelf *The Way, the Truth and the Life*, John 14. 6. *The Way*, ſo that whatſoever glory and dignity any action may have, yet if it be not through him, its out of the way; and the faſter a man runs, if it be out of the way, the greater loſſe it is. Then he is *the Truth*, all actions not done in his name, are but lyes and vanities: Thy Religion is a lye, thy Righteouſneſſe is a lye, if it be not done in and through him: And then he is the *Life*, let thy converſation be never ſo reſplendent, ſo glorious, yet it is but a dead glory; there is no ſupernatural life of grace, but where Chriſt is. Now a Moral man, if a Chriſtian, though he may in profeſſion acknowledge Chriſt, yet he doth not live as one that daily receiveth influence from him: Chriſt is not really in his thoughts, in his duties, in his affections; 6.

fections, he doth not pathetically and heartily, cry out, How vain are all these duties without Christ? How undone were I, if not for Christ?

7. Seventhly, *This Moral Vertue is not a life of Grace, because it is many times a dreadful opposer, and a cursed enemy to it.* Those Stoicks, which were the chiefest of Heathens, and had the sublimest notions about vertue, That would not have a man love vertue, not for the sweetness and delight it brings, they thought that too base, and an unworthy respect, but onely for vertues sake; yet how desperately did they set against *Paul*, Acts 17, 18. like loves its like; and therefore if moral vertue were grace, it would love, respect and honor it wheresoever it finds it: Those onely should be chief in our affections, who are in piety.

Quest. But you may say, *What? is there no difference then to be made between a vicious man and a civilized man; between these outward vertuous actions, and gross prophaneness?*

Answ. Yes, very much; for First, God hath commanded the prophane, gross man,

1 to be cast out of the Church-Assemblies, till he be reformed: *If one that is a brother, be a fornicator, drunkard, &c. not to eat with such an one; and cast out from among you that wicked person*, 1 Cor. 5. such gross sinners are no more to be suffered in holy Assemblies than Swine in your garden, than Toades in your dishes, than dead Flies in a box of ointment; but a Christian civilized, though not regenerated, hath no such censure to be inflicted upon him; and although this Morality be no qualification for heaven, yet it keeps men from being spots and blemishes, reproaches and scandals to that holy name which is called upon by us: Therefore its great matter of praise and blessing of God, if these restraints are put upon men, and they do not like Swine wallow in all mire and filth.

2. 2. This moral vertue is profitable both to others, and to themselves also. *To others*; Thus the Righteousness, Fortitude, and other noble Qualifications among the Romans, were a great advantage to the publique, and while those humane vertues flourished, *Rome* was the Queen and Head of the world; but (as their own Authors observe) when that strictness and justice was dissolved, and in the room thereof Avarice, Pleasures, and all corrupt administrations, then she became so sick, that she could neither indure her diseases, nor yet her remedies: And then they are profitable to those that do them, partly because their condemnation will be lesser, their punishments more mitigated; and partly because God doth bestow many outward temporall rewards upon them. *Ahab* for external humiliation had the publique judgements of the Land removed for that season; and industry, frugality and righteous dealings have temporal blessings following them.

Use. To inform how far they are off from all grace, and so all hopes of glory, who live in gross and prophane ways: What? if such Righteousness doth not avail? shall thy unrighteousness? If such temperance & sobriety? shall thy voluptuous and unclean courses? If copper be not found to be gold? shall dung be thought to be gold? Therefore let such be ashamed and confounded, and never open their mouthes with any confidence. But,

2. This sheweth the excellency of the word of God, which discovers those things as contemptible and unworthy, which among men are so admired: What is more amiable? than to see a man of a sober, temperate, chast and just conversation? yet the Scripture sheweth a more excellent way; not that it takes these away, but lifts them up to an higher nature. It makes a man go further, and do those things upon spiritual and supernatural grounds, which were done upon humane and inferior motives before.

SECT.

SECT. VIII.

Treateth of the Nature of Converting Grace, under the Notion of Washing, or Sanctifying.

SERM. LIX.

To undeceive Men that think, Though they live Wickedly, yet they shall dye Happily. And how it comes to pass that men are so prone to Deceive themselves.

1 COR. 6. 11.

And such were some of you; but ye are Washed, but ye are Sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God.

THe first words of the Text cause us to look back to the Verses before it. The Apostle in the beginning of the Chapter, reproveth a sinfull and unwarrantable practice among the *Corinthians* of going to Law one with another. Not that it is absolutely a sin to demand our right before a Magistrate; as the Anabaptists would infer from hence; for then the Apostle would not have permitted them to use such judicial decisions among themselves, to which he directs them; but the grounds of this prohibition are, partly because they impleaded one another before Heathen Magistrates; and so Christianity was made a reproach; partly they wanted a preparation of mind to suffer wrong, rather than unfully contest in inferiour matters; partly because they did wrong, and were full of injurious carriages, and that to their brethren: From which wickedness he deterreth them by that threatning; *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdome of heaven?* And to confirm this the more, he layeth down a more general proposition, enumerating several kindes of sins; and least they should think their Christian

ſtian faith would ſave them, though they had wicked lives, he adviſeth them, not to erre, or *be not deceived*, either by falſe Teachers, broaching ſuch Doctrines, or by their own corrupt hearts, ſuggeſting ſuch falſe deluſions: He doth alſo dehort them from ſuch wickedneſs, becauſe that was their courſe of life formerly, while unconverted, *but now they are waſhed and ſanctified.* Before I come to the main ſcope I intend out of theſe words, (which is to explain the nature of converting grace, under the notion of *Waſhing* and *Sanctifying*,) let me conſider that Phraſe, *verſe* 9. *Be not deceived*, and the beginning of this *verſe* 11. *And ſuch were ſome of you.* For the former, although it was as plain as the Sun-ſhine at noon-day, that all who live in groſs ſins ſhould be damned, yet there were *Corinthians* who deceived their own ſouls, thinking they might be ſaved, although they lived in all prophaneneſs. Therefore to prevent this the Apoſtle ſaith *Be not decived.* Chriſt uſeth ſuch a Preface, *Luke* 21. 8. and *Paul*, *Gal.* 6. 7. *James* alſo 1. 16. when they are to ſpeak that thing, which unknown, or unobſerved, would bring a man much evill; and truly there cannot be a greater cauſe to prefix ſuch an Antidote than in this matter of the Text: For how notoriouſly univerſal is this contagious and infectious Principle, that the profeſſion of the truth of Chriſt, and a general formal invocation upon his Name will bring a man to heaven, though his life be nothing but a preparation for hell. Learned men ſay, that *Simon Magus* taught this Doctrine, That a bare profeſſion of faith, without a reformation of mens live; is enough to ſalvation: Whether this be mens Doctrine, or opinion, I know not; to be ſure, it is too much their practice; and it may juſtly be thought, as *Auſtin* did, that one main reaſon, why *James* doth ſo much prefer good works, and a godly life, informing that faith alone without theſe did not juſtifie us, becauſe ſome corrupted and perverted theſe places in *Paul*'s Epiſtles, where he ſets up faith as the onely inſtrument of juſtification.

Obſerv. Obſerv. *That men are very prone generally to deceive themſelves in this, that though they live wickedly, yet they ſhall dye happily, and be ſaved gloriouſly.* Though they have lived enemies and adverſaries to God, yet they think to have the Kingdome of glory, as children and heirs of God. O monſtrous folly and madneſs to imagine ſuch things! But what is more frequently acted in the whole world than this? Is not prophaneneſs and impiety as common among us as dirt in the high-way, or weeds in Summer; yet which one of theſe men, that live in theſe wayes, doth not promiſe himſelf heaven? So that if we could remove this pillar, that ſo many lean upon, I ſee no obſtruction, or impediment in their way to ſalvation. If our hearers were driven out of this refuge, and were convinced; this is but a deluſion, and it will do them no good, how many would come to us as they did to *John Baptiſt*, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?*

Why men of great impiety have ſtrong perſwaſions of their happy Condition. 1. For the further preſſing of this point, it is worth the conſideration What are thoſe cauſes that make men of great impieties thus fooliſhly perſwaded; and firſt, *Non-attendance to the Scripture*; not obſerving the threatnings and curſes ſo peremptorily delivered there againſt all ungodlineſs. Men judge of their ſalvation, and have hopes according to the principles of the world, and humane perſwaſions: They think God like themſelves, as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *Pſal.* 50. They do not go to be informed out of the Word, how it will be with them at the latter end. Oh know then, though thy own heart, and though all the men in the world ſhould acquit thee, yet that is nothing, as long as the Word bindeth thee faſt in thoſe chains of condemnation. Thou therefore that liveſt in all groſs prophaneneſs, promiſing thy ſelf heaven and happineſs, look into the Scripture and tremble, take the Bible and read, ſee if that do not make it as impoſſible for thee a prophane man, abiding ſo without Repentance and Reformation, to be ſaved, as it is for the fire to be without heat, or the Sun without light: Who would think, that thou who readeſt and heareſt ſo much every day, ſhould be thus deceived? *Know ye not*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdome of heaven?* Know ye not! Is there any ſuch a Babe, or an Infant in Chriſtianity that

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is not acquainted with this? Come then and hear the Conclusion of all, let the Scripture at last put the period to thy vain hopes: Unless thou hast a new Bible, or new Scriptures, there can be no encouragement; for this which we read to you, and out of which we preach to you every day, makes it one main business thereof, to perswade the wicked it shall go ill with him. Oh then say, Here is no hope for me such a sinner, here is no encouragement till I become another man. They are the bewitchings, and deceitfulness of my own ignorant, corrupt heart, that telleth me of other things.

Secondly, *Therefore are many deceived in this plain point; because though they acknowledge damnation in the general to sinners, yet they never make particular application to themselves*; they do not say, This threatning, this curse belongs to me. God gave the Commandements in the singular number, *Thou shalt do no Murther, Thou shalt not commit Adultery*; to teach every man to reflect upon himself, and say, Thou doest thus; and thou doest thus. The Prophet complaineth, *No wicked man said, What have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. Hence are those commands, *To commune with our own hearts, and be still, To search and try our wayes.* It would make a man wonder, and say, How can this be? A man will acknowledge a Drunkard cannot inherit the Kingdome of heaven, and yet that man will be drunk; and so of all other sins. Now how came the general and the particular to be thus opposites? meerly because men came not to particular conviction; they do not make home-applciation; they say not, *Is not this I Lord?* Even godly men have been senseless of grievous sins, as *David* of Murther and Adultery, till *Nathan* saith, *Thou art the man.* Oh let thy Conscience take *Nathan*'s language, and say, *Thou art the man.* The Scripture speaks to me, the Minister preacheth to me, as if there were no other sin in the world: But this undoeth you, you go in soul and ungodly wayes, not so much as thinking what you are, not minding you are such and such a sinner. To reflect upon your own selves is a peculiar effect of reason, beasts cannot do it; and the more sensible thou art this way, the more reason thou hast in thee. Be not then as the Swine that never reflects on her self; thinking I am a Swine, I love to wallow in the Mire, I am no Sheep. As that Beast can never have such thoughts, so be not thou as bruitish, never to consider, How plain is my wickedness? it canot be hid from my eyes, I love not, or delight not in that which is good. 2. Psal. 4. Luke 3. 10.

Thirdly, *Therefore are men deceived, because they represent Gods Mercy and Grace in such an universal and unlimited way, that they bound it not to faith and repentance, and a godly life.* God indeed is an Ocean of mercy, an inexhausted Fountain of all grace and godliness. When we have thought the highest we can, yet still there is more mercy in him than we can comprehend; But to whom is all this? Who may plead this, and claim this in prayer? Even the humble, the broken and contrite heart. *David* may well cry out, *Have mercy according to the multitude of mercies*, Psal. 51. 1. Because his heart is wounded, and bones are broken through Gods displeasure at sin. If therefore thou wilt comfort thy self with Gods mercy, and with his grace, be such a qualified Subject as that requireth, lye like that man of *Jericho*, not onely half dead, but half damned in thy own sense, and then the good *Samaritan* will pour Oyl into thy wounds. Doth God any where proclaim pardon and forgiveness to the unhumbled sinner? Doth Christ say, Come to me ye jolly and merry sinners, who never felt sin a burden. No, but all the mercy he speaks, it is to those, who being burdened with sin, desire nothing more than to throw away that load. Do not then as the Bee is sometimes drowned in Honey, so thou drown thy self in the sweet apprehensions of Gods mercies, without Gods wayes. As a Beast might not touch the Mountain, so neither may a foul wretched sinner come near the Promise to lay hold on it. Why might not the Devils and damned in Hell comfort themselves with this, That God is mercifull, he is full of pity, and therefore will not let us lye always roaring in these eternall flames? Oh you would say, this would be a vain mad thing, because God hath 3.

decreed otherwise, And is it not thus also in our case? God is merciful, but he hath decreed otherwise, than that thou who loveſt and liveſt in ſins, ſhouldſt ever be refreſhed with this mercy. The damned in hell may have it as ſoon as thou wilfully abiding in thy wickedneſs; onely God may give thee Repentance, and ſo fit thee for mercy, which he will not do for Devils.

4. Fourthly, *That wherein they wilfully deceive themſelves, is alſo about Chriſt, the Mediatour and Saviour.* This they build upon; Chriſt came to ſave ſinners, he is a Mediator to make our peace. Now they make no queſtion, but this being true, they are ſure to be ſaved: Thus they build upon a good foundation, hay and ſtubble; for Chriſt is not a Saviour to any, but thoſe who receive him alſo as a Lord and a King, and ſo proffer ſubjection to all his Lawes: He is not onely a Jeſus, a Saviour, but he is alſo a Lord and a King, and he never communicates his benefits, where he doth not beſtow his graces. It is true he came to ſave ſinners, he died for this end, but he alſo died to ranſome us from our luſts, and to make us a people zealous of good works, *Tit.* 2. 14. The grace of God (which is that of the Goſpell in Chriſt) hath appeared, teaching us to deny all ungodlineſs: So then as Chriſts body was not laid any where but in a new Sepulcher, where no man elſe lay; ſo Chriſt the Mediator is not received into every mans heart, but where no luſt, or other groſs ſin is ſuffered to abide: If Chriſt be a Saviour to thee from hell hereafter, he is alſo a Saviour from preſent luſts and tranſgreſſions; and indeed this is the greateſt ſalvation of all, by how much the evil of ſin is above the evill of the greateſt puniſhment. Therefore the truly godly, and ſuch as indeed have propriety in Chriſt, they look upon this as the principal and chief end of our redemption by Chriſt, to have our active evills ſubdued, rather than our paſſive. They thank God for ſending Chriſt into the world, to take away proud hearts, earthly hearts, diſobedient lives. In this they rejoyce, that there is vertue and efficacy in Chriſts death, to kill thoſe burthenſome luſts and ſins which they lie under. Know therefore, that if Chriſt purpoſe to do you any good hereafter, he will do ſome to thee in this life. It is a great mercy, and thou needeſt it as much, that he ſhould deliver thee from thoſe preſent evil wayes thou walkeſt in, as if thou wert in hell flames to be ſaved from them: And never did *Dives* more importunately deſire a drop of Water in Hell to cool his ſcorched Tongue, than thou oughteſt for the preſent to deſire the blood of Chriſt, and the Spirit of God, which is like VVater, to extinguiſh that immoderate thirſt and deſire after ſin.

5. Fifthly, *Men do ſo eaſily deceive themſelves, becauſe they put too much worth and efficacy in the Sacraments, and external profeſſion of the true Religion.* In being a Proteſtant, in participation of the Sacraments, they think there is ſo much Piety and Religion, that though their lives be ſoul and noyſome, yet they hope for ſalvation. This was a great deluſion of old in the *Jews*; what controverſies had the Prophets, and expoſtulations with them in this matter! The *Jews* their pretended their new Moons, their Sabbaths, their Sacrifices, and would not be driven from this Refuge: But ſay the Prophets, *Waſh ye, make ye clean*, Iſaiah 1. *execute judgement and juſtice, let every wicked man forſake his evil way.* Otherwiſe the Prophet declareth, that God hateth their ſolemn Aſſemblies. The Apoſtle *James* would not have uſed ſo many Arguments to prove, that faith without the effects of it could not juſtify, if ſo be men had not been too prone to ſuck in this principle; and as I told you not long ſince, This Opinion was ſo generally and univerſally received (viz. That if a man did believe Orthodoxly, though he lived wickedly) in *Auſtins* time, That he did with fear and modeſty oppoſe it. But obſerve our Saviours ground of his refuſal of all thoſe who enjoy many privileges, yet live ungodly; *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity*, Mat. 7. Becauſe they were workers of iniquity, therefore God rejects them. Hence the Scripture complains of thoſe, who have the form and profeſſions of the faith of Chriſt, but in works they deny him, *Tit.* 1. 16. Thou abhorreſt the *Socinian* and other Hereticks, becauſe by their

their opinions they deny Christ to be God; but thou by thy ungodly actions dost also deny his God-head. Thou abhorrest the Atheist, who saith, *There is no God*: yet all the wickedness thou committest doth really say, *There is no God*: Therefore what do we regard thy words, and thy Sacraments, or thy profession, when we see thy deeds? Make thy life clean, wash thy foul conversation, and then make thy religious approaches to God. *If I regard iniquity in my heart* (saith *David*) *the Lord will not hear my prayer.* The cry of thy sinnes will be above the cry of thy prayers; know then, as every tree is tryed by its fruit, so thy actions discern what thou art. Make never so many zealous prayers, come never so frequently to Church, yet if in the week-day God findes Oathes, Drunkenness, Prophaneſs in thy life; this is a reall denying of him.

Sixthly, *Therefore they delude themselves in this weighty business, because they understand not the nature of faith and trusting in God.* Come unto the vilest of men, when deaths stroak is upon them, when the fear of that surrounds them, even then though full of their sinnes, yet will say, They trust in Christ Jesus, they believe in him. But oh thou ignorant man, what is it to believe, and to trust in him? *Is it not out of the sense of the bitterness of sin, & a deliberate forsaking of it, obedientially resigning up our selves to Christs commands, and therewith relying on Christ the Mediator,* is not this to believe? Doth not the same faith which with one hand receiveth Christ, with another purifie the soul, and carry it out to all the fruits of righteousness: presumption indeed that is easie; to lay hold upon Christ for pardon, with an handfull of wickedness this is ordinary: but to trust in him according to Scripture-direction, & that order which God hath inviolably prescribed men, that is rare. *Faith therefore is the gift of God & it is wrought by his Spirit in us*; we can no more close with Christ, in a true Scripture-manner, as a Saviour, or the Promises revealed by God, than we can joyn with him as a Law-giver, or obey his Precepts. If therefore thou understoodst the Nature of trusting in God, & what is is to believe, thou wouldst not so easily perswade thy self thou dost trust in him, when thy Conscience tells thee of thy manifold sinnes. Hence the godly have found it so difficult to believe: they have been almost over-whelmed with doubts and feares; though Christ hath held out the Scepter of grace to them, yet they have even fainted through fear and shame, when they came into his presence. How frequently doth *David* call upon his soul, *to trust in God, and wait on him?* Psal. 42. 5. Whereas this carnal presumption findes no opposition at all. Consider of all these grounds which doe so often delude thee, and they may doe thee infinite good. 6.

Use of Admonition, *To call your selves to a strict account; consider how your Christian faith and unchristian practises can stand together, how your Religion and your conversation can accord:* The one is Honey, the other is Gall, the one is Light, the other is Darkness. How is it possible you should fall into such palpable and absurd contradictions. O deceive not your selves any longer, think not it will be well as long as those sins are unrepented, and unreformed. Be not deceived, saith the Apostle to all such, when you have to doe with men; if they profess much kindness and observance of you, yet in all their actions they work you all the despight and mischief they can. Doe ye not call them Hypocrites, and say *Quid verba? What are words*; when I see your deeds to be contrary? Doth not God from heaven say the same thing to you; To what purpose is your hearing, and praying, your profession of love to me, when all your deeds savour of hatred and rebellion against me? Now to quicken thee against this self-delusion and self-destruction, consider; *Use* 1.

First, *That God will not be mocked*; for so saith the Apostle, *Be not deceived, God will not be mocked*, Gal. 6 7. All thy Religion, all thy holy duties, without a sanctification of thy life, is but a mere mockery of God; for what can be a greater mockery than this, to cry out of thy sinnes here, and to commit them when thou comest home? To say here, Lord, let thy will be done, even as Angels in heaven do it, and then at home to obey it no more than Devils in Hell. Oh consider, this is

mocking

mock of God, and of this sinne thou hast been guilty many years. Was not that plain mockery of Christ, when they called him King in scorn, and yet at the same time crucified him. No less is it here, when thou drawest nigh to God, as if thou worshippedst him, as if thou wouldst love and obey him, and afterwards live to his great dishonour.

Secondly, *Consider, that what a man doth in his actions, is in some sense a more reall demonstration of a man than any words or professions.* He is the greatest and most reall enemy to God, whose life is so, let his outward profession be, what it can be: Therefore God at the great day of judgement will proceed according to the works of men. The Lord heretofore complained of those *that drawed nigh to him with their lips*, Isa. 29.13. *but their hearts were far from him*; and that did appear by their lives. Dost thou think the words of prayer will help thee, when the actions of sinne are ready to damn thee? Wherein can you more really shew what you are, than by your constant life and conversation? O more blind than Moles or Bats, that see not themselves for the present the fire-brands of Hell. What can hide this from thy Conscience? Is it not too plain, that thy life is the fruit, thy duties are but leaves and blossoms. Doth not the husbandman cut down that tree for burning which beareth not fruit, though many leaves.

Thirdly, *As it is mockery of God, so its plain, grosse, and palpable hypocrisie*, Prophane men are apt to censure those who live more strictly, and accurately than themselves as Hypocrites, not considering in the mean while, that heaven and earth cannot but take notice of their Hypocrisie: for what is more palpable than this, in thy words and Christian Religion to acknowledge Christ a Lord and King, but in all thy actions to rebell against him: On the Sabbath day to come and outwardly to bewail thy sins; and the very next day, or hour, to commit those very sinnes again. How can you so soon forget what you were about? How is it that you so quickly crosse your prayers and holy duties? May not heathens and Pagans deride you, when they see your ungodly lives? May not they say, Loe, there is a Christian who worshippeth Christ, that commmands him not to swear, but he will doe it all the day long? loe, there is a Christian, whom Christ commands, that their hearts should not be over-charged with Drunkenness and the cares of this world, but they will do the clean contrary: What do you think God hath forgotten your Religious approaches and ingagements, because you have forgotten them?

Fourthly, *Remember thou canst not alwayes Live in this fools paradice.* Thou canst not be alwayes be in this fond dream of happiness and felicity; but God at last will bring thee to the touch-stone, and thy reward shall be according as thou art. Thus he that doth wickedly may for awhile account himself happy; yet this will quickly melt, when death comes, when the day of judgement comes, then it will be fully discovered, that those sinnes and heaven can no more stand together, than light and darkness. Then God will tell you? *Depart you workers of iniquity*; There is a great gulf between mercy and you, Oh then reflect upon thy self and say, Why doe I all this? I live thus against Gods Law, and yet please my self with thoughts of peace and happiness, how can it be? you must have another way to heaven, than ever the Bible hath yet discovered.

2. Use 2d. of Instruction, *That nothing in all the Christian Religion, if duely considered, doth at all incourage to any sinne.* If any thing might imbolden a man, it might be thought the mercy and goodness of God, the freeness and fulnesse of Grace: but as for the former, *There is forgiveness with thee, that thou maist be feared*, saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 130.4. and as for the latter, with what holy indignation doth the Apostle argue against those that from the freeness of grace, would argue a liberty to sinne, as if the plenty of the one would incourage to multiply the other, *Rom.* 6.1. If then every thing in the Bible, if every thing in the true Christian Religion, be thus an antidote against sinne, a preservative from it, *How incurably wicked must they needs be, that by those holy motives are yet not made holy?*

holy: From which principle in Religion, art thou emboldened to thy lusts and sins? from what duty or Ordinance doest thou gather comfort in thy wickedness? If all these things are hand-writings against thy sins, why doest thou not tremble to commit them?

SERM. LX.

That Gods Grace of Conversion, is sometimes vouchsafed to the worst of men.

1 COR. 6. 11.

And such were some of you, but ye are washed, &c.

WE are now to consider a second kinde of Argument, the Apostle useth to dehort them from all gross wickedness, and that is the admirable and wonderful change that is now made upon them by converting Grace: They are not Swine any more, but sheep, and therefore must not wallow in the mire and filth of sin as formerly: So that the scope of the Apostle is to compare their former black and foul life, with the present glorious light they are now translated into. *And such were some of you.* He had reckoned up beasts rather than men, of monsters rather than men of reason; and yet, *Such were some of you.* He saith τινὲς *Some of you*, to shew, that every one of them had not all those filthy sores: Every one was not guilty of all the enumerated sins (except idolatry, which all were guilty of) unless in the seed and root, which is original corruption; but it is to be understood distributively, some were fornicators, some effeminate, some drunkards, some extortioners. *Corinth* was wicked, even to a proverbial speech, it seemed an hospital of diseased sick men, in respect of their moralities: And further, the Apostle saith in the neuter gender, ταῦτα, not τινὲς, not such persons, but such sins, emphatically demonstrating their wickedness that they were not so much *Peccatores*, as *ipsa peccata*, sinners, as the very sins themselves: We may then stand and behold the wonderful work of Grace, that raiseth children up to *Abraham* out of stones; that maketh Blackamores to change their skins. The *Corinthians*, while Idolaters, changed the image of God, into the likeness of an Ox or any other beast; but now God changeth these who were become like bruit beasts, into the image of the holy and pure God.

That the grace of God converting, is sometimes vouchsafed even to the worst and vilest of men. God many times takes the most crooked trees, and makes them pillars in this Temple; the most rugged and unpolished stones, and polisheth them for his building; even as Christ while he was upon the earth, for the most part cured those diseases which were desperate, that no art, nor no Physicians could cure: So many times, the grace of God changeth those who are hopelesse men, upon whom no art can do any good, upon whom spiritual Physicians for a great while have lost all their labour. This is much propheſied of as the fruit of the Gospel, that the savage, cruel and poysonous natures of wicked men, shall be strangely taken away, *Isa.* 35. 5, 6, 7. *The eyes of the blinde shall* *Obs.* 3.

be opened &c. No Lyon ſhall be there, &c. Iſa. 55. 11, 13. *Inſtead of the bryar ſhall come up the mirtle tree.*

Let us obſerve the grounds, why the grace of Converſion is ſometimes vouchſafed to theſe incurable men, in all humane apprehenſions, ſuch as *Manaſſeth, Paul, Mary Magdalen*, with many others: And

Reaſ 1. Firſt, *It is to demonſtrate the power of the word of God, animated and inlivened by the ſpirit, above all Humane Eloquence, or Moral Philoſophy*; wherein men have much laboured to make men better; but thoſe endeavors did prove like the waſhing of a brick, which did not cleanſe, but more defile. The Scripture doth often take notice of this peculiar effect of Gods word, that by it *We are forewarned from ſin*, Pſal. 19. *the ſimple receive underſtanding*, Pſal. 119. By it *we are begotten again*, 1 Pet. 1. *That is the ſword which entereth into the ſecret thoughts and imaginations of mens hearts, That captivateth and beateth down all the ſtrong holds of ſin and Satan, and diſpoſſeſſeth Satan out of his ſtrongeſt Caſtles:* Now this fiery vertue of the word preached, is never more manifeſted, than when it meets with ſuch moyſt, green wood, ſuch indiſpoſed materials, as groſs, prophane men are. The Apoſtle calls the word preached, *The power of God to ſalvation*, 1 Cor. 1. when the *Grecians*, men of parts and learning, judged it fooliſhneſs; and the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, *He came not in the inticing words of humane eloquence, leſt the power of Chriſt ſhould be obſcured*, 1 Corinthians 2. 4. When therefore by the ſimple, plain and pure demonſtration of Divine truthes, and of Gods Word, you ſee the hearts and conſciences of flagitious men awakened; you ſee them changed into holy, godly, heavenly men, of prophane, foul and ungodly. What glorious praiſe doth hereby redound to the word preached? This is like *Davids* little ſtone, ſlung into the head of great *Goliah*, If men of wiſdom, eloquence, ingenuity and excellent Morality, if theſe only were the men converted? it would quickly be thought that it was ſome excellency in them, rather than the power of Gods word without; but in theſe groſs livers it cannot be attributed to any thing in the world, but the word, preached: Deſpiſe not therefore the plain and powerful preaching of Gods word, for that is the muſtard-ſeed, which though little in quantity, is in operation mighty: you ſee twelve men indued with ability to preach this, did quickly leaven this whole world.

2. Secondly, *God makes his grace to come to ſuch great ſinners ſometimes, that his tender mercies and compaſſions may be made the more illuſtrious:* As it was Chriſts pity to cure that cripple, that lay thirty years by the pools ſide, and had no man to help him; ſo theſe ſinners that are bound in ſtronger chains than others, whom the Devil detaineth in ſurer chains than others, its a greater act of pity and grace to reſcue them: Thus *Paul* being ſenſible of himſelf, as the greateſt of all ſinners, how paſſionately doth he break out to admire the mercy and grace of God to him: So that when we ſee a wretched obſtinate ſinner, who careth for nothing, feareth nothing, is not able to pity himſelf, converted and inlightned by the grace of God, here are tender bowels, God pitieth him more than man doth himſelf. As *Hierom* ſaid of the poor dumb man that cannot ſpeak or beg for an alms, *Maxime rogat, dum non poteſt rogare*, The more unable he is to ſpeak, the more he doth ſpeak, moving compaſſion and pity. Thus a wicked man, who is indeed dumb ſpiritually, cannot ſpeak, cannot pray, cannot utter any one word in his behalf, is thereby an object of pity with God, becauſe ſo miſerable: If then you ask, Why are ſuch mens eyes opened? why do ſuch men underſtand what they did not? Chriſt in mercy hath ſaid unto them, *Ariſe and walk.*

3. Thirdly, *Grace converts ſometimes notorious ſinners, to confound the pride and ſwelling thoughts of ſelf-righteouſneſs. There are a generation of men, whoſe ways are clean in their own eyes*, Prov. 16. 1. men who juſtifie themſelves, bleſſing God they are not like other men; now when the grace of God comes and worketh upon

upon the most profligate sinners, leaving others to their own pride and conceited righteousnes, hereby they are confounded and ashamed: Thus it was discovered by our Saviour, he tells the pharisees, *That the publicans and harlots should go into the kingdom of heaven before them*; and *He came not to call such righteous as they were, but sinners to repentance*, Mat. 9. 13. There are none commonly further off true grace, than those who please themselves with the conceit of their own goodnes and righteousnes. The emptiest ear of corn growes up highest, and holds its head above others; but those who have true grace, are deeply sensible of their own insufficiency and imperfections; their righteousnesse, is to bewail their own unrighteousnesse: It falls out therefore, that there is sometimes more hope of a gross sinner, than a civilized Pharisee; for the one is sooner convinced, his conscience is easier awakened; but the other being already falsely perswaded of his own worth, can hardly be changed: *Ille morbus vix est sanabilis qui sanitatem imitatur*, That disease which is like health, is hardly cured; and thus a man living a life like godlinesse, when it is not so indeed, is seldom truly reformed.

Fourthly, *God will have some of the worst of men sometimes converted, that the Ministers of God, who are sometimes cast upon such a people, might not sow without hope: nor preach without hope*: Even a wilderness may become a pleasant river, even a *Mary Magdalene*, a Publican, may be converted by preaching; What then may not the Ministers of God expect? though their soul (as *David* saith) *Lyeth down among Lyons*: We may not alwayes say, *Woe be to us, because we live in the tents of Kedar*, for God may make that like *Jerusalem*. A place where nothing but bryars and thorns came up, may be made a pleasant garden: Christ told his Disciples, *He sent them like sheep amongst wolves*, Mat. 10. 16. and yet these sheep made many wolves sheep like themselves: Though therefore we catch nothing, when we cast our nets; yea, though we catch scorpions in stead of fishes, yet these scorpions may be made fishes: *With God all things are possible*, saith our Saviour. Mat. 19. 26. speaking of this very thing, to convert men, which is to make a Camel go through the eye of a needle: Though therefore humane reason may tell a man, there is no success to be expected, no good to be done, because a people so and so vicious; yet we must not regard the dead womb, but the power of God: *It be that opens the barren womb, and makes those that were fruitless to bring forth.* 4.

Fifthly, *Therefore God will have some of these Belzebub sinners converted, that so grace may be acknowledged to be a real, manifest, powerfull work, and that in the eyes of all the world*: Men are prone to judge godlinesse, nothing but the Melancholy, and the tender constitution of some mens bodies, or their black imaginations or fancies which arise within; but now when such, who have been so long, so continual in evil and ungodly ways, they shall love and delight in what they once loathed, This makes godlinesse a palpable visible thing: When *Paul* a blasphemer, a cursed opposer of the ways of Christ, is converted, and sets up that which he once pulled down, this makes all men see Gods Grace is not a notion, but a real lively work upon a man. That as the whole world wondered when they saw Christ work such palpable miracles, *making the blinde to see, the deaf to hear, the dead to rise*, they concluded he was God; here could be no imposture or deceit, the things were so manifest: Thus when God calls some wicked men, and makes them forsake all the pleasures and profits, leave the custom-receipt immediately, deny their parents, friends and all that might work upon naturall affections, all the prophane and carnal company to whom their souls was once glewed; this must make every man say, Here is more than notions, here is a real fire. The Poets taught much of *Circe's* cup, which turned men into beasts, but here is a change of beasts into men, yea into Angels; and we may say, *This work of the Lord is marvellous in our eyes.* 5.

Of incouragement to the spiritual husbandman, though he sow even upon the hardest Use.

rocks, and preach to beaſts rather than men? for who knoweth but that God may turn a noiſom dunghil, into a mine of gold. That of our Saviour ſhould be wings to us in our race, *With God all things are poſſible*; and that of God, *I will take away the heart of ſtone, and give an heart of fleſh*: Oh that we might ſay of all wicked men, that which the Apoſtle ſpeaketh here in the Text, *And ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified:* God will not have any wicked man deſpair in himſelf, that he is ſo wicked that God cannot, or will not ever give him a better heart; nor yet the miniſter to deſpair, though there be no viſible hopes of ever doing good upon ſuch unworthy men: Onely you may have this objection in your hearts:

Ezek. 32.

Queſt. Why do we not ſee God working thus as wonderfully to the change of men, as he hath done heretofore? there the *Corinthians*, the *Epheſians*, and other Heathens, wallowing in Idolatry, and all moral vices, yet found the word of God aſſimilating them to its own nature; it made men leave their corrupt and defiled natures, and come to imbrace that which formerly was ſo contrary to them: But now we ſee no ſuch things done, no not among Chriſtians; in thoſe days an Heathen Adulterer, an Heathen a Drunkard, became waſhed and cleanſed by the word; but now a Chriſtian thus polluted, notwithſtanding his Chriſtianity, and the word frequently preached unto him, doth not reform and make him leave his former impieties.

Anſw. To this the anſwer may be, *That wicked men living in their ſins under the daily exerciſe of the word, quickly provoke a ſpiritual cenſure and judgement to be inflicted upon them*; by which means, as the clay under the Sun; they become more obdurate; wonder not then, if as miracles, ſo this wonderfull work of converſion ceaſeth (at leaſt its not ſo frequent) for rebellion and unfruitfulneſs under the means of grace, enjoyed ſo long a time, hath deſerved this: but I added (not ſo frequently) becauſe even to this day in ſeveral places, God ſtill goeth out with this Omnipotent power upon ſome few, ſome firebrands there are pulled out of the fire, ſome Tygers are made Lambs, although this is very rare in compariſon of what hath been formerly; not but that Gods arm is as ſtrong, and the word we preach as powerful, but as it is ſaid of one place, *Chriſt could do no miracles there, becauſe of their unbelief*, Mat. 6. 6. *He could not* (that is) he would not, becauſe he ſaw their unbelief made them ſo wretched a people; ſo it is here, our miniſtery can do no good, our preaching cannot convert; not that mens luſts are ſtronger than Gods grace, but becauſe they put ſuch bolts and bars, ſuch obſtructions in the way of grace, that thereby God will not make it effectual to them. O then be afraid, if thou, though ſtill before this fire of the word, yet art alwayes cold and chill, feeling no ſpiritual heat at all.

In the next place, let us obſerve from the words of oppoſition, *And ſuch were ſome of you, but yet are waſhed:* They are not the ſame they were once.

Obſ. *That where converting grace is vouchſafed to a man, it makes a great change, be it not the man he was once.*

We may ſay of every regenerate man, Such wicked men you were once, prophane as others, negligent as others, ſenſeleſs of ſin and Gods wrath as others, but now this dark night is turned into a glorious day. The Prophet ſpake of ſome, *Amos* 6. 12. *That they turned righteouſneſs into hemlock and wormwood*: That was a wicked turning, but this turneth hemlock into righteouſneſs. The Prophet complained of *Jeruſalem*, fallen from her mercies, *That her gold was become droſs, and her wine water*, Lam. 4. but here is the contrary, droſs is become gold, and water wine. *Ego non ſum ego*, ſaid an unclean perſon once converted, to the whore that ſollicited him to the ſame courſes ſtill: So do thou ſay to all thy former wickedneſs, catching hold on thee as *Joſephs* miſtreſs did on him; I am not I, I have not the ſame judgement, the ſame affections, the ſame deſires that once I had, and therefore cannot imbrace what I once ſo dearly loved. The exact handling of this point will be, when we come to thoſe Texts that call it converſion,

converſion, or a change, or a turning to God; then the term from which and the term to which, may more largely be conſidered: Onely I ſhall now give you ſome qualities of this turning, and change from our evil wayes, truly to ſtir you up immediately to the practiſe thereof. We ſee God hath wrought many changings and turnings of things in our dayes: O how happy, if in all theſe, we might ſee this ſpiritual change, men formerly prophane, now holy; men heretofore guilty of notorious ſins, now as exemplary and zealous of what is godly.

1. The qualities of a gracious change or turning from our evill ways.

And firſt, *Therefore this change is a neceſſary one:* It muſt be ſaid of every one that would be ſaved, *Such an one thou once waſt, but now thou art ſanctified.* Even the man who hath alwayes lived civilly and unblamedly, that hath no groſs ſin to be turned from, yet he hath the ſoul-uncleanneſs, and the heart-leproſie upon him, from which he muſt be waſhed; ſo that this turning from what once we were, is indiſpenſibly neceſſary in young and old, in rich and poor, either inwardly or outwardly: Conſider of this therefore, you whoſe Motto is, *Semper idem*; though that be a glory in a good thing, yet for a man to be alwayes the ſame he was from the womb, is certain and irrecoverable death; When then will you bethink your ſelves? when ſhall the time be, that thou wilt become another man? think not that fleſh and blood can inherit the Kingdom of heaven: This undoeth many, that as they never dream of a change, which death will one day make upon them, ſo they never deſire a change that Grace in this preſent life ſhould work on them: Therefore as *Job* ſaid of the change by death, *He would every day wait till his change come* Job. 14. 14. (as ſome expound it:) do thou ſay of this change by grace, I will every day pray, hear, read, meditate, mourn and roar out before God all the day long, till this ſpiritual change come.

2.

Secondly, *Its a rational change*: Its the higheſt act of reaſon, for a man to become another man: For ſeeing the Scripture, which cannot lye, informeth us both of original and actual pollution, whereby we become no more qualified for heaven, than Toades to be made Angels: This being granted, its the greateſt reaſon in the world, that thou ſhouldſt immediately ariſe, and go out from thy own ſelf; For how wilt thou, who art but ſtubble and dry wood, be able to endure this conſuming fire of Gods wrath. Again, its rational, becauſe its for the better: Though men do not love to change, yet when its for the better, then they are glad; How do men thus change in all their outward affairs? but herein turning from ſin to grace, we tranſcendently have the advantage; we change corruption for glory, coals for gold, luſt and ſin, for the enjoyment of God, and communion with him: So that if men would ſet judgement on work, and conſider what that is they were once; and what that is to which God now calleth them, they would make no delay, but riſe up and be doing. Again, its the greateſt reaſon thus to change, becauſe we our ſelves are ſubject to a toral change by death: We cannot alwayes live and abound in our pleaſures, and our jollities, but death will at laſt come and make a wonderful change: Oh therefore be changed ſpiritually, before thou art changed corporally; the time will come when it will be ſaid of thee, Thou livedſt in ſuch advantages, in ſuch comforts, but now thou art not, death hath ſwallowed up all thy temporal joy, and life it ſelf: Oh let it be for the preſent ſaid, Thou didſt live once in ſuch wickedneſs, in ſuch impieties, but now all is altered: *I beſeech you as pilgrims, abſtain from the luſts of the fleſh*: 1 Pet. 2. 11. *Remember you are pilgrims and travellers, you have no abiding place in this world.*

3.

Thirdly, *Its a profitable change*: *What profit have you of thoſe things, whereof you are now aſhamed*, Rom. 6. 1. Alas, thy ſins are no wayes profitable to thee, for all the bleſſes of God both temporal and ſpiritual do accompany them; but godlineſs is profitable for all things: Though it would *not profit a man, to gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul*, yet it would exceedingly profit a man, to

gain his soul, though he lost all the world: Though he said, *Miserum est illud verbum fuisse*, yet here, *Felix & beatum verbum est fuisse*: Is a blessed and happy word, to say, Such an ungodly man once, but now not at all; such an one that scorned and despised the ways of God, but now he loveth and rejoyceth in them: even as the Prodigals Father rejoyced over his repenting son, *He was dead, but now is alive; he was lost, but now is found.* Thus mayest thou, with joy and thanksgiving, say, I was lost, but grace hath found me; I was dead, but grace hath inlivened me.

4. Fourthly, *Its an honorable change: For those that honour God, God will honour*, 1 Sam. 2.30. As those that serve base and vile lusts, the Lord giveth them up to contempt and scorn before others. It is true, in the eyes of the world, to set upon this change, its many times object of disdain, to leave thy lusts, thy wantonness, thy pride, thy jolly companions, and to betake thy self to a more accurat and exact way of godliness, makes a man the drunkards song of *Psal.* 69. 12. as *David* complained he was: But as *David* was then more honorable, when he danced so Religiously before the Ark, than when he conquered and subdued so many Philistines, although *Michal* despised him and scorned him at her very heart: Thus it is here, since thou hast forsaken thy sinnes, feared an oath, been constant in Private and Family Prayer, zealously sanctifying Gods Sabbaths, which he hath commanded: Since this (I say) thou art become truly honourable, and art born of God.

Use. Use of Exhortation, *To raise and awaken your selves out of your former impieties:* Oh that once we might say, You were dead, but now are made alive: Oh that at last we might say this Text, *Such and such hainous offenders some of you have been, but now ye are washed, now ye are sanctified through the blood of Christ.* Call thy self to an account, say, Oh my soul, doest thou minde to be thus always? Are there no purposes or resolutions to become another man? Why doth not he that used to swear, swear no more? Why doth not he that used to be lustful be lustful no more? *Let him that stole* (saith the Apostle) *steal no more*, Ephes. 4.28. Oh that God would make this blessed change in your lives! What should hinder it? Can your sinnes be better than GOD to you? Can your lusts be more than Heaven to you?

SERM.

SERM. LXI.

Of the waſhing and cleanſing of a Sinner.

1 COR. 6. 11.

And ſuch were ſome of you; but ye are Waſhed.

WE have already conſidered the *Corinthians*, according to what they were by their own voluntary corruption, *Let us now take notice of them, as what they are by grace.* They were black and uncomely of themſelves, but ſanctified and made beautifull by the grace of God. Now this grace of God vouchſafed unto them is expreſſed in three particulars, Ye are *Waſhed*, Ye are *Sanctified*, Ye are *Juſtified*. Some make this difference between them, That the firſt priviledge, *Ye are waſhed*, is a general comprehending both Sanctification & Juſtification; as if the Apoſtle had firſt expreſſed himſelf in the general, and then diſtributed this general into two famous branches thereof: and indeed waſhing or cleanſing is ſometimes uſed for the taking away the guilt of ſin, and then it is the ſame with juſtification; as when *David* prayeth God would waſh him & make him clean, *Pſal.* 51. and ſometimes its uſed for the cleanſing from the filth and power of ſin, in which ſenſe its the ſame with ſanctification: and in this reſpect, *Iſaiah* 1. God calls upon *Jeruſalem* to waſh her, and to make her clean: This may well be received: But I rather go with other Expoſitors, that make the Apoſtle uſe a gradation, naming thoſe priviledges in the order God beſtowed them upon them: and the firſt is Waſhing; that is Regeneration; the Type whereof and ſeal is Baptiſm; which was the firſt thing done to them, when received into the Church: ſo that the meaning is; But ye are ſpiritually waſhed and cleanſed from the filth and dominion of theſe ſins, a Seal whereof was your Baptiſm.

Then the ſecond degree is *Sanctified*, which is a further grace of God, not only regenerating, but making us holy unto the Lord, and cauſing us to walk as thoſe that are ſet apart for God, from all common and prophane uſe. Laſtly, they are *Juſtified*, Now although it be ſeriouſly diſputed, whether Juſtification or Sanctification goe before one another; and generally it is aſſerted, that in priority of nature a man is juſtified before he be ſanctified, though they be both together in time; yet withall they acknowledge, that according to our ſenſe and feeling, and the Method we muſt take for comfort, we apprehend our Sanctification before our Juſtification; and no man may perſwade himſelf, that he is juſtified, who doth not diſcover in himſelf the fruits of Sanctification. The one is the fruit, the other is the tree: ſo that the Apoſtle may very well put ſanctification firſt, becauſe to our ſenſe and apprehenſion it is ſo. As for that interpretation of Papiſts and others, that make juſtified, to be the obtaining of a further degree of righteouſneſs, and increaſing in holineſs, we reject as erroneous. Now this threefold mercy is amplified by the meritorious cauſe, *In the name of the Lord Jeſus.* That is by Jeſus Chriſt known and beleeved on; as alſo by the efficient cauſe, the Spirit of our God, which is therefore called the holy Spirit, as being in an appropria-

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ted manner, the Author of our Sanctification. Thus the Text is opened, I begin with the firſt, *Ye are waſhed*, and obſerve,

Obſ. *That Regeneration, or the renewing of ſinners, is a waſhing or cleanſing of them.* Sin hath two things in it, Filth and Pollution, and ſo Sanctification cureth it; guilt and merit of condemnation, ſo juſtification taketh it away. We are upon the firſt work of grace, that which takes away the noiſomneſs, & pollution of ſin, with the dominion and power of it, which is here called Waſhing and Sanctifying. The *Corinthians* like Swine had been wallowing in their Mire, and grace did not only waſh their out-ſides, but their in-ſides, their very natures away, and make them ſheep. Thus God ſpeaketh of a clear Fountain he will ſet open for *Judah* and *Jeruſalem* to waſh in. *Zach.* 13. 1. For the diſcovery of this point, conſider,

1. Sin of a defiling nature.

First, *That the Title of Regeneration, under the notion of waſhing, doth ſuppoſe that ſinne is of a defiling polluting nature, making the perſons unclean and loathſome, where it is.* Its therefore compared to *Spots*, *Deut.* 32. 5. and *Blemiſhes*, Epheſ. 5. 27. to *Mire*, to *Vomit*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 22. Such names doth the Scripture give ſinne: to teach men how they ſhould look upon themſelves, when ſinners? *Ezek.* 16. you have there the Prophet excellently deſcribing every mans naturall condition, by an infant new born, tumbling in its bloud, not waſhed, or cleanſed. Men make ſin the matter of their boaſt, and their glory; but it is indeed matter of ſhame and loathing. Thou art aſhamed of thy rags, and thy ſpotted garments: But oh what bluſhing ſhould be at thy wicked and ungodly actions. Thou ſhouldeſt ſit down like a *Job* upon his Dung-hill, abhorring thy ſelf, like a *Lazarus* full of ſores, like an unclean Leaper, crying out, *Thou art unclean, unclean.* The Scripture ſpeaking of wicked men, ſaith, *They are become filthy and abhominable in their doings*, *Pſalme.* 14. and it calls them *vile perſons*, Pſal. 15. 4. Whatſoever eſteem and glory ungodly men may have in this world, yet they are with God vile perſons, and therefore called by the name of ſuch Beaſts as are odious to men. Whereas on the contrary, Grace is the life, the beauty, the honour and glory of a man, compared to excellent and precious ornaments.

2. Superſtitious bodily-waſhings.

Secondly, *This apprehenſion that ſinne makes men unclean and defiled, hath been ſo ingraven in the hearts of all men by nature, that therefore they have uſed ſuperſtitiouſly many externall bodily waſhings:* as if that would take away their pollution, and make them more acceptable to God. Thus the Heathens uſed to waſh themſelves, before they entered into their Temples, to ſacrifice to their gods, and they had water-pots, or ſtones of water ſtood at the entrance into the Temple, wherein they purified themſelves: confeſſing hereby, that ſin made them ſo beaſtly and unclean, that they were no wayes fit or decent to perform any Religious action: and this the *Jews* they brought in many ſuperſtitious Waſhings: When they came from Market, when they had been about any imployments, they would come home and waſh themſelves, yea, they waſh'd their Beds, their Pots, their Diſhes, *Mark.* 7. 4. leſt they ſhould get any defilement. Thus *Pilate* did waſh his hands, to denote thereby his innocency; and *Tertullian* ſpeaks of the ſuperſtition of ſome Chriſtians in his dayes, That they would never goe to prayer, till they had waſhed themſelves, Now our Saviours Doctrine is a good Antidote to all ſuch ſuperſtitious thoughts: Not that which goeth into a man doth defile him, but that which comes out. Its not a bodily filthineſs, or uncleanneſſe, but a ſoul-filthineſs, which is ſo diſpleaſing to God. The Papiſts they attribute much to their Holy water, as if the ſprinkling of that would cleanſe away the ſinne of the ſoul, but this is the peculiar effect of Chriſts bloud onely.

Mar. 7. 15, 16.

3. The uſe of externall Ordinances and Rites.

Thirdly, *That we might be fully convinced of our native filthineſs, and the nature of Gods Spirit in renewing us, God appointed external Ordinances and Rites of bodily waſhing, hereby to make us underſtand ſpiritual things.* Thus in the Old Teſtament, God commanded ſeverall waſhings of the body: The Prieſt was to waſh himſelf before he ſacrificed, and ſeveral other cleanſings there were; by all which God did inform them of their vileneſſe and loathſomeneſſe, as alſo there-

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by to look to Christs bloud, of which these were Types: As the Apostle argueth at large to the Hebrews. In the New Testament also, although the externall Rites are but few in number, which Christ appointed under the Gospell, his Church being now out of her Infancy, and so more inabled to discern spirituall things of themselves. Yet one of the two Sacraments, *viz.* Baptism, God hath appointed for this end, to signifie our naturall pollution, and the renewing operation of Gods Spirit: Thus Baptizing is as much as Washing. All that are made Christs Disciples, he would have washed, to shew that they had noysomnesse upon them; and that the Spirit of God must cleanse their souls. *John* 3.5. *Unlesse a man be born of Water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdome of heaven*; He doth not speak of Baptism there; for Christ had not at that time appointed Baptism (though *John* Baptized) and to be sure it was not appointed then universally to all Nations, as appeareth by the Commission afterwards; *Goe, Baptize all Nations.* This is confessed by *Bellarmine* himself. I rather therefore take water for the Spirit of God, as afterwards it is compared to fire; so that the sense is, *Unlesse a man be born of the Spirit of God*, which is like water, cleansing, healing, quenching, Sanctifying, *he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* But though this place carry it not, yet many other places speak of this Baptism, and the signification thereof: so that the foulnesse of sinne, and the nature of Regeneration is excellently decyphered by the Sacrament of Baptism. Doe not thou then rest in thy Baptism, doe not presume upon that, for unless thereby thou art taught to loath thy self for sinne: unless thou art washed from filthy sinnes and lustfull wayes, this washing is no more to thee, than the washing of a Blackamoor, which leaves him as deformed as he was. Oh that Baptized men, washed men should yet be so foul and noisome in their lives, unclean bodies, foul tongues, earthly hearts, all these defile.

Consider that place, *Heb.* 10. 22. where the Apostle sheweth the duty, and the priviledge of the people of God, they may come with boldnesse unto God, he hath held out the Scepter of Grace to invite them. But who are those whom God will thus honour?

Who God honours with bold accesse unto him.

First, Such as are washed from an evill Conscience, all those who wash themselves from all known evils, who avoid inward sinnes, pride, hypocrisie, earthly and inmoderate affections, Oh thou canst have no boldnesse to pray, or to call on God, whose Conscience tels thee of such defilement and wickednesse thou livest in. And,

Secondly: Their bodies washed with pure water. This is an allusion either to the legal washings, or to Baptism; and implyes, that not only the soul, but the body also must be washed from all its bodily filthinesse, as 2 *Cor.* 7. *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of flesh and Spirit*; So that soul-wickednesse, and bodily wickednesse must be washed away.

4. Of the washing of the heart.

Fourthly, *Therefore the Scripture speaketh of a two-fold subject to be Washed.* First the heart; thus as in the place mentioned, having your hearts sprinkled and cleansed from all filthinesse of spirit. This heart-washing is first to be set upon, as being the root, principle, and foundation. Thus purifie your hearts, ye double minded, *Jam.* 4.8. If the Fountain be not cleansed, all the streams must needs be muddy, Now although most men neglect this Duty, yet this is the main of all. A bad heart is an ill Treasury: out of the heart proceed evill thoughts, and all manner of actuall evill. This point our Saviour pressed much upon the Pharisees, who had cleansed their lives from outward wickednesse, but their inwards were full of all foul and noisome lusts: and the necessity of this appeareth, in that God accepteth of no externall religious Duty, no Praying, no Hearing, no Charitie, no Humilitie, except they be first washed in their hearts. There lyeth the greatest filthinesse, though you must take the candle of the Scripture, if you would finde out the Dust there, and sweep it away.

The second kind of washing the Scripture speaks of, is the washing of our

The waſhing of our hands.

hands, which is the cleanſing of us from all actions of Wickedneſſe; as Injuſtice, Oppreſſion, Uncleanneſſe, and all manner of unlawfull and ſinfull doings. Thus *James* addeth, *Cleanſe your hands, and purifie your hearts:* He ſaith, firſt Cleanſe your hands, and then Purifie your hearts. Not that the waſhing of the hands is to be done before the waſhing of the heart; but becauſe our Actions they are moſt manifeſt and ſenſible to the world; and therefore we ought to declare our ſelves clear in that reſpect. So then, no man may comfort himſelf, as if Regenerated or renewed, if ſo be his Actions are foul and ſinfull. If thy hands be not clean, thou maiſt not take hold of any holy thing. Conſider *Davids* Expreſſion, *I will waſh my hands in innocency, ſo will I compaſſe thy Altar, Pſalm.* 26. 2. *David* will not come to worſhip God, till he hath waſhed his hands in innocency. Oh conſider this excellent and holy pattern which *David* hath left for you. Say, I will waſh my life, my hands, my eyes, my body from all its former wickedneſſe, and ſo will I pray, ſo will I goe to hear. *Lay aſide all ſuperfluity of naughtineſs* ſaith the Apoſtle, *Jam.* 1. 21. He calls ſin *ῥυπαρία, Sordes*, filth and loathſome matter, and then hear the Word of God. As thoſe that made the Garland of Roſes and other Flowers, for thoſe that conquered in the Race, they were to have clean and waſhed hands; ſo all thoſe who meddle in any holy duty, praying, or hearing, they muſt have cleanſed lives: when God gave the Law, he would have the people of *Iſrael* cleanſe themſelves three dayes before they heard it; and the women who were to come into *Ahaſuerus* his preſence, were ſeven dayes purifying, and dreſſing themſelves. How much more then, when we come into the preſence of an holy God, ought we to cleanſe our ſelves, and to ſhake off all that which may be diſpleaſing in his eyes.

Fifthly, *To be ſpiritually waſhed and cleanſed there are theſe things required:*

5. What is required to ſpiritual waſhing.

I. First, *a loathing and abhorring of our ſelves*; looking upon our ſelves as ſo many bruitiſh beaſts, and ſo many abhominable Monſters, fit for nothing but to be caſt upon the dunghill, becauſe we have loſt all our Savour. Thus *Job* abhorred himſelf in duſt & aſhes, under the apprehenſion of Gods glorious Majeſty. *Ezek.* 20. 43. The Promiſe of grace made to the people of *Iſrael* is, *That they ſhould remember their wicked doings, wherein they have been defiled, & they ſhould loath themſelves in their own ſight. We bluſh*, ſaith *Daniel* and *Ezra, and are aſhamed.* Thus the Publican ſtood aloof off, as deeply ſenſible of his uncleanneſſe. Oh then, how farre are moſt men from this waſhing in the Text; when did they ever loath themſelves? when were they abominable in their own eyes? when did they humble themſelves in the duſt, crying out they were noiſome Dunghills, and not men. They could not indure their own ſelves: The very memory and thoughts of all their wayes were grievous and tedious to them. Till men come thus to be aſhamed and confounded in themſelves, they cannot be ſo much as in a preparation to be made clean. Oh tremble then, you who applaud your ſelves, who love and pleaſe your ſelves in your wicked wayes, like the Horſe Beetle, that delights to live in the Dung; like Vermine, that love to be in Muck-hils. Oh why are ye not aſhamed that God ſhould ſee you, that good Angels and men ſhould behold you. It will never be well with thee, nor will thou ever be put into any hopes of ſalvation, till thou beginneſt to be odious in thy own eyes, till thou canſt not abide & indure thy ſelf.

II. Secondly, *To be waſhed is required godly ſorrow, and mourning for ſinne. David waſhed his Bed with teares*, and ſo he did his ſoul alſo. Not that our teares or ſorrow can waſh away the guilt of ſin. No, there can be no remiſſion without bloud, *Heb.* 9. 22. and the bloud of Chriſt; but they may in ſome ſenſe waſh the filth and defilements of ſinne away. Therefore there is Gods waſhing, which the Scripture ſpeaks much of, and that in the remiſſion of the guilt of ſinne; and there is our waſhing, which is the godly ſorrow and mourning for the iniquities we have committed: ſo then if thou wouldſt be a man waſhed from thy ſinfull pollutions, conſider, That thy head muſt be like a fountain of teares, thy eyes muſt be like the Pool of *Bethſaida* in this ſenſe, that thy filthineſſe may be waſhed away.

How

How then canst thou perswade thy self, that thou hast received this priviledge, when thy heart was never melted for thy sins; Godly sorrow is wholly a strange thing to thee, thou dost not know what it means. Alas! those suddain exclamations, The Lord forgive me, God pardon me, I should not have said so, or done so: This is not the godly sorrow commanded in the Scripture; why then dost thou lie with thy filth and unclean abominations upon thee? why dost thou not mourn and lament over thy wretched condition? What! hast thou tears for the losse of Wife, children, goods and estate, but none for the losse of God? Tears in thy eyes are better Jewels than those on thy ears.

III. Thirdly, *To be washed, there is also required a spirituall pain and trouble of the soul.* For this washing of a sinner, is like the washing of putrified old sores, which cannot but administer great grief and aches, as when the Jailor washed *Peters* sores: Therefore *David* expresseth his Repentance by broken bones, *Psalme* 51. which declareth the holy pain and trouble of soul he had within him because of his iniquities. Hence it is also called pricking and wounding at heart. Go to therefore you sinners, who live heart-whole, and heart-sound, as you call it, you never have any pangs, any travail of soul for your iniquities, you never are in labour or pain; know, that you are not washed from your impieties, : why dost thou not take up the Prophet *Micah*'s expression, *Mich.* 1.8. *I will wail and houl, I will go stript and naked, I will make a mourning like the Dragons, and wailing like the Owls,* because of the anguish of mind, and trouble of soul upon me for my iniquities. Never think it will be well, till those sinnes which have been so sweet and pleasant to thee, be like Gall and Wormwood, biting like a Serpent, and stinging like an Adder. It cannot be, but that these lusts for a season so delightful, will afterwards become like so many devils tormenting thy conscience. Be not afraid to be sick and troubled for sin now, it may be medicinal and helpful now, but it will be pænal and eternally torturing hereafter.

IIII. Fourthly, *To be cleansed, there is required a constant and daily applying of those remidies, which are appointed by God to make us clean,* and that is faith in Christs bloud, and faith receiving the Word of God. The bloud of Christ and the Word of God are both cleansers. Thus *Acts* 15. Faith is said to purifie the heart: and *David* prayeth, *Psal.* 51. *That God would wash him with Hyssop, and make him clean, so he should be whiter than Snow:* an allusive exposition to the *Jewish* Customs of besprinkling the Posts of the door with the bloud of the Sacrifice, which signified the bloud of Christ sprinkled upon the soul, and faith that is like the bunch of Hyssop, which though low and contemptible, yet was instrumental to that glorious effect. Thus also the garments of the Saints are said to be made white in the bloud of the Lamb: though it be red, yet it makes them white: Therefore faith in Christ is mighty in operation to get out all the spots and defilements that are upon our lives.

The other cleansing Instrument is the word of God cleansing his Church through his Word, and *Psalme* 119. *Wherewith shall a young man make clean his wayes? even by attending to thy Word.* A young man most prone to soul and noisome lusts, even he may quickly by the Word be washed and cleansed. Come then often in this Bath, wash thy self often in the waters of the Scripture, and then thou wilt become white and lovely.

V. Lastly, *This washing is a continuall work.* Though the Apostle saith, *They are washed,* in the by-past time, yet because man in his journey to heaven, gets much soil and filth; therefore he must be washing himself every day. *John* 13. 9, 10. *Peter* did not understand that our Saviour taught this by his action of washing their feet, but when he did, he cryeth out, *Not my feet only, but also my hands and head.* Now that the most godly themselves doe need a continual washing, appeareth by that: he that is washed, needeth not, save to wash his feet. The meaning of this difficult place seemeth to be, That though they were cleansed by Regeneration, yet in their travel towards heaven, they got filth upon their feet, which they ought

every day to waſh off, ſo that as thou getteſt pollution upon thy ſoul daily, ſo thou muſt cleanſe daily: Where then are thoſe deluded perſons, who think themſelves without ſin, that they need no cleanſing? even therefore they have the more ſin, becauſe they think they have no ſin.

Uſe. Uſe of Exhortation, *To all prophane and ungodly perſons*, that they would abominate and loath themſelves, be in their own eyes as they are in Gods ſight, hated and abhorred. How can you but conſider and be afraid under theſe things: Thy actions are foul actions; thy life a noiſome life; thy words, loathſom communication: Thou art like a dead carca'e, like an open Sepulchre, full of abomination: Oh that thou canſt abide thy ſelf! Thou ſhouldſt be as ſome miſerable wretch, that hath the members of his body rotting away, and yet he liveth, how loathſome is ſuch a man to himſelf? he cannot indure his own ſmell: Thus it ſhould be to thee, who liveſt in thy groſs wickedneſs.

SERM. LXII.

Of the Grace of God ſanctifying a Sinner.

1 COR. 6. 11.

And ſuch were ſome of you, but you are waſhed, but you are Sanctified, &c.

THE Apoſtle (as you heard) is now deſcribing what the *Corinthians* are by the grace of God, which is threefold, *Waſhing* (and that is diſpatched;) *Sanctifying*, and that is the work now in hand. As for *Illyricus* his opinion, that takes theſe three things for the ſame, making them only words *Synonymous*, there is no colour for it; come we therefore to handle the nature of this gracious work of God, and the word hath many and ſeveral acceptations in the Scripture, which are neceſſary to be known.

The word ſanctified, its ſeveral acceptions.

The firſt and ordinary uſe of the word, is for *the external celebrating and acknowledging the Name and Ordinances of God as holy*: Thus we pray, *Sanctified be thy name*; and very often we are commanded *To ſanctifie the Lord*; which is then done, when we do with all holy fear and reverence make mention of him, and acknowledge his Majeſty; the contrary whereunto, is to defile, to pollute, and to blaſpheme his holy name.

Secondly, *To Sanctifie, is often uſed in Scripture, for the ſeparating any thing from prophane and common uſes as holy unto God*: Thus all the veſſels in the Temple were ſanctified, and the Prieſts were ſanctified; and in this ſenſe Chriſt ſaith, *He ſanctified himſelf*, viz. He compareth himſelf to be an expiatory Sacrifice for our ſins. Iohn 17.1.

Thirdly, *There are ſome who ſay the word to Sanctifie, is as much as to juſtifie, and to make holy and righteous through Chriſts Righteouſneſſe*; and therefore they ſpeak of an imputative Sanctification (which is the ſame with Juſtification) and is really inherent, but inchoate in this life. Thus they ſay Sanctification is taken for Juſtification, frequently in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, Heb. 10. *By which will we are ſanctified*, and Heb. 3. *Chriſt, that he might ſanctifie his people, ſuffered without*

without the gate; and thus Chriſt is ſaid *To be made unto us, Wiſdom and Sanctification*; But this ſenſe of the word is not ſo generally acknowledged.

Fourthly, *To ſanctifie, is ſometimes uſed for the preparing and deſigning of any to ſome great work and exploit*; ſo *Iſa.* 13, The *Medes* are ſaid to be ſanctified, for the deſtruction of *Babylon*: *I have commanded my ſanctified ones*; yea, in the Scripture commonly the judgements of God upon the wicked, by way of war and ſlaughter, are compared to Sacrifices, and ſo thoſe that are inſtruments to execute them, in that ſenſe are ſanctified; yea, it ſignifieth to prepare or endeavor any thing, Jer. 6. *Sanctifie a war*, Mich. 3. *If they do not give in their mouth, they prepare a war.*

Fifthly, *The word is ſometimes uſed antiphraſtically, for the clear contrary*, to ſanctifie, is then as much as to pollute, and to be unclean; thus *Exod.* 19. *Lev.* 8. Thoſe that did after an unclean manner draw nigh to holy things, they are ſaid to be ſanctified, that is, unclean: And thus whores in the Hebrew are called Holy, that is, polluted and vile, and thus *Sacrum* among the Latines is uſed

Sixthly *There is a paſſive Sanctification, or a work of God, whereby he changeth us, and maketh us of unholy, holy*; and this is the grace intended in the Text: *I pray God ye be ſanctified throughout*, 1 Theſſ. ult. 1 Pet. 1.1. *Through the Sanctification of the Spirit to obedience.*

Seventhly, *There is an active Sanctification, whereby in the progreſs of holineſs, we daily purifie our ſelves, growing more and more holy*, 2Cor 7.7. 1 John 3. *He that hath this hope purifyeth or ſanctifieth himſelf, as God is holy:* Theſe two latter ſenſes of the word, may be here chiefly intended.

That thoſe who were renewed by the Grace of God, they are ſanctified ones; they are made holy, and purified from the filth and droſs that was in them. *Obſerv.*

Let us firſt obſerve how the ſeverall ſenſes of the word *Sanctified*, formerly related, is aptly applicable to them: And

Firſt, *They are ſegregated from the world*; They are choſen from that prophane and common courſe of life they lived in before; that as the Veſſels were taken from all common uſe, and applied onely to ſacred actions, to the Sacrifices, and other Offerings: Thus God by grace, doth take men, who before were under the power of Satan, at the command of every luſt, they were vile, unclean, fit for no holy imployments: now they are ſeparated from thoſe former evils: *Thus true Religion is that which keeps a man unſpotted from the world*, James 1.27. Thou doſt touch this pitch, and art not defiled; thou art in this Babylonian furnace, and haſt not thy garments ſinged: This is to be a true and a good ſeparatiſt, when by the heart and affections, a man forſaketh the ways of the world; though he be in the world, yet he is not of the world; for the world lying in wickedneſſe, godlineſſe cannot be but ſingularity and preciſeneſſe, in reſpect of the multitude; therefore thou art not in the number of thoſe ſanctified ones, nay, thou canſt not ſay, thou art of the true Religion or haſt any true Religion at all, till thou keepeſt thy ſelf clean and unblameable from all the groſſe and foul wickedneſs, that the world uſually commits. 1. Wherein the people of God are ſanctified.

Secondly, The godly are ſanctified, becauſe they are not onely ſeparated from their former prophaneneſs, but they are alſo *Dedicated and Conſecrated unto God*, they are made his, and are peculiarly applyed unto him; in which ſenſe the godly are called *A Royal Prieſthood*, 1 Pet. 2.9. and, *The firſt fruits*, James 1. 18. thus they are ſaid to be *none of their own*, Phil. 4. *The godly hath God ſet apart for himſelf* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*.) ſo then, to be ſanctified, is to be given up wholly unto the Lord as his, no more a mans own, no more the worlds, no more ſins: Therefore all the ſins of a godly man, have a kinde of Sacriledge in them, they take their ſouls and bodies which were conſecrated unto God, and apply them to prophane and the Devils uſe: Thus the Apoſtle argueth, *Shall I take the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, and make it one with an whores?* 2 Cor. 6. In this manner, 2.

all the ſins of the godly are to be aggravated, Sin not with thy eyes, with thy hands, with thy body, thou makeſt the Temple of God an Hell, thou art guilty of high Sacrileдge.

3. Thirdly, To be ſanctified you heard, was to be prepared and fitted for any great work and imployment; *Thus alſo the people of God are created and prepared for every good work*: All the actions of grace are ſupernatural, far above humane power, they are Divine works, and therefore muſt have power from above to inable them thereunto. To leave thy ſins thou muſt be ſanctified thereunto; to pray aright, to hear the word of God in a ſoul-ſaving manner, there muſt be a ſanctification of thy heart; eſpecially this is uſed for executing Juſtice upon the enemies of God and his glory: This is Gods Sacrifice, and thus every particular Chriſtian, he hath many Sacrifices, for the offering of which he needeth this Sanctification. A broken and contrite heart, that is a ſacrifice, *Pſal* 51. good works are a ſacrifice, prayer is a ſacrifice. Now as in the Old Teſtament they were peculiarly conſecrated and fitted thereunto, thus alſo in the New Teſtament, none can ſubdue ſin, approach nigh unto God in any holy way, that is, not firſt ſanctified by his ſpirit, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. *Sanctified and meet for the Maſters uſe.* As the *Medes* were ſanctified to deſtroy the *Babylonians*, ſo muſt thou be to kill thy luſts, to mortifie thy ſins: Though you are not now to kill beaſts, to deſtroy them unto God, yet ye have beaſtly luſts, which you are to mortifie continually; Pride, Covetouſneſſe, Prophaneneſſe, theſe are beaſtly luſts, which thou art ſanctified to deſtroy.

4. Fourthly, To be ſanctified in the Scripture-ſenſe, *Is, to be made fit and lawful for its proper uſe*: Thus ſome expound that place, *The unbelieving wife is ſanctified through the believing husbands*, 1 Cor 7. That is, made fit and lawful for conjugal relation, though that is not all the meaning, but we have another place, where every thing is ſaid *to be ſanctified by the word of God and prayer*, 1 Tim. 4. 5. viz. All our Meats, Drinks, lawful Imployments, they are ſanctified by prayer: The curſe that is upon all the creatures is removed away, and thy meat is made fit to nouriſh thee, thy cloathes to warm thee, *&c.*

Of a Civil and Spiritual right to the Creature.

In this ſenſe *Divines* ſpeak of a civil right, and a ſanctified right to the creatures: Wicked men have a civil, lawful right to the goods, to the poſſeſſions they enjoy, and poſſeſſe them with a good conſcience, but they want the ſanctified right of them; *i. e.* they have not the grace of God in their heart, whereby they might improve them in a godly manner, to the glory and honor of God; *It being impoſſible without faith to pleaſe God*: Oh then bewail thy condition! while thou art unſanctified, thou art not fit to eat, to drink, to be a poſſeſſor of any eſtate, any honor, any goods; not but that a wicked man is true owner of what he is, but he hath not a ſanctified uſe of them, he doth not eat or drink to the glory of God, his eſtate and wealth he knoweth not how to improve for bleſſed and heavenly ends.

5. Fifthly, *To ſanctifie, is to acknowledge and uſe all things that belong to God, after an holy, reverent and heavenly manner*: Thus the people of God are often exhorted *To ſanctifie God in their hearts*, Iſa. 8. 13. and ſo they are commanded *To ſanctifie or keep holy his Sabbaths*, Iſa. 29. 23. ſo that herein is a true ſanctified perſon diſcovered, when he doth with all holy fear and reverence approach near unto God in his Ordinances; Thus a godly man is deſcribed by this property, *He feareth an oath*, Eccleſ. 9. 2. becauſe an oath is a ſacred appeal unto God, as the witneſs of our actions, and becauſe his majeſty is ſo great and glorious, that we are unworthy to take his name into our mouthes; therefore he is ſaid *To fear an oath*, he trembleth to ſwear. Oh how far are thoſe then from Sanctification, who prophanely and paſſionately beſch out their oathes, and without any reverence, yea, in madneſs and fury, make mention of God in their Oathes. If thou wert ſanctified, thou wouldeſt acknowledge the Name, Perſon, Nature, Attributes and Ordinances of God Sacred and Holy, and ſo would after a ſcrip-

out

ous; humble and holy manner use them, and make mention of them: So that the swearer and the curser, howsoever he may mitigate his sin, that he did it in his passion, and he doth not think of it, yet he can never pretend to Sanctification; for where that is, it doth rule the heart with such an holy and reverentiall awe of Gods Majesty, that he never makes mention of him, but with Religious and trembling affections. Its admirable what the Heathens have been in this very point of swearing, how unwilling to do it, though in a lawful thing, and all because of a devout apprehension they had of that Sacred Majesty to whom they did appeal in their oathes. O then, what shame and confusion should this be to Christians: there is scarce any old man, or young man, any rich man, or poor man, but even to this detestable sin of swearing, for which a man may properly be called prophane, because he hath low, despicable and irreverent thoughts of God. Another duty of a godly man sanctified, is to keep holy his Sabbaths, as you read in many places; so that the loose, careless and contemptuous despising of it, is an argument of an unsanctified heart: The godly make it their delight, and they keep a spiritual Sabbath from their sins, and by this means, their souls enter into an holy rest that day: But the ungodly man, he judgeth these days a burthen, a trouble, he longs to have them over, that he may to the world, or his lusts again. Try then thy Sanctification, by thy holy esteem and prize of thy holy duties, which are for the encrease of godliness, and promoting of that: When thou comest to pray, to hear, to keep his Sabbaths, with thy thoughts full of the world, the love thereof, or delight therein, thou art no ways prepared to sanctifie God.

Lastly, To sanctifie, is to have all the faculties and powers of the soul, renewed by holy principles within, and thereby carried out to do those things which are holy, and after an holy manner: And thus all those that are regenerated are wrought upon, their understandings are made holy, their wills holy, their love an holy love, their grief and fear holy, This is the chief mercy, above all Riches, Honors and Greatnesse; without this Sanctification, every man, though alive, is dead; though rich, is poor; though happy, is miserable. And for the better discovery of it, consider: 6.

First the efficient cause to which this is peculiarly appropriated, and that is, *The Holy Spirit of God*, called, *The Holy Spirit*, Ephes. 1.13, Rom. 1.4. 2 Thess. 2.13. and *The Spirit of sanctification*, because peculiarly appropriated to him to work this in us: So that if thou desirest this Sanctification, fain thou wouldst have a sanctified heart, and sanctified affections; O it troubles thee that thou art not acted by such holy principles: lift up thy eyes to heaven pray that God would vouchsafe this holy spirit to thee, which will work like fire, consuming that drosse of corruption in thee. No wonder, if under much preaching, many judgements of God, people remain prophane and loose, dissolute in their sins, for neither Minister or Angels, can infuse this holy foundation into them, its the proper work of Gods Spirit: Take heed therefore of grieving or resisting this spirit, and that you do, when ye live in sins against conviction, against the plain declaration of Gods word; when that informeth, directeth judgeth, and condemneth thee, yet thou wilt go on, and be obstinate in thy sins: This is the sad case of many thousands, who thereby chase away the spirit of Sanctification from them. Now that God is more willing to bestow his spirit, upon those that ask him in a right manner, than any father is able, or willing to give any necessary good thing to his childe, appeareth *Matth. 7. If ye being wicked know how to give good things, how much rather will your Father in heaven, give his spirit to those that ask him*: O then say, This is the necessary thing, this is to be sought for in the first place. 1. The efficient cause of Sanctification.

Secondly, The instrument of this Sanctification, the means whereby God will work it, is the *Word*: Thus our Saviour prayeth, *That God would Sanctifie his by his truth, his word is truth*, John 17. There is no ordinary means 2. The instrument of Sanctification, the Word.

for the obtaining of this, but by the word. This is the Chariot of the Spirit, here we must expect its workings. As it had been a vain thing in *Naaman*, to expect the cleansing of his leprosie in any water but in *Jordan*, so it is as foolish and absurd to expect sanctification by any humane rites and inventions of men, a number of which are introduced in Popery. Now as Gods spirit only efficiently sanctifieth, and not humane power or freewill; so the Divine truthes of God are instituted Mediums for the glorious effect, and no other superstitious designments made by men: Oh then, if ever thou wouldst be sanctified, be a diligent hearer of the word, hear in season and out of season, as we are commanded to preach: Come to this fountain often to be washed in, throw thy self frequently in this fire, to get thy drosse out. The effects of Gods word are admirable, especially in this point, to sanctifie thee, to make thee have holy affections, and holy principles; and holy ends and aimes in all thou doest. As those that are much in the Sun, they cannot but be much coloured by it; so those that are in reading often, in hearing often, in praying often, they will finde such an holy change upon them, such admirable effects on their lives; that there will be as much wonder at them, as there were of those who were dead and rotting in their graves, yet raised by the mighty power of Christ: As therefore there is no hope of that tree that is near no waters side, that groweth in a barren wilderneſſe; so there is no hopes of ever being sanctified from those who seldom or never come to hear the word, or if they do, its out of formality, custome, and with so much dulneſſe, sleepineſs and distractions, that their very outward deportment manifests much contempt and irreverence towards God? Do these men come to be sanctified? do such come with such grand expectation, Of unholy to be made holy.

3. The meritorious cause of Sanctification.

Thirdly, The Meritorious cause, which procureth this great priviledge at Gods hand, is *Jesus Christ*: Thus the Apostle addeth, *In the Name of the Lord Jesus*; so that one great effect of those Agonies and Sufferings which Christ underwent, was to obtain Sanctification: *Christ shed his blood, that he might purchase to himself an holy people*, Tit. 3. Oh then, how should this make you highly esteem it! Was it a small or a light thing for which Christ indured all those torments? could we not be sanctified, but by his blood? why then doest thou make no matter of it? where is the man that cryeth out, Oh Christ dyed, and yet I am not sanctified? Christ hath shead his blood, and yet I am not made holy.

4. The extent of Sanctification.

Fourthly, Consider the extent of this Sanctification, its *universal throughout*: *I pray God ye be sanctified throughout, in spirit, soul and body*, 1 Thess. 5. 3. The spirit, that is in the choicest and most sublime part of a man, that needeth Sanctification; even these Heavens are defiled, this Sun hath black and foul spots. Hence we read of *Carnal mindes, Corrupt understandings*, and therefore we need the Sanctification of them, yea, this must be the first work of Sanctification: its your minde, your judgement, your reason, that is so great an enemy to God; What hinders, but that thou shouldest go out presently, and give thy self up unto all holy obedience? but thy minde, thy judgement is not satisfied, that hath this or that carnal plea; so that of all parts, this eye this understanding must be light, else all the whole body will be dark: Oh therefore that God would sanctifie your mindes, your understandings, make them holy, then would your affections and your conversations quickly become changed. Then the next thing to be sanctified, is the soul; that is, the affections and passions, as commonly Interpreters think; and indeed, these are like the wheels in the Chariot, like the fire among the Elements; if these be not sanctified, a man is carried up and down like a ship in the storm, without Pilot or any conduct: And besides, these affections are very unruly and masterful, therefore the sanctification of them is more requisite. Lastly, there is the body, and that also must be sanctified; *viz.* Organically, as it is the instrument of the soul: Thus the tongue, the

the Eyes, the Ears, the Hands, they all are to be sanctified. A great deal of bodyly wickednesse there is in the world, and therefore that must be made holy. Therefore Chastity, and freedom from uncleannesse, and whoredome, is in a peculiar manner called *Sanctification*, 1 Thess. 4. 3, 4. Observe, you who are carried away with unlawfull, lustfull pleasures: Chastity and purity of Body from such loathsome courses, is called emphatically, *Sanctification*. So that Fornicators, Adulterers, Lustfull, and Lascivious persons, they are in a speciall manner unsanctified persons; they are no more to be called Godly that live in such sinnes, though they should pray, hear, make never such profession of Religion, than darknesse to be esteemed light.

Use, *Of exhortation.* *Is* there such a work of God as sanctification; and is that necessary to every one, then look out and examine diligently whether thou hast it or no: God hath made thee, and created thee, but hath he sanctified thee? God hath given thee riches, wealth, honour, parts, and learning, but hath he given thee Sanctification? Alas the lives of most men, are so prophane, impure, unclean, filthy, that you cannot call them Sanctified ones, unless in that sense as the Hebrews call whores holy, as I told you. And this is the more to be lamented, because men enjoy the means, and live under the way to sanctification, which is Gods word. Oh that thou who shouldest be a Temple of the *Holy Ghost*, shouldst be a swine for the devil to enter in: I intreat you to be awakened; if no sanctification here, no glorification hereafter: VVithout holinesse no man shall see God. VVhy? can you rest and be quiet till you get some evidences of Sanctification: be no longer brutish, but men, but Christians. *Say, O Lord, I desire that at last I may be sanctified to thy own self, Oh separate me from my wonted sinnes, my customary iniquities.* *Use.*

SERMON LXIII.

Signes and Characters of Sanctified ones.

1 COR. 6. 11.

But ye are Sanctified, &c.

IN what sense a godly man is sanctified, hath already been declared. Now let us consider the symptomes or properties of sanctification, which will be as so many testimonies of evidences, whereby we may come to be assured that we are sanctified.

It is true, such is the self-love, and self-flattery in every man, that he is quickly perswaded that he is one to whom this privilledge doth belong. VVhen therefore it shall be discussed, who are they that are thus qualified; *It* will appear so difficult and rare a thing, that every one may be astonished and cry out, *Who then can be saved?* VVe were indeed in our Baptisme Dedicated, and Consecrated to God, and so had a kind of sanctification. There is also an external sanctification vouchsafed to all those who are under the outward Administration of the Ordinances, in which sense Believers and their children are In what sense all Christians are Sanctified.

called *Holy*, 1 *Cor.* 7 in oppoſition to Heathens, and unbelievers: but this is not the ſanctification in the Text, nor that to which the promiſe of glory doth belong.

Let us therefore conſider the ſigns by which we come to know who are truly ſanctified.

1. Thoſe that are Sanctified have the Spirit of God dwelling in them.

And firſt, *They who are ſo, have the ſpirit of God effectually, and powerfully dwelling in them.* That as wicked men have the Divel filling their hearts, and hereigneth in them, whereby they are carried out to all wickedneſſe, with delight and boldneſſe: thus thoſe that are ſanctified are full of the Holy Ghoſt, being partakers of his operations, and ſo are thereby fitted for all holineſſe. Hence it is called *the ſpirit of ſanctification*, and *the holy ſpirit*, becauſe where the ſpirit of God dwelleth, there it ſanctifieth, and makes holy. Alas the greateſt part of Chriſtians are deſtitute of Gods Spirit; yea, they have ſcarce heard whether there be an holy Spirit or not: And thereupon they have nothing but cuſtomarineſſe, formality, and education, which do act them in all religious duties. But as in working of Miracles, no humane ſtrength or power could enable them thereunto, they were only done by power from the Holy Ghoſt; So neither to love God, to believe in him, to mortifie ſin, can be done by the ſole ſtrength of free-will: but it muſt be the ſpirit of God changing and new-molding the heart. Oh then conſider this, all you who go in a round, pray and heare, and hear and pray, in a general cuſtomary way: the ſpirit of God is not in theſe, which yet is like the ſoul to the body: like fire to the ſacrifice: like windes to the ſhip; Our duties and hearts are but Ciſterns, that is the Fountain. There is never a Duty accepted, if the ſpirit of God be not working therein, *Rom.* 8. The ſpirit helpeth our infirmities, and God heareth the voice of his own ſpirit. Till therefore thou art made partaker of Gods ſpirit, all thy external righteouſneſs and holineſs is but a ſhadow and no ſubſtance. It is an image or picture, no reall life at all. Oh then, How far are prophane, diſſolute men from this Grace of ſanctification? Doth the holy ſpirit of God dwell in thee? Doth not the unclean ſpirit rather live in thee, whoſe heart and life is made like a very hell? Is it the holy Spirit of God that inciteth thee to curſe, to ſwear, to luſts! Oh blaſphemy to think, or ſay ſo. Let then all ungodly, and foul wretches be aſhamed and confounded within themſelves. It was the Devil that deſired to enter into ſwine: The Spirit of God appeared in an innocent and harmleſſe Dove: Some men are ſo far from having the Spirit of ſanctification, that they mock and deride at it, yea maliciouſly oppoſe it; but theſe are reſerved to a dreadful judgement.

Secondly, *Thoſe that are ſanctified, have a ready and willing obedience to the truth and commands of God*: Therefore it is called *Sanctification of the Spirit to Obedience*, 1 Pet. 1. 2. It is impoſſible to have Sanctification, and not to have a chearfull and willing obedience to all thoſe duties that are required of us. Doth God ſay, to the proud, *Be humble*, if ſanctified, he obeyeth immediately? Doth God ſay to the prophane, *Be ſober and heavenly*, when ſanctified, he yeilds immediately; inſomuch that all thoſe hearers who live in viſible diſobedience to the word of God preached, they have no evidence of their ſanctification: *Obedience is better than ſacrifice*. God looks to that more than praying, hearing, or coming to the Ordinances: Doſt thou ſay as Chriſt? *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, thy Law is written within my heart*. Thus *David* being ſanctified, profeſſeth his ready and willing obedience unto God: And *Paul* alſo, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* Act. 9. 6. He gives his heart up to God like a blank, let God ſet down what he pleaſeth: As fire doth melt the toughest Iron, or makes it in any frame you would have it; Thus the ſpirit of ſanctification doth melt and affect the ſoul, that it becomes chearfully obedient in duties of the greateſt ſelf-denial, and contrariety to fleſh and blood. Oh then think not within thy ſelf, I hear thus much, I come to Church thus often; but what obedience is there in thy life? That crowneth all thy duties; that is the glory of all religion. The *Iſraelites* that profered thouſands of

of Lambs, yea, the children of their body were not ſo acceptable, as if they had done juſtly, and walked humbly with God: Obedience is a neceſſary fruit of ſanctification.

Thirdly, *Thoſe that are ſanctified delight in the uſe and means of all thoſe exercises which encreaſe ſanctification.* The Godly are deſcribed by hungring, and thirſting and ſeeking, and ſo they can never have enough of holineſs? Now the preaching of the Word is one principal inſtrument of ſanctification, *Sanctifie them by thy truth, thy Word is truth*, John 17. It is an argument thou haſt not this ſanctification upon thy affections, when thou haſt no high eſteem, or peiſe of the holy Ordinances; when this honey-combe is loathſom to thy ſtomack, full of fleſhy Luſts. The Godly are to call the Sabbaths, *a delight*: And the Word is aggravated under all manner of excellencies by *David*'s gracious heart; and for this end, becauſe it hath ſpiritual and ſavory effects: So then if thou wouldeſt know the evidences of thy ſanctification, and judge thereby, Examine how thou art affected to the means of grace? Do they become welcome and precious to thee? Doſt thou cry out like thoſe in the transfiguration, *It is good to be here?* Is it as meat and drink unto thee? Then thou mayeſt comfortably rejoyce in this, That God hath given thee a ſanctified a heart, to love the word of God, and the means of Grace, and that becauſe of the powerfull operation thereby, cannot be but by a ſpirit graciouſly wrought upon. 3. Delight in Ordinances.

Fourthly, *Thoſe that are ſanctified, are diligent in preparing and fitting themſelves for the holy duties they are converſant in.* Thus to ſanctifie, was to ſet a man apart for the ſpiritual imployment he was called unto. And herein is a great diſcovery of the truth of Grace ſeen; when men do not onely, and cuſtomarily perform holy Duties, but they do *Hoc agere*, as the Prieſts cried out in the Heathens ſacrifice. Thus it is a duty to ſerve the Lord without diſtraction, 1 *Cor.* 7. And hence are thoſe expreſſions, *Watch to pray*, Mark 13.33. *take heed how you hear*, Mar 4.24. *Be ſwift to hear, laying aſide all ſuperfluity of naughtineſs*, James 1. 21. *To pray with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy ſoul, this is the fruit of ſanctification*. How many need this truth to be powerfully preſſed upon them. I ſpeak not of prophane and ungodly men, who quite lay aſide the performance of any holy duties; they pray not at all, they hear not at all, or very ſeldome: But of thoſe who take upon them the profeſſion of Religion; that hear and repeat Sermons, that have family-Duties conſtantly: Alas it is not the doing of theſe; it is not the bare performance of theſe that argue thy ſanctification: But doſt thou watch unto theſe Duties? Doſt thou take heed to thy ſelf in the doing of them? Are they not diſcharged as a Task, as a burden thou knoweſt thou art obliged unto? This is to be feared, that when God cometh to examine your religious duties, they will be found but ſo many empty formalities, Duties neither coming from the life of Grace, nor yet ſtirring up and encreaſing that life. Oh this is to be conſidered, that all holy duties are to come from ſpiritual life, and to ſtir up ſpiritual life; whereas the deadneſs, the dulneſs, the barrenneſs of all thy private and publick duties, are a great teſtimony at leſt to thy deſect in ſanctification: ſay then to thy ſoul, awake thou that ſleepeſt: What? Did *David* pray thus? Did *Daniel* pray thus? Did *Jonah* in the Whales belly pray thus? Be afraid that thou art onely luke-warm, that thou haſt not true zeal, and ſo God will ſpue thee out of his mouth, as he threatens, *Rev.* 3.16. perſwade your ſelves that your heartleſs, cuſtomary, lazy performances, are great ſins againſt God, have a contempt of his Majeſty upon them; and for which God doth threaten to take away the means of Grace, as from ſome of the Churches of *Aſia*. Oh then ſay to thy ſelf, How can this earthly, cold, lazy heart of mine ſtand with ſanctification? How can I ſay I have the love of God, and Chriſt in me, which is like fire, and do things thus coldly? Dwell upon this ſin, meditate much upon it, for how eaſily and readily doth negligence and lazineſs creep into all your performances; inſomuch that our duties are therefore ſo ineffectual, 4. Preparation for duties.

and unprofitable, becauſe they are not animated, and enlivened with the power of godlineſs.

5. Free from noiſom luſts. Fifthly, *Thoſe that are ſanctified, are clean and purged from thoſe vicious, and ſoul noiſome luſts they were once plunged into; and thus waſhed and ſanctified are joyned together.* The Leper was not a ſanctified perſon in the Law, becauſe he was unclean, 2 Tim. 21. *If a man therefore purge himſelf from theſe, he ſhall be a veſſell unto honour, ſanctified and meet for his Maſters uſe.* If he purge himſelf from theſe (that is) from all unclean wayes of iniquity, then he is ſanctified. Conſider therefore how unſpotted art thou kept from the wickedneſs of the world? How clean art thou from thy former defilements? Are not the ſame blots, and bloaches upon thy life as formerly? Are there not the ſame monſtrous deformities as before? How canſt thou hold up thy face? Why art thou not confounded within thee, to think how unclean and brutiſh thou art? Be not then any more wallowing in thy mire and filthineſs. It is time at laſt to make thy ſelf pure.

6. Fit for ſpiritual employment. Sixthly, *Thoſe that are ſanctified, they are* (as it followeth in that text) *meet for their Maſters uſe, fit for any ſpiritual employment, prepared unto every good work.* Oh this is a bleſſed eſtate when thou art fit to be employed for any ſervice by God. As *Eſay, when he had a coal from the Altar that touched him*, then he was ſanctified, and the uncleanneſs of his lips was taken away. Thou art not fit to be a Magiſtrate, a Miniſter, a Maſter, a Father, a Servant, till ſanctified for this uſe. There muſt be a particular ſmoothing, and fitting of thee for every particular relation, for every good Duty, elſe thou canſt not ſerve God thereby. It is the greateſt honour that we creatures are capable of, that we may be uſed as inſtruments for his glory. Now men may be either paſſive inſtruments, or active inſtruments under him; Paſſive inſtruments I call, all ſuch as are raiſed up by God to do his work; but they have no aim or ſpiritual inclinations to ſerve God therein. Thus *Cyrus*, and *Nebuchadnezzar*, they are called Gods ſervants, but their hearts were not ſanctified for God in this work. Again there are active inſtruments, and ſuch are thoſe who in the Text *are made meet for their Maſters uſe*, they have humility, and an holy fear of God. They eye him, and look up to him; and in this ſenſe *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, *David*, and many others were ſanctified. If therefore God call thee to any ſervie, if God put thee into any relation, though never ſo mean, know thou canſt not go through that relation in a gracious manner, unleſs ſanctified thereunto, *and made meet for it.* Be not a blunt and unſerviceable inſtrument in Gods hand.

7. Not caſt down with fears. Seventhly, *Thoſe that are ſanctified, are not caſt down with inordinate and ſinfull fears, becauſe of all the troubles and perſecutions that may fall upon them in doing their duties.* The work of ſanctification is accompanied with much oppoſition, perſecution, and many difficulties: Now herein is the excellency of this ſeen, that a man is not diſcouraged for all this; he feareth to offend God by any ſin, or neglect of his duty, more than any external miſery. *Sanctifie the Lord your God, and let him be your fear*, 1 Pet. 3.15. Be not afraid of what terrour and troubles the world can raiſe againſt you for godlineſs ſake; but ſanctifie God, and let him be your fear: That is, have holy, high, reverent, and great thoughts of God; look upon his name, his power, his Authority as greater than any mans. It is ſanctification onely that will make a man encounter with all oppoſitions, that will make a man fear God onely: for that puts an awfull eſteem into us of his great Name.

8. Spiritual Prieſts. Eighthly, *Thoſe that are ſanctified, by this their ſanctification are made ſpiritual Prieſts, offering up ſpiritual ſacrifices unto God.* Not that they may take upon them the publick office of preaching, and adminiſtring Sacraments, but becauſe they have ſacrifices in a ſpiritual manner to be offered up unto God; Eſpecially that place is much to be urged, Rom. 12.1. *Offer up your bodies a reaſonable ſacrifice unto*

The Lord. In the Old Teſtament they did after a corporall manner ſlay and kill Beaſts, offering them to God: But now we are in a ſpiritual manner to crucifie and mortifie the fleſh, with the affections and luſts thereof. If then thou art ſanctified, all thy inordinate paſſions, and affections of anger, love, and joy, are circumciſed. As the ſacrifice of one kinde was to be wholly burnt unto God, no part to remain; ſo art thou wholly to be reſigned unto God, and all that is thine is to be given up unto him, that ſo no love may be in thee, but of God, and in reference to him; and thus of all other paſſions. Oh then if you finde ſin, and uncircumciſed affections, and motions in thee, be afraid, for the ſpirit of ſanctification is not to be received in vain; where that rules and raigneth, there will be a daily killing of thoſe unruly Luſts.

Ninthly, *Thoſe that are ſanctified, they have alſo the priviledge of Juſtification, and Adoption, whereby they are enabled to come with holineſs to the throne of Grace.* The ſpirit of God, which is the ſanctifier, is alſo the comforter, and it doth comfort by the fruits of Sanctification, Hence *Rom.* 8. The Apoſtle deſcribeth thoſe to have the ſpirit, *who walk not after the fleſh, nor fulfill the luſts thereof.* So that the more thou aboundeſt in ſanctification, thou doſt alſo come nearer to conſolation; not but that the moſt holy and ſanctified ones of God, may ſometimes for gracious ends in Gods diſpenſations, be barren of all comfort, and deſtitute of joy. But becauſe joy and comfort is promiſed to the daily exerciſe of Sanctification, the righteous and the godly they are called upon to rejoyce, as being the onely and proper ſubjects to whom this conſolation doth belong. Therefore by wicked and unſavory words and actions, we are ſaid to grieve the ſpirit of God, *Eph.* 4.30. and no wonder, if when we grieve that, that it grieveth us, or leaveth us to be grieved, and vexed by the Prince of darkneſſe. 9. Iuſtified and adopted.

Theſe properties being thus opened, let us conſider the grounds and reaſons why we ſhould ſo much preſſe after, and deſire this priviledge. Reaſons or motives to ſanctification.

And firſt, *To the ſanctified perſon, God makes all things ſanctified.* Oh noble and unſpeakable priviledge to the clean, all things become clean *Rom.* 8. all things work together for the good of thoſe that love God, and that is an effect of Sanctification. What will win us and move us, if not this advantage? All things ſhall be Sanctified to thee, *i.e.* All things ſhall make thee holy; mercies, afflictions, comforts, and croſſes. Thus as the Temple did Sanctifie the gold, and every thing brought therein; ſo this ſanctified perſon by Gods grace, hath every thing Sanctified, health and ſickneſſe, ſtraights and libertie, life and death. Now that is the utmoſt mercy in a mercy, to have it Sanctified; it is the higheſt thing to be deſired. Thou canſt wiſh and expect no more than this, than that the condition thou art in, the providences of God which befall thee, may be Sanctified; yet this thou art ſure of, who art firſt ſanctified thy ſelf. This advantage is indeed ſpiritual, and therefore remote from earthly and worldly men, who ſo they have mercies, never care or pray for the ſanctification of them.

Secondly, *Thoſe that are ſanctified, are the on'y fit and welcome perſons that may come into Gods preſence.* Thus in the Old Teſtament, they were to ſanctifie themſelves *when they were to draw nigh unto God:* And that Typical legal Sanctification, did inſtruct concerning our Moral Sanctification. Thoſe that draw nigh to an holy God, in any holy duty, ought themſelves to be made holy. *What haſt thou to do to take my words in thy mouth, and hateſt to be reformed,* ſaid God? Pſal. 50. Again *I hate your new Moons, and your ſolemne feaſts,* ſaith God to unſanctified perſons, *Eſa* 1. Remember therefore that thou art no prepared, or fitted man to approach neer unto God: there is no gracious invitation of thee till thou haſt thus been ſanctified. Stand aloof off: holy duties are for holy perſons: holy men muſt draw nigh to an holy God: if God bid thee depart from him here under a diſpenſation of Grace, How much more wilt thou hear that terrible *Depart,* at the day of Judgement? 2.

Thirdly, *Therefore endeavour after ſanctification, becauſe that only anſwers really* 3.

to the name and title the Scripture giveth all believers, all that are baptiſed. They are called Saints, to the Saints at *Corinth*: *The Saints ſalute you.* I know many controverſies are about this compellation, I touch not on them now, onely this is certain, the Title of a Saint bindes thee to real Sanctification. To be called rich, and yet poor, is but a mockery: to be accounted well, and yet ſick, is but a reall miſery: And thus it is here: To be called holy, and yet wicked, to be ſtiled a Saint, and yet a beaſt, or a Divel, Oh how ſhould it ſhame and amaze thee? Say then, My Chriſtianity, my Baptiſm, my Religion doth oblige me to this Sanctification. I have onely a Title, if I have not true holineſſe, So that all you who live in groſſe ignorance, and ſcandalous wayes, What ſhall I term you? *How* ſhall I name you? Art thou fit to be called a Believer, a Saint? Yet I ſpeak not this, as if the Scripture called none Saints, or holy, but ſuch as had internall Sanctification.

4. Fourthly, *Be therefore, ſtirred up to this, becauſe this is better than all knowledge, parts and abilities.* Oh that men who look at religion, would minde this more. This is the will of God, your ſanctification, follow after holineſſe or Sanctification, without which no man can ſee God Thou thinkeſt it a great matter to be able to repeat Sermons, to diſpute in matters of religion: Oh but it is better to ſpeak five words from a principle of Sanctification, than five thouſand from parts and intellectual abilities only. Oh then ſay, if I pray, I preach, I diſpute, I repeat, and have not ſanctification; I am but a tinckling cymbal that makes a pleaſant noiſe to others, but it ſelfis not affected therewith.

Uſe. *Uſe of Exhortation,* ſtill to be moved and preſſed hereunto. Oh the comfort and glory of being in the number of thoſe that are Sanctified: I may adde one motive more: this is the onely evidence of your Election, of Juſtification, of right to eternal glory. Here a man muſt begin; If I be ſanctified, then I am elected, then I am juſtified. How then can you have any comfort? How is it that you are not full of fears and troubles, that finde no tokens of ſanctification upon you, but the clean contrary. Sanctification, it is the end of all our preaching and of your hearing; and therefore every thing hath been in vain to you till this be accompliſhed. Do not then rejoyce any more that thy riches have encreaſed, that outward mercies have abounded; but ſtill look to this, Art thou ſanctified? Yet after you have heard Sermon after ſermon, How prone are you to go home the ſame men? Not neighbour to ſay to neighbour, How may we do that we may be Sanctified.

SERM.

SERM. LXIV.

The counterfeits of Sanctification. That Devotion, in superstitious Customes, or Gods own Ordinances, or being externally in Covenant with God, do not really sanctifie a man.

1 COR. 6. 11.

And such were some of you, but ye are Sanctified, &c.

YOu have heard the nature and properties of sanctification: Now let us discuss the counterfeits of it: for there are many things in Christianity which people do generally trust in, as if they had power to sanctifie them, in the mean while neglecting wholy true and real Sanctification. This point is of great consequence if men would diligently attend to it: For as it was generally received among the Jews, that the Temple and Sacrifices did sanctifie them, though their lives were full of wickedness: So there is scarce any one Christian, but thinketh his Baptisme, his Christianity, the Gospel, these do sanctifie him. And as among the Jews, this principle ingraffed in their hearts, was that bitter root which made all things else bitter; so it is now among Christians. Let us go over in particular those abused instruments for sanctification.

And first, *There are and have been many superstitious humane customes introduced, in the zealous performance of which men have thought themselves sanctified.* These things have abounded in Popery: Insomuch that all the holiness almost they celebrate and commend, is this external holiness. Hence their holy images, holy vestments, holy Alters, holy Crosses, holy Water, and a world of such Consecrated things they have, in the devout use whereof they conceive themselves made more holy. The accumulating and heaping of these consecrated sanctities, were brought in partly by an ignorant zeal to imitate the Jewish dispensations, as also a desire to symbolize with Paganish rites: and partly for to satisfie the ambition and avarice of their holy Mother, the Church of *Rome*: And if we consider the generall ignorance and superstitious disposition in most people, it may seem a wonder of wonders, that ever such a reformation could be brought in, as should take people off from their accustomed superstitious sanctification. But God calleth things that are not; as if they were: Now although I hope there are few that hear me, but have learnt better than to be addicted to such consecrated holiness, yet take these antidotes against it. 1. Zeal in Superstitious customs.

1. *That if the instituted consecrations, and sanctifications in the Old Testament, and that by God himself, did not upon the meer use of them, or the work done, beget to all, and morall sanctification; much lesse can meer humane institutions, introduced solely by the will of man.* Now that it was so in the Old Testament, it is plain. We read of many purifications, and sanctifications; They had holy vessels, the holy Temple, the Priests Garments were holy; yet none of these instituted holinesses did make the Priests or people better; though they had holy Oyl poured on their Antidotes. 1.

their bo lies, yet if they were not anointed with the graces of Gods Spirit, all was nothing. Though they came to an holy Temple, yet if their bodies were not an holy Temple, this profited them not; and no remiſſion of ſin could be obtained by the killing of Sacrifices. If then Gods own Conſecrations did not make perſons inwardly, and in their lives ſanctified, How can we think that holy places, holy Oyl, holy Water, or holy times, that have no Originall, but from Mans preſumption, ſhall be able to work ſuch effects in us.

II. 2. *Theſe can have no ſuch ſanctified operations, becauſe not appointed by God*; and where there is no Divine inſtitution, we may not expect any Divine operation. *In vain do they worſhip me, teaching for Doctrines the Traditions of Men*, Mat. 15. 9. *In vain*, Oh what a Thunderbolt is this; Who can perſwade the ſuperſtitious man, that hath laboured and toiled himſelf in ſuch ignorant and formall Devotions, that all is but labour in vain? Why might not men appoint Sacraments, and adde more to thoſe two Chriſt left us, if ſo be that they could appoint any Uſages or Rites, which would work ſuch effects?

III. 3. *It argueth a people of a Divine and Noble diſpoſition, when they enquire into the Originall, and Divine inſtitution of things.* Hath God put his ſtamp and ſeal upon ſuch a Cuſtome? Is there a Divine ſuperſcription upon ſuch a religious Rite? This would be like pulling off the ſcales from the eyes, and make them weary of *Egyptian* darkneſſe. The Hebrews call Idols ſometimes by a word that ſignifieth Terrors and Fears, becauſe the Worſhippers of them did excruciate themſelves by a thouſand of ſuperſtitious fears about them. And thus alſo are all the Traditions of men, perplexing the conſciences of men with endleſs ſcruples; whereas a true knowledge of God out of his word, ariſing in the hearts of a Man, would like the light quickly diſpel this darkneſſe.

IV. 4. *It is a dangerous thing to depend on theſe things for ſanctification, becauſe they fill the heart with opinions of merit, ſatisfaction, and compenſation made to God.* Hence where theſe Cuſtomes are introduced, there the Doctrine of Merits and Free-will, and of humane ſatisfactions, are vehemently, aſſerted: Now the main ſcope of the Scripture is to pull down this pride of mans heart, to emptie him of all righteouſneſſe and worth; to make him to ſee Chriſts fulneſs, and his emptineſs. Oh, How farre was *Paul* from thinking of any ſatisfactions, or Compenſations, who admireth that Evangelicall Grace ſo much vouchſafed unto him a moſt grievous ſinner! The Godly heart cryeth out with the Centurion, he is not worthy Chriſt ſhould come within his roof.

V. 5. *The work of this externall adherent holineſſe is very eaſie.* It is no greater labour or trouble to beſprinkle themſelves with ſo much Holy water, to be anoynted with ſo much Oyl. If this were all that Chriſt required of thoſe that would be ſaved, hell would be emptie. But to what purpoſe are conſecrated Croſſes, and ſanctified Beads, if thy tongue, and eyes, and whole body be not alſo ſanctified. The Papiſts they give this reaſon, why ſo many turned Proteſtants, becauſe (ſay they) Proteſtaniſm chalks out an eaſie way to heaven, it is but Believe, and all will be well: but Popery holds out a more pleaſant and ſutable way to fleſh and blood; for what burthen is there in heaping up many Ceremonious and ſuperſtitious actions? The mortifying of one ſin, the crucifying of one Luſt, will be more heart-ache and trouble to fleſh and blood, than a thouſand ſuch Traditionall ſervices.

Secondly, Well then, it may eaſily be granted, *That ſuch petty ridiculous ſanctifies that are by mens commandements, may be no more than dung, yea, an abomination unto the Lord.* But what ſhall be thought of thoſe holy Duties, which God hath appointed: there is holy praying, holy hearing. Theſe holy ſervices which God himſelf hath Commanded, Doth not the conſtant, and diligent

diligent use of these sanctifie a Man? No, these are not barely to be relied upon.

I. How the constant and diligent use of Gods Ordinances, do not sanctifie.

For 1. *These duties do not sanctifie, except thou be first sanctified inwardly.* Prayer doth not make thee holy, but an holy prayer proceeds from holiness. These duties do then onely encrease, and adde to our Grace, when they are the exercises and effects of a sanctified life within us. A wicked man who is spiritually dead in his sins, can no more pray after a spiritual gracious manner, than a dead man can speak or breath. Do not then mistake in this business: these religious Duties are called holy, not because they sanctifie every one that appeareth near to God in them; but because God, who is the object of them, and on whom they are terminated, is an holy God, and because they encrease holiness in those who are endued with a supernatural life.

II.

2. *God in the Old Testament doth severely rebuke all those that draw nigh to Him in those duties he commanded, and yet refuse to be washed from their sins.* This is the main scope of all the Prophets in all their Sermons, upbraiding, and complaining that they would approach to him, as if they were his people, in a very solemn manner: *They would hear, yet do nothing*, Ezek. 33.32. And thereupon God disdaineth their duties; God accounts of them no more than as heathens, and the vilest of men: And do we not need such Prophets again, to awaken our people? May not we say? The burthen of the Lord, the burthen of the Lord. To what purpose are those multitude of Duties? Wash ye, and make ye clean, and so will God accept you. What a ridiculous thing is it to comfort thy self with an holy prayer, as thou thinkest, when thou hast so many unholy words, and unholy actions? will God take notice of thy duties, when thy sins cry so loud in his ears? but we have spoken heretofore of this.

3 The being externally in Covenant with God, how it Sanctifies, and how it doth not sanctifie a man.

We come to the Third thing intended, *And that is the holiness of the Covenant under which all passe that outwardly professe God to be their God, and accept of Jesus Christ to be their Lord.* This is the highest holiness next to that of Sanctification, and true godliness: Now because this is a controverted point, and many who confesse an outward Covenant-holiness that was Typical among the Jews, yet deny any such federal holiness in the New Testament; and therefore say all the holiness in the Gospel, is a Moral real holiness; we must be the more tender what we deliver herein.

I.

And 1. Consider, *That God who is the supream Lord and Governour of all, that might deal with men onely in an absolute way, as a Lawgiver, man being his Creature; yet such is his gracious goodnesse, that he enters into a familiar Covenant way with us.* God might have commanded us to do such and such things, but never have entred into a Covenant to promise and engage himself to be thus and thus, and to do thus and thus for us: This Covenant of Grace is that which the Scripture doth so often speak of & admire; the substance of it being to become our God, and to make us his people. Now what tongue can express the priviledge, and great glory of his condition, to own God for our God, so that thereby his wisdome, his power, his goodnesse, all is for our advantage; and we come in all duties unto God, not upon absolute terms, but Covenant-terms, and that of Grace: Whereby God doth as it were lay aside the glory of his Majesty, and his terrible severe justice, and becomes like one of us, condescending to us?

II.

2. *This Covenant is dispensed in an external and visible administration, by the Word and Sacraments.* The preaching of the Gospel is the solemn promulgation of this Covenant, and invitation to enter therein. The Sacraments are seals to ratifie and confirm this holy and sacred agreement. Now because all know not the work of Grace, to whom this Covenant is externally administred, hence ariseth that necessary distinction of an external Covenant, and an internal. The external Covenant is that whereby in an outward visible manner God doth own a people, and they externally professe their owning of him; but yet in

their hearts and ſouls they do not ſtedfaſtly cleave unto God, and faithfully keep this Covenant in the Conditions thereof. The internal, or inward Covenant, is that whereby God doth in a powerfull ſpiritual manner take a people to him, working in their hearts all thoſe gifts and graces promiſed in the Covenant, as regeneration, remiſſion of ſin, adoption, and the like: And in this ſenſe onely the truly godly are in the Covenant, and they are onely Gods people, and he their God. This diſtinction of a Covenant into outward and inward, is not a diſtinction of a *Genus* into its *Species*, ſo much as a diſtinction of a thing into the ſeveral adminiſtrations and diſpenſations of it. If *Adam* had ſtood firm in that ſtate of integrity, there had not been this diſtinction of an external and internal Covenant: for all then would have been godly; and the outward diſpenſation of Gods love would have been to none but thoſe that were indeed his. But ſince the fall, even in Gods own garden, there are weeds as well as flowers, there is Chaff as well as Wheat in his Floor: and therefore ſome are partakers of the Covenant onely externally, ſome both externally and internally alſo.

III. 3. By reaſon of this external and viſible participation of the Covenant. All thoſe who live under it, and do not apoſtatize, or abſolutely revolt from it, have a kind of external Covenant-holineſs, and in oppoſition to Heathens and Pagans or Apoſtates may be called holy. This is indeed greatly doubted of by ſome; but if we conſider the Scripture, God doth own a people for his, though not inwardly godly, as long as they externally own him, and do not plainly renounce his Worſhip and Service. It is true indeed, if we ſpeak of ſpiritual and gracious Communion with an enjoyment of God, ſo they are none of his; but we now relate to an external ſociety only: Thus the Jews, though they were falſe and hypocrital in their hearts, yea, full of many abominable impieties, yet God owned them as his people, till the conjugal bond at laſt was wilfully and perfidiouſly violated by them. Hence in that they were Circumciſed, and ſolemnly worſhipped the true God, God owned them as his people, though he did alſo at the ſame time reprove them ſeverely for their ſins. Hence the Heathens, *Ephe.* 2. are ſaid to be ſtrangers from the Covenant and Common-wealth of *Iſrael*; implying, that all the *Iſraelites* by Birth and Education, till they made a manifeſt revolt, were under the Covenant. Therefore conſider what the Apoſtle ſaith of all the Jews, *Rom.* 9. 4. Who are *Iſraelites*, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, *i. e.* The Ark and outward teſtimony of Gods preſence, and the Covenants, and Adoption. They were all in Covenant, and ſo outwardly the ſons of God; and therefore God by the Prophet complaineth that they had taken his ſons, and his daughters, which they had brought forth to him, and offered them up to *Moloch*. Thus you ſee in the Old Teſtament, that even unregenerate men were in ſome ſenſe under the Covenant, and ſo had an exernal holineſs; and therefore ſometimes they are called Saints, *Deut.* 33. 3. in oppoſition to the world, that was deſtitute of the knowledge and true worſhip of God; and ſome again, that were the children of the Kingdom, ſhould yet be caſt forth, *Mat.* 12. Under the New Teſtament, that ſuch an external, viſible enjoying of the Ordinances doth alſo bring a kind of external holineſs, which Heathens and Pagans have not is apparent, firſt by that place, 1 *Cor.* 7. Elſe were your children unclean, but now they are holy. What holineſs can this be?

Firſt, it cannot be a civill holineſs, as ſome would expound it. That is, they are Legitimate Children, and not Baſtards: For in that ſenſe the Children of Heathens are holy, *i. e.* they are not Baſtards, becauſe marriages are lawfull and valid amongſt them.

Then ſecondly, Holineſs cannot be underſtood of true inherent holineſs, for ſo all the Children of Believing Parents are not holy. How many godly Parents have wicked and ungodly Children?

Therefore thirdly, It muſt be meant of an external Covenant-holineſs, whereby Believers were in outward manner owned by God, and by that their children

alſo had a right to Baptiſm, and ſo are not born as Children of Heathens in the outward power of Satan and wrath: For although by nature they are children of wrath, yet being born within the Covenant, they have an holineſs; that is, a right to ſuch Ordinances they are capable of, which the Children of Pagans have not. Thus *Heb.* 10.29. the Apoſtle ſpeaks there of an Apoſtate, who never had true inward grace and ſanctication in him; yet he is ſaid to be ſanctified by the blood of the Covenant. How was that? not really and in truth, for then he could never fall into that unpardonable ſin: but externally and in reſpect of the outward enjoyment of the Goſpel, with their profeſſion of obedience thereunto. And hence it is, that the Apoſtle writing to all Believers, to all Churches which he had planted, he giveth them the title of Saints: eſpecially, we are to take notice of that expreſſion, 1*Cor.* 1.2. *To them that are ſanctified, called to be Saints* The *Corinthians* (you know) were many of them taxed for grievous and dangerous crimes, both in doctrine and manners; yet he ſtileth them ſanctified and Saints. As for the exception that ſome make, he ſpeaks thus in reſpect of the better part. I grant that to be true in part; yet becauſe the other did not wilfully renounce Chriſt, they might in ſome ſenſe be ſaid to be ſanctified, for they voluntarily owned that holy profeſſion and name of Chriſt, though in works they denyed him. Beſides thoſe titles ſhewed what they ought to be, and what Obligations were on them to walk holily: But this requireth a more large and exact handling. Some reject the Tranſlation, *called to be Saints*; becauſe in the Greek it is κλητοῖς ἁγίοις, called Saints, but this is needleſs; for in the firſt Verſe *Paul* is ſaid to be κλητὸς ἀπόστολος, called an Apoſtle; which neceſsarily denoteth his Apoſtleſhip to be the end of his Calling; as Sainſhip is the end of ours.

4. *The offer and tendring of this Covenant is not enough to make a people outwardly holy, but there muſt be an outward and viſible accepting of it.* The Goſpel hath been preached to many people, who yet reject it; and therefore not taking the Covenant, continued ſtill in their natural pollution and uncleanneſs; and this is neceſsarily to be preſſed upon you: for moſt Chriſtians know not, or attend not what they do. There is none of you who are Baptized, and own the title of Chriſtians, but ye have entred into a Covenant with God, you have promiſed to be his, you have reſigned up your ſelves unto him, as your Lord, whoſe Laws you will obey. Thus as many as are baptized, are ſaid, *To put on Jeſus Chriſt. Gal.* 3.27. That is, their external profeſſion, and Sacramentall obligation, 1 *Pet.* 3.21. That *Anſwer of a good Conſcience* is an alluſive expreſſion to Covenants and Contracts which are mutually made between parties. Oh then, that all you who glory in your Baptiſm and Chriſtianity, and thereby in a kind of holineſs, would remember what thoſe ſtipulations were? Were not thoſe ingagements to renounce the devill, to forſake all wicked wayes, and to cleave onely to him? Becauſe you entred into ſuch an agreement, and made ſuch an external profeſſion, therefore thou art in a ſenſe under the Covenant, and ſo haſt a Covenant-Sanctification. But all this will not avail without true, reall, and practicall holineſs, and amendment of thy life. IV.

Firſt, *This holineſſe is but titular and nominal*; and although it be of ſome dignity and priviledge, as it was to the *Jews*, to have the Oracles and promiſes belonging to them; Yet it is not advantagious to the chiefeſt and moſt neceſsary good, which is the enjoyment of God, and eternal happineſs. Now as in all other things the name doth not ſatisfie without the reality, the name of riches without riches; the name of health without health; ſo neither may the name of Sanctification, without the thing it ſelf. Put not then any confidence in this, that thou art under Gods Covenant, thou haſt given up thy ſelf to him in Baptiſm, thou weareſt this Badge and Mark; for all this is but a ſhadow and no ſubſtance, till thy affections and converſations be made really holy. I.

II. Secondly, *This Covenant-holinesse will not serve, because it doth but aggravate and heighten the wickednesse of those who being under this bond, yet walk contrary to God.* God will proceed against thee as a perfidious violator of that holy Covenant thou madest with him for thee, who hast thus entred into Covenant with God, and brought all thy Children under this relation, to perform no Covenant-duties; how unpardonable is it? Therefore God doth greatly complain when his people are are no better, and walk no more holily, than those that never knew him, or drew nigh to him, *Hos.* 6.7. But they like men, have dealt treacherously. Some expound it thus, They like *Adam* transgressed the Covenant; That as *Adam* placed in Paradise continued not faithfull to God, so the Israelites brought into a rich and plentifull land, flowing with Milk and Honey, brake those holy bonds they were tyed in to God. But we rather take it as *Rivet, They like men*, that is, as if they were none of my people, as if they had never covenanted with me, but were, like common men of the world, that live without the knowledge of God, so opposite and rebellious are they against me. Oh how truly may this Text be verified of too many Christians: *Like men they transgresse Gods Law.*

Use 1. Use of Instruction. How prone men are, though it is very vain, to have hopes in a false counterfeit Sanctification. In Popery the greatest part of their religion is placed in holy Images, holy Temples, holy Ceremonies; as if these things did sanctifie them. And although Protestants are generally delivered from this blindnesse, yet how do they lean upon external Signes or Badges of holinesse, because they partake of an holy Baptism, have a Covenant-holinesse, which also is communicated to their Children, how ready to be puffed up with it! Oh but none of these holinesses or sanctifications, is meant in that place. Without Sanctification no man shall see God: And, *Be ye holy as I am holy.* Attend therefore to that which is true Sanctification, that to which the promise of grace and glory is made.

Use 2. *Use* 2. To rebuke sharply all prophane and ungodly persons, that yet are under the names and titles of Christians, and sanctified persons: Oh the justice of God will fetch thee from these very Altars and condemn thee. How can the patience of God any longer bear with thee, in the profession of holinesse, (for so thy Christianity is) to be wicked and unholy. Many times hast thou been admonished herein; tremble at it, and know, the seasons and opportunities of getting holiness will not continue alwayes.

SERM

SERM. LXV.

Comfortable Directions, to poor Doubting Christians.

1 COR. 6. 11.

But ye are Sanctified, &c.

I Shall conclude the work of grace at this time expreſſed in the Text, under the notion of Sanctification, and that ſhall be by handling ſome practical caſes which may juſtly be propounded by a godly ſanctified heart, for ſeeing this is the evidence of our election, and juſtification. No marvail, if the ſoul may have doubts to be informed about therein. And,

I. Whether from common gifts of the ſpirit a man may not conclude grace to be in him.

First it may be demanded *Why*, if I perceive thoſe common gifts and abilities which come from the holy Ghoſt in me, I may not thence conclude the Spirit of ſanctification in me? There were in the primitive times extraordinary gifts vouchſafed by the Holy Ghoſt, according to the promiſe of old, *Joel* 2. Now all theſe were from the ſame ſpirit, as the Apoſtle witneſſeth, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. And although thoſe extraordinary works of the Holy Ghoſt now ceaſe, yet there are many gifts ſtill diſpenſed unto men, that cannot be called the works of the fleſh, but the gifts of Gods Spirit; ſuch as believing for a ſeaſon, joy in the word preached: illumination of mind, taſting experimentally the ſenſe of Gods word, in which the Apoſtle ſaith, *They are partakers of the Holy Ghoſt*, *Heb.* 6. May we not then, where we feel theſe things in our ſelves, or ſee them in others, conclude there is the work of ſanctification?

Anſw. He may not.

To this in the firſt place I Anſwer, *That amongſt men, who judge by outward appearance, and cannot try the hearts and reins, which is Gods Soveraignty, theſe things are much admired, and received for Sanctification*, Hence if we ſee a man have good utterance and gift in prayer, with affectionate inlargements; if he ſpeak of ſome joy and ſweetneſſe he hath in the Ordinances; if he can confer and diſpute with ſome illumination of minde and underſtanding in religious things; we are apt to take all that glitters thus, for gold: and becauſe others doe put ſuch an eſteem upon them; therefore they that have ſuch gifts do eaſily perſwade themſelves that they are ſanctified alſo. But theſe gifts of Gods Spirit are not ſanctification. A man may have all thoſe enumerated excellencies, and yet be an unregenerated man: For.

Reaſ. 1. *First, You have many inſtances of thoſe who have had theſe gifts, and yet no true members of Chriſt.* As thoſe *Heb.* 6. which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, and therefore though the Apoſtle had reckoned up thoſe great things, yet he ſaith, *I hope better things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation.* In this number was *Judas*, the foolish Virgins, the third kind of hearers, ſuch are compared to Swine waſhed: though waſhed, yet Swine ſtill. Oh then think it not ſuch a matter, if becauſe of parts and abilities in prayer, diſcourſe and conference in Religion, thou art eminently admired by others; for theſe are no ſure ſignes of ſanctifica-

tion. Here may be light, but no oyl, and therefore though it be our ſaying ordinarily; Such an one is an able Chriſtian; Why ſo? becauſe of gifts in Prayer, abilitie to ſpeak in divine things; yet that is not ſo. He is an able Chriſtian, who is ſtrong in the works of Sanctification, who is able in believing, in heavenly mindedneſs, in humility, in uprightneſs and ſincerity of heart. If ever the Profeſſors of *England* needed any truth, they ought to give diligent heed to this: For how is that which is indeed true godlineſs neglected, and curious Diſputes and needleſs Controverſies exalted in the room thereof!

2. Secondly, These doe not ſanctifie; becauſe a man that hath theſe gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, is ſtill carnal & unſavoury, improving them wholly to carnall and corrupt ends. It's commonly objected by *Arminians*, and others, when we ſay, That an unregenerate man is wholly fleſh, and altogether corrupt: and yet may have many gifts of Gods Spirit: how then can they be wholly corrupt? Are thoſe gifts of God evill? and its anſwered, The men are altogether corrupt & carnall, though ſome good gifts of God be in them: for they improve all theſe to a ſinfull end, for ſelf-advantage one way or other; even as they do the external Gifts of God, Riches, Honour and Glory: ſo that as by theſe they are not made holy, but their corruptions are more drawn out by them: So it is here, they are not made holy by theſe Gifts and inlargements, but rather internall and ſoul corruption is more ſtrengthened thereby, but I have ſpoken at large, that the common gifts of Gods Spirit are no evidences of grace.

II. What a truely ſanctified man ſhould doe when he findes no evidences of ſanctification.

A ſecond doubt therefore may be, what a true godly man, who is indeed ſanctified, ſhould doe, when he findes no evidences of his ſanctification. All the Sermons he heareth preached about it, put him into fear and tremblings of heart: for alas! he goeth home, and looketh in his ſoul, compareth himſelf and the ſymptomes and properties of ſanctification together, and O the diſproportion he preſently diſcovers! Inſomuch that he hath little joy in himſelf, and none knoweth but his own ſoul, what ſad temptations, and heavy anxieties of ſpirit he lyeth under.

Anſw. 1. To anſwer this: Firſt, it cannot be denied, but that even a ſanctified perſon may be in great darkneſſe, and heavy blackneſs of ſoul, that he cannot but judge himſelf for the preſent to be a Reprobate and a caſt away; to be an hypocrite, and all that he had done in hypocriſie. *David* ſometimes caſteth forth deſpairing words in his Pſalms about his condition, as if he had no hopes of God: *Heman* the Pſalmiſt complaines of the terrours of God, that made him even diſtracted thereby, *Pſ.* 88. 15. This is no new thing, for a child of light to lye and walk in darkneſs; for a childe that is heir to a great inheritance, to be in the dark cloſe womb, knowing nothing of it. God hath wiſe ends in this both in reference to the perſons themſelves, that are thus exerciſed, to humble them & to keep them low; as alſo to teach wicked men, that if Godly men be thus ſcarcely ſaved, where ſhall the wicked appear? Although wicked men for the moſt part ſuck poiſon hence; and God maketh this an heavy ſtumbling-block to them, that they conclude the contrary, as if it were godlineſs, and the too much following of Sermons, and the means of Grace, made them ſo. But oh miſerable deluded ſouls to fall at ſuch ſtones, & to harden themſelves in wickedneſs by that, which ſhould indeed humble them. But to direct the tempted ſoul in this matter: Firſt he muſt give up himſelf to the inſtruction and information of others, who are godly and wiſe; for he being in a temptation is not fit to judge, nor can he paſſe righteous judgement. A man in the dark cannot ſee his face in the glaſſe, nor in muddyed and turbulent water. Thou art ſick, and we ſee Phyſicians themſelves, though never ſo wiſe, will yet hardly venture to be their own Phyſicians in dangerous diſeaſes, but require the aſſiſtance of others; Chriſt himſelf had an Angel to help him. The ſame word παρακαλεῖν in the Scripture is both to exhort & comfort, becauſe comfort is not received in a gracious heart but by frequent & daily exhortations. Doe not then regard thy own thoughts, and thy own determinations. Its

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ſaid *Abraham* ſtaggered not through unbeliefe, *Rom.* 4.20. That implyeth, that there are temptations, which do as it were give a man a great blow in the head, making him dizzy and ſtaggering. Now as a man in ſuch an unexpected blow knoweth not what he doth, nor underſtand himſelf; ſo neither doth a Chriſtian in ſuch temptations. Remember therefore thy ſelf in this black condition: Say, I am not wiſe enough, nor able enough to judge my ſelf.

2. Secondly, Art thou in doubt about thy condition? conſider whether there be not ſome great ſin committed, and unrepented of, that doth juſtly provoke God to caſt thee in this darkneſſe. This was *Davids* caſe after thoſe foul enormities; then he could not tell what to ſay, or think of himſelf. This *David* inſinuateth when he prayeth ſo earneſtly for truth in the inward parts, *Pſalm.* 51 Wonder not then if ſuch foggy miſts raiſe ſo great a darkneſs, that it obſcure the very Sun. Thou deſireſt impoſſibilities; thou wouldſt have evidence of ſanctification, when its evident thou doſt not mortifie thy ſins; Therefore repair that crack in thy building, that leak in thy Ship. *David* in another Pſalm 31. ſpeaketh alſo that he had no quietneſs in his bones, till he had confeſſed that ſin which troubled him. Do not then deceive thy own ſoul; till thou haſt put that *Dalilah* away from thee, never think to enjoy the joy of the Lord, which is thy ſtrength.

3. Thirdly, It may be thou doſt not diſtinguiſh between the preſence of Grace, and the power of it; between weak graces and ſtrong graces. And that which is little, or which is not to thy deſire and mind, thou accounteſt nothing at all. A little Infant hath a mans nature in him, as well as he that is grown. As it was in the building of the Temple, they were not to deſpiſe the day of ſmal things; ſo neither is a godly man to contemn or diſregard the beginnings, and the ſmal things of grace. Our Saviour would not deſpiſe the ſmoaking Flax, and wilt thou? Take heed therefore of thinking thou haſt no evidences, becauſe they be imperfect and weak: One ſpark argues fire as well as an whole flame. The childe of God while he looketh to the rule, and conſidereth what he ought to be, never remembers that the conformity to this rule is more or leſs in thoſe that believe; ſo then though thou art in the loweſt form, yet thou art ſtill in Chriſts ſchoo', and needeſt to look backward for what hath been done, and forewar'd for what remaineth to be done.

4. Fourthly, remember the evidences thou haſt enjoyed formerly. This is a ſpecial way to keep the heart up againſt all aſſaults. The time hath been when thou didſt walk in the comfortable demonſtrations of grace in thy heart and life. The time was, when light did ſhine into thy breaſt, and thou couldſt with much thankfulneſs acknowledge the good things God wrought for thee; let not then the preſent darkneſs obſcure all former light; live by the remembrance of what thou haſt felt, if thou canſt not by any preſent ſenſe and experience; for if ever thou haſt upon good grounds diſcovered thy ſelf to be in the ſtate of ſanctification, thou art ſtill: whatſoever thy preſent fears may be to the contrary, God is the ſame, Chriſt and the promiſe continue ſtill the ſame. Think then of thoſe Bottles of tears thou haſt filled, and remember it was once day, though now it be night, and it will be day again.

5. Fifthly, Lay down this alſo for a true and comfortable rule, That if thou canſt not find ſuch marks of grace, yet if there be earneſt deſires & ſtrong groans after theſe, there is grace begun in thee. Theſe ſprouts cannot be, but where ſanctification is. Hence it is, that thoſe who *hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs*, are ſaid to be bleſſed, becauſe they ſhall be ſatisfied, *Mat.* 5. Though therefore corruptions are potent, they bear thee down, earthly affections, immoderate paſſions are prevalent over thee; yet becauſe thou panteſt and breatheſt after more grace, this is an argument of ſpirituall life in thee. *Paul* that complained of the Law of ſin within him, found alſo the life of Grace within him; ſo that as long as thou doſt not willingly give up thy ſelf to ſin, and obedience to the

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juſtis thereof, here is no matter of dejection, but incouragement. *Paul* and others have in this manner been exerciſed.

6. Sixthly, If thou haſt no comfort from ſanctifying grace, then make the more of juſtifying grace. God many times hides thoſe works of his in us from our own eys, that ſo we may the more eſteem his grace without us. The hungry will prize the Honey-comb, & the ſick the Phyſician. Thoſe that ſit in darkneſs, they long for light. Thus *David*, when he was in many ſad and ſpiritual exercises, gets into this Ark, in the midſt of thoſe waters that did overflow. There is a time when God will put a chriſtian to the life of faith, and make dependance and adherence the greateſt honour a Chriſtian can bring to him; and this is moſt eminently ſeen, when to his own ſenſe and feeling he is a barren wilderneſs; the ſenſe and diſcovery of grace in us makes much indeed for our comfort; but dependance on the promiſe and adherence to it, even while we are ready to ſink and to be damned, is the greateſt honour to *God*.

7. Seventhly, Conſider this alſo, that as the heart is very deceitful in a preſumptuous man, flattring him upon falſe grounds to belive in God; ſo it is as deceitfull in a tempted Chriſtian to make him doubt of all things, fear all things, regard his ſins only, & not his graces. How prevalent the deceit of the heart is in Phariſaical men, is evident to all the world; for how confident and bold are ſuch? When have they any fear or doubts about their condition? When do they ever ſay, It may be all this is but a ſmooth skin, no ſound vitals at all? But in a godly man tempted, there his deceit worketh in a contrary way, not taking notice of the great things God hath done for his ſoul, he believeth and mourneth for ſin, he would not commit any known ſin for all the world, yet at the ſame time cannot ſee the uprigheneſs and ſincerity of his heart: Say then I have a deceitfull heart in my fears and doubts, as well as preſumptions.

8. Eighthly, Know this alſo, That it is a great & grievous ſin to deny the works of God in us, to betray the uprightnes and integrity of our hearts. You ſee *Job* ſtands like a ſtrong Oak againſt all the violent blaſts that are upon him: He is a man outwardly and inwardly afflicted, and that by extraordinary judgement from God, which made his godly freinds conclude, that certainly he was an hypocrite, God did not uſe to give ſuch extraordinary blows, but where there were great faults: now ſee how reſolute *Job* was in all this, *He would not part with his integrity till he died*, *Job* 27.5. As there is nothing wherein the devil doth more deſire to ſhake thee, than in the integrity and truth of thy grace; ſo in this thou ought'ſt to be the more peremptory, and its no preſumption but great unthankfulneſs, not to acknowledge Gods gift in thee. Beſides this is a bearing falſe witneſs againſt thy own ſelf, not in matters of goods or life and death, but everlaſting peace and comfort.

9. Ninthly, Though thou ſit in never ſo much darkneſs, not knowing what to do or think, yet humble thy ſelf under Gods hand, give not way to fretting impatience, entertain no hard thoughts againſt God and his proceedings: Say, O Lord, if I ſhould never ſee good day in this world. O Lord, though thou ſhutteſt me up in a priſon and dark dungeon all my life time, that I can never get out, yet I may not expoſtulate with thee; my heart muſt not ſwell or fret; for it is thou (Lord) that doſt it. Thus if we would follow *Peters* Exhortation, *To humble our ſelves under the mighty hand, then he would exalt us*, 1 *Pet.* 5.6. It is indeed very hard to rebuke thoſe roarings of the ſoul, to quiet thoſe tempeſts and waves; we ſee what ſad effects they had upon *Job*. Into what horrid paſſion he breaketh out; and when he was reproved for this (O ſaith he) *if you were in my ſoul's ſtead, you would do as I do*. Well the ſtouter the Adverſaries are thou grappleſt with, the greater honour it will be to conquer; if it be a *Goliah*, then *David* will be more exalted.

Laſtly, If thy temptations be thus violent, that as hitherto thou are perſwaded thou haſt no grace, yet from this time begin in not too late now: If God will call

call thee in at the heat of the day, refuse not to labour in the Vineyard. While thou art fearing and doubting about thy condition, the day is spending, and night is coming on; so that though thou shouldest grant, that all which hath been done by thee, hath been in Hypocrisie, and on false grounds; yet now begin to lay the first stone in a good foundation: Say, O Lord, Let all these fears, all these doubts be sanctified to me, to make a sure work: *Qui nil dubitat, nil discit.* He that doubteth of nothing, will never seek out to learn; and it may be well for thee that God hath shaken thee thus, it may be to make the root stronger; There may be a clearer calm after these boisterous troubles.

III. Incouragements to those who finde Sanctification in them but in a low degree.

This may suffice to comfort those who stand thus suspended from God, and cast like *Absolom* from *Davids* face. What incouragements may be given to that Christian, who findes indeed Sanctification in him, but in a low degree, he is a Babe, a child, not a grown man; now to such a one, no comfort ought to be administred, so as to make him sit still, that he should have a *nil ultra*. No, *Paul* himself, who ran like the Sun swiftly fulfilling his race, Phil. 3. yet *forgets what is behind, & makes fast on to what is before:* so that to grow in grace is a necessary duty, and we ought to be carried on to perfection, *Heb. 6.* Yea it many times may give ground of suspicion to Gods people, whether they have grace in them, or no; because they are at such a stand: yea, not so well, but sometimes in decayes and great dulnesse; so that if the increase of riches add to the desire of them, how much rather should the increase of grace still provoke thee more and more? but yet thou art not without many grounds of hope and comfort.

1. For first, In that God hath bestowed the least degree of sanctification upon thee, he hath done more unto thee, than if he should give thee all the glory and honour of this world. To be rich in faith, though poor in the world, is better than to be rich in the world and poor in faith. Oh then with what thankfulnesse shouldst thou admire Gods goodnesse to thee? Hath he given thee but this little Mustard-seed of Grace? Hath he but begun this great work in thee? This is happier and more excellent than all the outward advantages of the earth. Its a wofull thing to have our portion in this world. As *Ismael* had many great gifts, but *Isaac* had the Inheritance; so it may be God gives thee great outward abundance; but as for the spiritual Inheritance, that he giveth to others: rejoyce then, and be exceeding glad, all you who finde but the very first fruits of this happinesse.

2. Secondly, The promise of justification and pardon is made unto the truth of grace, not to the measure and degrees of it: The little hand of a child, may hold a Pearl, as well as a Giants hand; so that though thou hast not as much grace and godlinesse as a *Paul*, or a *David*, yet thou maist as comfortably apply the Covenant of grace to thy soul, as they did. Its not, *he* that believeth thus much shall be saved, *but he that believeth*, John 6. 35.

3. Thirdly, Thou who art weak, yet seest this and bewailest it, hast this advantage, which a stranger hath not, to walk more humbly, to depend more firmly and strongly upon Christ. Sometimes great Cedars, as *David* and *Peter* fall foully, when lesse shrubs stand still. The more eminent a Christian is, the more danger he is in, of pride, and self-confidence, and thereupon they fall more foully; but the little child, that is afraid to go, will not let the Mothers hand go, is kept from falling.

4. Fourthly, The weaker thou art, in some respects God hath the more care and tender respect over thee. Christ will not *quench the smoaking Flax*, Mat. 12. 20. The husbandman is most carefull of his tendrest plants; *Aristotle* saith, Nature hath made parents to have most love to their youngest and weakest children. Thus God takes those that are weakest, and giveth them more consolations and the greater support.

5. Fifthly, There is no Christian so weak, but he may some way or other do God much service: & this he should comfort himself in, as the greatest honour he is

capable off. The Apoſtle often uſeth this ſimilitude of a mans body, and ſheweth how that though one part be more noble than another; yet even the moſt ignoble hath its proper uſe, the body knoweth not how to be without it. The eye cannot ſay to the foot, *I have no need of thee*; yea, the Apoſtle exhorts all, *That they ſhould eſteem of every man better than himſelf*, *Rom.* 12. Even the meaneſt Chriſtian doth in ſome thing or other exceed a ſtronger.

Uſe. *Uſe.* Be exhorted to this great duty and priviledge of Sanctification. If there be any honour, any happineſs, any excellency, it is in this: Thou art not fit for any holy duty, for any religious approach unto God, without Sanctification. Thy Chriſtianity, and the doctrine of Chriſt obligeth thee unto it. This is the proper and peculiar benefit that is in Chriſts Church. There is no holineſſe among Heathens, no Sanctification without the Church of God: well, though now thou art a prophane deſpiſer, and it may be an oppoſer of holineſs, yet one day it will be in requeſt, when Riches, Honour, Greatneſſe will do thee no good. Conſider, this is the will of God, your Sanctification, 1 *Theſ.* 4 3. All the commands in Scripture drive to this, they tend to this; If thou art not holy, thou haſt no right to happineſs, to have an inheritance among them that are ſanctified. *Acts* 26. 18. Holineſſe is promiſed under the Goſpel to be in a large meaſure. *Zech*, 14.20,21. Every Veſſell ſhall have Holineſs unto the Lord: An excellent Promiſe to be improved by us.

SECT.

SECT. IX.

Of the VVork of Grace, under the Notion of *Converſion*, or *Turning unto God.*

SERM. LXVI.

Shewing that the Damnation of Wicked Men is unpleaſing to God, and that which he delights not in.

EZEK. 33. 11.

Say unto them, As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live; Wherefore turn ye, turn ye from your evill wayes; For why will ye dye, O houſe of Iſrael?

I Shall now in the next place, conſider the work of Grace, under the notion of *Converſion*, or *Turning unto God*, which is one of the moſt frequent words in the Scripture to denote that duty. For the better opening of the words upon which I intend to build this diſcourſe, we may obſerve God himſelf, inditing a Sermon for *Ezekiel* the Prophet to Preach, wherein there is, 1. The Doctrine, *I have no pleaſure in the death of a wicked man.* 2. The confirmation of it by an Oath, which God himſelf makes, *As I live, ſaith God* 3. The uſe of Exhortation, *Turn ye, Turn ye.* 4. The Motive, *Why will ye dye?* For the occaſion of theſe words, you may ſee God giving Commiſſion to *Ezekiel* to be a Watchman, admoniſhing him by ſeveral Arguments to diſcharge his truſt faithfully; and in that all Miniſters are concerned: It was *Chryſoſtomes* wonder, if any ſpiritual Officer, who had charge of ſouls committed unto him, could be ſaved; for if a man is not able to give an account for his own ſins, how ſhall he do it for other? Therefore the forepart of this Chapter ſhould be the faithful Miniſters Looking-glaſs, wherein he ſhould often look: And if there be ſo much joy in heaven, for the reducing of one ſheep that goeth aſtray, how much rather for the converſion of a wandring Shepherd! Another part of his duty is, to vindicate and juſtifie God; for the Jews quarrelled and repined at Gods pro-

vidence, as if his *wayes were unequall*, or as if God did delight in the deſtruction of men, yea, though they turned from their wicked wayes. Now my Text is an Apology unto that calumny, where the clean contrary is confirmed by an Oath of God himſelf; who though he cannot lye, and ſo his word is enough, yet for condeſcenſion to our capacity, and to confirm our faith, doth ſweare, *That he delights not in the death of a wicked man, O beatos nos quorum causâ Deus jurat, O miſerrimos ſi nec juranti Domino credimus.* Tertullian.

4. Now this Text is frequently urged and debated upon in the matter of Reprobation, corrupt Teachers concluding from hence, that there is no Election or Reprobation abſolutely, becauſe God doth ſeriouſly will every mans life, and no wicked mans death. Some anſwer, that this place is wholly impertinent to that queſtion; for (ſay they) the Prophet ſpeaks not here of eternal death, but temporal, and that which is by the violence of the ſword: And (ſay they further) the antecedents and conſequents do evidently ſhew, that the ſenſe is, God doth not will the death of a wicked man, if he will turn from his wickedneſs; for the Jews charged God fooliſhly, as if they were puniſhed unjuſtly, for they perſwaded themſelves they turned to God, and yet their calamities were not taken away: This is probable, but grant the Text to be comprehenſive of Eternal death, as many other places are; ſuch as that, *God would not have any to periſh, but to come to the knowledge of the truth*, &c. 1 Tim. 2. v. 4. Then the anſwer is known, which may eaſily be made good, though it be not my work now, God hath an approving will, and an effective or decreeing will. Gods approving will is carried out to the objects, as good in it ſelf; but Gods Effective will is, when he intends to bring a thing about. God had an approving will, that *Adam* ſhould ſtand, therefore he gave him a command, and threatned him if he did fall; yet he had not an effective will, to make him to ſtand, for then who could have hindred it? Thus Chriſts tears over *Jeruſalem* (*How often would I have gathered thee, and thou wouldeſt not?*) were not Grocodiles tears (as ſome ſay the Calviniſts make them) for though Chriſt, as God, had not decreed the converſion of the Jews, yet the thing it ſelf was approved of, and commanded, and he as the Miniſter of the New Teſtament, affectionately deſired it: So here in the Text, God by this pathetical expreſſion, doth declare, how acceptable and deſirable a thing it is in its ſelf, that the Jews ſhould be converted; how diſtaſtfull and unpleaſant their damnation was: therefore mark the expreſſion, he doth not ſay, I do not will the death of the wicked, but *I have no pleaſure in it*: And if that of the *Arminians* be true, that God doth effectually will the converſion of all, why then are not all converted? *Who hath reſiſted his will?* but I intend grapes, and not thornes; practical not controverſal matter from this Text.

Obſ. 3. The firſt Obſervation is, *That the damnation and deſtruction of a wicked man, is unpleaſing to God, its not that which he delightes in.*

Obj. Before I open the point, you may object one known and evident place (there being many others alſo equivolent to it) *Prov.* 1. 26. *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh*: This argueth their deſtruction was pleaſing to him. Hence judgements upon the wicked are compared to *Sacrifices*, becauſe they are ſo acceptable to him.

Anſw. To Anſwer this; Both theſe are true, *God delights not in the death of a ſinner, yet He will laugh at their Deſtruction*: For if you conſider death and hell, as the ſinners miſery meerly, and as ſin brings it, ſo it is diſpleaſing to God; but as it is an act of juſtice puniſhing the impenitent for his wickedneſſe; ſo it is well pleaſing to God, for he is juſt as well as merciſull. Even as a juſt Judge that condemneth a Malefactor, may pitty the man condemned for his Crimes, and the execution be grievous to him, as it's the mans miſery; yet as he is a juſt Judge, ſo he delights alſo to have juſtice done: but this is handled in Controverſies.

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Let us ſee wherein it appeareth, that this is not well pleaſing to God; and that therefore the whole fault and blame of a mans perdition, is wholly on his own head:

Firſt, Gods unwillingneſſe to damn, is ſeen in the original and primitive inſtitution and creation of man: He made him after his own Image, indued him with all ſufficient power and ability to perſevere: There was no ſpot, or blemiſh, or defect in him, onely he was mutable, and might Apoſtatize from this happy eſtate if he would: Seeing then God withheld nothing from him, that might make him happy; and in him he covenanted with all mankinde, intending the like good to them; hence it doth appear, how well pleaſing it was unto God, that man ſhould continue in a ſtate of holineſſe before him: *Sin then came into the world, and by it death through Adams voluntary tranſgreſſion*: There was no Antecedaneous decree from God, neceſſitating him to ſin: It was his own willful choice, and that when he knew the penalty to the contrary; but yet ſo, that Gods permiſſive decree of his fall, did precede, though not neceſſitating: If therefore ſin had been inbred in mans heart at firſt, as it is now ſince his fall, then the cauſe would have been imputed to God; but then he had that priviledge of power to do that which is good, and to withſtand what is evil. I. Arguments to prove the point.

Secondly, *Gods unwillingneſs is ſeen, even ſince mans revolt*; For whereas he might have dealt with us as the lapſed Angels, who are left without any remedy, he hath appointed an Ark to ſave ſome Righteous perſons. There was never ſuch offers and tenders to Angels, as here in the Text, *Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye be damned?* Now the means God hath appointed for a mans recovery are divers: *Reaſon* 2.

Firſt, There are means by way of love and goodneſs: There are alſo means by way of Chaſtiſements and afflictions By way of Love: How winning and overcoming ſhould that be? Love doth ſurround thee; its love that thou liveſt, that thou breatheſt; its love, thou art preſerved from hell and damnation; its love, that thou haſt any ſupport at all; therefore the goodneſs of God in all the Creatures thou enjoyeſt, ſhould lead thee to repentance, *Rom.* 2. The Sun that ſhines to thee, the Earth that brings forth fruit for thee, the health and perfection of the ſenſes, ſhould melt thee always into good. Again, becauſe naturally we are ſlaviſh, and ſo moved rather by judgements than mercies; rather driven with whips than drawn with ſilken cords of love; therefore God leaveth not that way unattempted alſo: Hence the Prophets are ſo diligent in informing the Iſraelites, what was the cauſe of their plagues, famines, the ſword and captivity, even their ſins; and therefore they ſhould not be ſo much weary of them, or cry out of them, as of their iniquities: *God doth not puniſh willingly*, ſaith the Scripture, *Pſal.* 104. like the Bee that naturally gives honey, but ſtings not unleſſe provoked. As the Phyſician doth not willingly put his Patient to torments, but for his good: Thus it is here, God ſeeth all his love upon thee will do thee no good, thou doeſt abuſe it and grow wanton under it; therefore he will take another courſe, he will throw thee ſometimes into the water, to ſee if that will get the filth out of thee; ſometimes into the fire, to ſee if that will fetch the droſs out: If therefore God would leave thee incurable, he would let thee alone, and puniſh thee no more, as he threatens ſome, *Hoſea* 4. 14. O then know there is never a mercy, or an affliction, never a ſmile from God, or frown from him, but he will have an account of it: How hath it made thee weary of thy ſins, and willing to repent? I. The means God hath appointed for mans recovery.

Secondly, *The means God hath appointed, are either external or internal.* External are the Scriptures, and the preaching of the word of God. As where the Sun ſhineth, that is to give light and life; ſo where the Goſpel ariſeth, that is to beget ſpiritual and ſupernatural life: The word of God therefore, and the preaching thereof, is compared to all effectual and energetical things, to Muſtard-ſeed; II.

Muſterd-ſeed, to Leaven, to a Sword, to an Hammer, to Fire. Now why doth God cauſe this noiſe alwayes to ſound in thy ears, but becauſe thou ſhouldſt hearken and be obedient? It is true indeed, we muſt diſtinguiſh of wicked men, they are either ſuch as live in Paganiſm, in the ignorance of God, and without the Church (though God hath not left ſuch without a teſtimony and a witneſs, their conſciences within, and the creatures without, bearing witneſs of God:) yet we cannot ſay, that God ſo immediately wills their ſalvation, as of others, ſtill keeping to the firſt diſtinction we mentioned, and not contradicting that: Why indeed God ſhould thus differently diſpenſe the means of grace to ſome, and not to others, yea neglect the far greater part of mankinde, is a myſtery too deep for us to wade in: Gods ways are always moſt juſt, when they are moſt ſecret and unknown to us; yet even of ſuch deſtitute perſons, we may ſay, *God hath no pleaſure in their death*, according to our premiſed ſence; for he giveth them warnings againſt ſin, and implanted a thouſand witneſs within them, to accuſe them, if ever they do evil: or ſuch wicked men, who live under the ſound of the trumpet, that are awakened, and reminded every day of their tranſgreſſions; to ſuch as theſe God diſcovers, how unwilling he is, that they ſhould periſh in their impieties. Conſider therefore, that every leaf in the Scripture, every Sermon thou heareſt, will be a terrible matter of account at that dreadful day: God will ſay, How often would I have converted thee, inſtructed thee, but thou wouldſt not! Then there are internal means, of which anon.

Reaſon 3. Thirdly, *Gods pleaſure in the converſion of wicked men is ſeen, by thoſe pathetical and affectionate expreſſions, which we ſee the Scripture uſeth*: which do not only argue Gods will, but the height and ſtrength of his will: As here in the Text; Firſt, Gods Oath, *As I live (ſaith God,)* then the ingemination of the duty, *Turn ye, turn ye*; laſtly, a vehement expoſtulation, *Why will ye die?* So you may read many times in the Scripture thoſe exclamations, *Oh that my people were wiſe, that they would conſider their latter end*; and we ſee Chriſt himſelf, though in the midſt of all that pomp and glory which was attributed to him; yet weeping over *Jeruſalem, Oh that thou hadſt known the things that belong to thy peace, &c.* Luke 19.42. The truth of this alſo will further be amplified, if you conſider what zealous and importunate Meſſengers his Prophets are: *We beſeech you, and intreat you to be reconciled unto God*, 2 Cor. 5.20. *If ye will not hear (ſaith Jeremy) my ſoul ſhall mourn in ſecret for you*, Jer. 13. 17. The conſiſtency of theſe things, with an abſolute Election, in the ſenſe that the Orthodox maintain it, and not which their adverſaries calumniouſly faſten upon them, See in Controverſal Writers.

Reaſon 4. Fourthly, *That the death of a wicked man is diſpleaſing to God, appeareth in that ſin, which is the cauſe of death, is the onely evil hated by him, and that onely which he hath decreed to puniſh to all eternity: Thou art of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity*, Hab. 1. and, *God is angry with the wicked every day*: He that commands us to hate it, how much rather muſt he himſelf loath it? God therefore is not the author and lover of ſin; for *Non eſt author ejus, cujus eſt ultor*, He is not the Author of that of which he is the Avenger: How then can God delight in thy damnation, when the cauſe of it is ſo abominated by him! Indeed (as you heard) ſeeing damnation is an act of Juſtice, and ſo hath the nature of good, God doth delight in it; but as it is ruine of the creature by ſin, ſo it is not acceptable to him.

Reaſon 5. Fifthly, *Gods unwillingneſſe that the wicked ſhould periſh, appeareth in thoſe internal means, and inward works of Gods Spirit, that are vouchſafed to many*: God thinks it not enough to give the word, and the ordinances, and thus outwardly to knock at the door; but he alſo opens the door in ſome meaſure. Hence come thoſe convictions of Conſcience, thoſe illuminations of the underſtanding, and many ſuch ſecret motions of Gods ſpirit, that if poſſible, the

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ſoul might at laſt bewail its ſins, and turn unto God. Its true, thus far God doth not go with every one, neither are all admitted unto ſuch favor, but many within the means of Grace, have their hearts thus continually beaten upon, and their conſciences thus convinced and ſmitten: And therefore ſuch who ſhall yet retain their natural pravity and wickedneſs, when ſo many remedies ſhall be applied, argue the greater obſtinacy, & judgement of God upon them.

Now to all this, there is one grand and main Objection, which is, If God do thus will and delight in the converſion of men, If thoſe invitations are ſerious, and ſo pathetical, Why then doth not God change the hearts of all? why are not all converted? why are any damned? *Object.*

To this there is a true Anſwer and a falſe Anſwer returned: The falſe Anſwer is by *Arminians* and others; Therefore ſome are converted and not others (ſay they) becauſe ſome do receive the grace of God offered, and not others: But this is to put all the glory of mans converſion upon his own will; for why do ſome receive the grace of God, and not others? Can any receive grace, without the help of grace? Muſt there not be ſupernatural life breathed into a man before he can ſtretch out his hand towards God? beſides, this oppoſeth all thoſe places of Scripture, which deſcribe man dead in ſin, and unable to any good; and converſion is not the awakening of a man aſleep, but the reſurrection of one that is dead: Therefore the true anſwer is, that although God hath revealed his approving will thus, about the ſalvation of ſinners; yet the Scripture doth plainly limit his effective will, to thoſe that are elected, not to all men, but to ſome, *Rom.* 9. There this queſtion is on purpoſe handled, and the Apoſtles concluſion is, *On whom he will, he ſheweth mercy, and whom he will, he hardens,* And doth there ſilence all thoſe cavils, that proud ſinners may make; even this very Objection he inſtanceth in, *Who hath reſiſted his will?* So that you muſt compare one Scripture with another; and be ſure to keep ſobriety and humility in this great myſtery, not lanching further into this Ocean, than the Scripture is a ſtar to guide you in. *Anſw.*

Secondly, Though God doth thus will the ſalvation of ſinners, yet he is alſo a God of Soveraignity and Power: None may preſcribe to him; he is of boundleſs Wiſedom & Counſel, & none can ſearch out or know the depths of God, but the ſpirit of God. How many things doth the Scripture reveal, as objects of faith, which cannot be comprehended by us; that are above all humane reaſon though not contrary to ſound reaſon? Our Saviour hath taught us an excellent way to reſolve theſe diſpenſations of God, *Even ſo Father, for ſo it pleaſeth thee,* Mat. 11. As *Ipſe dixit* muſt be the ground of faith; ſo *Ipſe voluit* of our ſubmiſſion. 2.

Vſe 1. Of inſtruction, concerning the inexcuſeableneſs of wicked men, who periſh in their ſins? Who may be blamed but thy own ſelf? Although we have it from *Adam*, to lay our ſins off from our ſelves, yet theſe fig-leaves will not cover our nakedneſs, for to God thou canſt not impute thy ruine: *O Iſrael, thy perdition is of thy ſelf,* Hoſea 13.9. *Let no man ſay, when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God, for he tempts no man, but every one is led aſide by the luſts of his own heart,* James 1. O thou! that in this life-time flattereſt thy ſelf, thy ſins muſt not be owned by thee, none may put thee in minde of what thou art; when God ſhall at the day of judgement, diſcover all hidden things of darkneſs, then it will be manifeſt, thou, even thy own ſelf, haſt undone thy ſelf: God hath done like a gracious, good, juſt and mercifull God, but thou haſt been a cruel enemy unto thy own ſoul, *Qui voluntatem Dei ſpreverunt invitantem, voluntatem Dei ſentient vindicantem,* You ſhall finde his power in puniſhments; who have deſpiſed his grace and mercy in offers thereof, *Auſtin.* Neither may you excuſe your ſelves, by caſting your ſins on Satan; for although he be a Tempter, and doth continually ſuggeſt corrupt luſts unto thy heart; yet this is onely by temptation, by ſuggeſtion, he doth not make thee ſin, whether thou wilt or no; Thou art ſtubble, and that makes *Vſe* 1.

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the ſparks of fire which come from him, ſo eaſily inflame. As ſome Heathens have imputed their miſcarriages to I know not what, Fate, and the conſtellation of Stars; ſo many Chriſtian people, put their iniquities off either to God or the Devil: What would you have them to do? they cannot help it; How could God puniſh and damn thee for theſe ſins, if he cauſed them in thee? God indeed hath a juſt and terrible providence about the ſins of men, he is not an idle ſpectator of them, but yet he doth not infuſe any wickedneſſe into men; *that* they have of themſelves, onely God may guide and order it to wiſe ends, and cauſe it to run down what channels he pleaſeth.

Uſe 2. *Uſe* 2. The aggravation of the wickedneſſe of thoſe ſinners, who ſtand out wilfully againſt the goodneſs and patience of God, that would lead them to repentance; For how ſhall any mouth be opened for thee? who ſhall plead for thee? What excuſe haſt thou? Conſider, that God deſireth thy converſion, who doth not need thee, who can be honored, though thou art damned in hell: he can raiſe up children to *Abraham* out of ſtones: When therefore God ſhall thus invite thee for thy good and advantage onely, he is not bettered by thee, nor made the more happy, then thy forehead muſt be braſs, that doth not bluſh at ſuch ingratitude; cry out, Who am I, Lord? what am I, that I ſhould be regarded? wilt not thou have praiſe, and honor and glory though I be a caſt-away? why ſhould my life and ſalvation be ſo dear to thee, who am naturally a curſed enemy to thee?

Uſe 3. *Uſe* 3. Of conſolation to broken and tempted Chriſtians, who ſit down like *Job* upon the dunghill, abhorring themſelves; they are loathſom in their own eyes, and becauſe ſo, therefore they think God will not receive ſuch Monſters into his preſence: Oh, they ſay, though God take pleaſure in the life and ſalvation of others, yet he will not ſurely do ſo to me: But Oh this Text, *ſhould be ſweeter than the honey or honey comb to thee*; God ſaith, *As he liveth, he delighteth not in thy damnation*: Art thou therefore weary of thy ſins? doeſt thou renounce thy luſts? Then be not afraid to come, *Thoſe that come to him he will in no wiſe caſt off*: God ſaith, *Why will ye dye, O houſe of Iſrael?* Do thou turn the Text, and ſay, *Why ſhall I dye, O God of Iſrael?* ſet this Scripture againſt Hell, Devil and all accuſations of conſcience, God doth not delight to bruiſe and break thee with thoſe many temptations, that are worſe than death it ſelf.

Uſe 4. *Uſe* 4. Of direction unto Chriſtians, under all their miſeries and troubles, not to repine at God, but to blame and humble themſelves. The Jews here, had the devouring ſword come upon them, which did cut them off father and ſon together; now they thought Gods ways were not equal herein: And thus *Solomon*, *The wickedneſſe or fooliſhneſſe of a man, perverteth his own ways, and then his heart fretteth againſt the Lord*, Prov. 19 3. As God hath no pleaſure in the death of a man repenting, ſo neither in the troubles, calamities, and ſad afflictions he lieth under: He doth not afflict willingly; Were it not our rebellion and untowardneſs, we ſhould not have ſo many ſtripes and ſcourges from him: Oh this is an excellent way to humble our ſelves in the duſt; why ſhould a living man complain for the puniſhment of his ſins? *Lam.* 3.

SERM.

SERM. LXVII.

Divers Propositions or Considerations introductory to the Doctrine of Conversion.

EZEK. 33. 11.

Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way: Turn ye, turn ye from your evill wayes.

THis Text hath informed us how unpleasing the death of a wicked man is to God. We now proceed to the inference made from that Proposition, *Therefore the wicked should turn from his evill wayes. Turn ye, turn ye.* The ingemination denoteth the vehement affection and desire of God, as also our stupidity and love to our sins, when once calling we will not awaken, but we must over and over again be called upon. I am therefore now to treat on that famous and necessary work, conversion or turning from sin. As Satan and the Angel did once drive about *Moses* his body, so now the great controversie between God and his Angels, and the Devil and his instruments, is about a wicked man, whether he shall still be kept in the bonds or chains of sin, or whether he shall be loosened from them, and set free to walk in Gods Commandements. I shall because of the usefulness of this point, handle it doctrinally & practically. And the foundation upon which we shall build our discourse shall be this Doctrine, *viz.*

Doct. *That conversion or turning from our evill wayes, is necessarily required to an happy and eternal life.* The Text hath this in the affirmative and the contrary, Let the wicked man turn, that he may live. *Turn ye, Why will ye dy?* See how life is the necessary consequent of Conversion, and death the fruit of neglecting it. Life and death are the great Arguments in the world. What will not a man give for life? and death is the King of terrours. We use to say, such a man is so earnest and busy in that matter, as if life & death depended on it. To be sure, such ought your cares, prayers, and endeavors to be about avoiding of sin, and cleaving to that which is good, for life and death are in these things. Oh that men by faith and an effectual Meditation would apply these things more.

For introduction into this matter, consider some particulars.

Introductory considerations. 1. First, *That the phrase in the Text, to be converted, or turn our selves, is a metaphor taken from the outward situation or position of bodies, and is applied sometimes to things, sometimes to persons.* To *Things*; so God is said to turn joy into laughter, and to turn the captivity of *Sion*: unto *Persons*; and sometimes it is applied to *God*, when of angry he becomes loving and propitious unto *men*, when they leave their lusts, and turn to him, both are comprised in this Text: *Turn unto me, and I will turn unto you.* Turn unto me by an holy change, and I will turn to you by a gracious change, though all the change be in man, not God. The Texts of Scripture that command and commend this conversion are so many, that it is enough to name them; so then as bodies are said to have such a local posture, (as for example) a man may stand with this posture, as to have his back upon the Sun, and his face clean contrary to it; Thus it is with the soul, the affections

of the ſoul are its feet, and when it turneth from God, the back is turned upon the Sun; and in that poſture he continueth, till by Faith and Repentance he be turned again. Conſider therefore in what poſture thy ſoul is, whether thou art not clean oppoſite to *God* and his way. As naturally we came into the world, with our faces towards hell, and our backs upon God; ſo it is with our ſouls.

2. Secondly, *As by ſin we are thus turned from God, which is* terminus a quo, *ſo the Creature, and the luſts of ſin are the* terminus ad quem, *to which they turn.* Converſion is a motion; Now in all motions there is the term from which, and the term to which. Thus in the motion of the ſoul to ſin: The term from which, is *God*; the term to which is ſin: and the contrary is when we turn to *God*; ſo that if there were no other arguments, this might eaſily perſwade us to come out of that cuſtome & delight in ſin, which we have been uſed unto; for how reaſonable and happy is the change, to leave ſin, that hath guilt, torment, condemnation, and all curſes in it, and to turn to *God*, the fountain of all happineſs and joy! Oh, we might think, that all the violent temptations of ſin, ſhould never be able to hold us, but that we would quickly break all thoſe bonds, and run to *God*.

3. Thirdly, *This phraſe of turning to God, and from ſin, implieth thus much, That while we live in ſin, we make ſin our Lord and Maſter:* And therefore follow that, turn up and down after that, as the Servant after his Maſter: But when we caſt off theſe tranſgreſſions, then we follow the Lord our Maſter, and go after him; ſo that all men in the world are divided into theſe two ranks, either they are ſuch as go after their luſts, turn after them, as the ſhadow after the body, or elſe ſuch as cleave unto the Lord, and as the herb *Heliotropium*, turneth up and down after the Motion of the Sun, ſo do they in obedience & affections after the commandments of *God*. Now this ſervice & obedience to the luſts of the fleſh is a tedious and toilſome life indeed, though to the corrupt heart it may ſeem otherwiſe: *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden*, Mat. 11. 28. A man that turneth into the way of ſin, is like a traveller that ſhould turn into a way full of Quick-ſands, and Bogs, and dangerous Precipices, having alſo a ſore and intollerable burden on his back, preſſing him down with exquiſite pain.

Queſt. How wicked men that are in cruel bondage to their Luſts can be merry.

Therefore, if you ask, How can wicked men be thus merry, jocund, ſecure, and preſumptuous, when they are in ſuch a dangerous eſtate? The Anſwer is eaſy.

Anſw. Firſt, *They are ignorant and fooliſh*; their eyes are put out; and mad men cannot apprehend the danger they are in.

Secondly, Sin is a connatural and ſutable object to their depraved affections; and ſo they ſwallow down ſin, which is like honey in the mouth, though it prove gravel in the belly. Oh then that all wicked men would have thoſe repenting reſolutions, as the Prodigal, *I will leave my Huſks and Swine, and riſe, and return to my Fathers houſe. I will leave theſe new lovers, and new husbands, and go to my old*, as the church purpoſed, *Hoſ.* 2. 7.

4. Fourthly, *This Converſion unto God, as it implieth ſin, putting us into an averſion from him; ſo alſo it ſuppoſeth ſlight and contempt, which every wicked man puts upon God.* For to turn the back on a man is an action of ſcorn, & diſdain. Thus God complaineth, *They turned the back upon him, and not the face*, Jer. 32. 33. All ſin hath in it a contempt of God; for it is the turning the back on God. And although every ſin doth not formally, and expreſſely intend ſuch a diſdain and contempt of God; yet interpretatively, and in truth it doth ſo. *Ariſtotle* ſaith, that contempt & contumely do more provoke an ingennous man than real oppoſitions. When God would aggravate *David*'s ſin, he calleth it, A Deſpiſing of him. Oh then that wicked men would lay this more to heart! Thy ungodlineſs and wickedneſs thou liveſt in is ſo much ſcorn and contempt offered unto *God*, its turning the back on him. Now for thee a poor ſinfull Creature, who haſt all thy mercies from God to put contempt on him, how unſufferable is it? and the greater the contempt is, by how much baſe and more ignoble thy luſts are, to which thou turneſt. To prefer the Devil before God, to regard his temptations more than

God

Gods Promiſes; What arrogancy, and impudency is this; Did the Devill create thee, doth he preſerve thee, did he die, or was crucified for thee? Then if thou art ſo many wayes obliged, and ingaged unto God; yet for thee to prefer the Creature, yea the Devill before God, how unjuſtifiable is it?

Fifthly, *Becauſe by ſinne we are thus averſe from God. The further we go on in ſin, and the more progreſſe we make in thoſe wayes, the farther off ſtill we are from God, and our turning back to him will be a more difficult thing.* The Prodigal went into a far Country, ſpiritually as well as corporally: He went far from God, and therefore his return would coſt him dearer: ſo that this ſhould make every man ſtop betimes in the way of his ſinning; this ſhould make him without any delay return to God: for every day thou goeſt farther, and ſtill farther from him; when ever thou ſhalt return to him, thy task will be the harder. Oh it is ſeldome ſeen, that a man who hath all his life time been in motion and travell from God, ſhould at laſt bethink himſelf, and reſolve to go back to God, from whence he fell. As *Auſtin* ſaid of the Heathens noble and admirable actions of morality, which he called glittering ſins, That the laſter they learn, the more they were out of the way; This is true of all wicked men, the greater haſte they make in this world, and the more dayes they live, the farther off are they from God: thou art farther off from ſalvation, than thou waſt many years ago. A ſad thing it is to conſider, that the longer thou liveſt, the leſſe hope of thy Converſion; the more time thou haſt ſpent in this world, the further off from happineſs. Be not then worſe than the Horſe, or the Mule, for a Bridle in their mouth will ſtop them, and turn them out of the way: But though the Scripture put many Bridles in thy mouth, give thee many curbs to keep thee from ſin, yet thou wilt violently ruſh on. The Apoſtle could ſay of ſome, *Their ſalvation was nearer than at firſt*, Rom. 13. but we may of many, Their damnation is nearer. 5.

Sixthly, *This Converſion and turning unto God, is in Scripture ſpoken ſometimes as our work, and ſometimes as Gods work.* Thus in the Text, *Turn ye, turn ye.* And again, *Make ye a new heart, and a new ſpirit*: But in other places, its made the peculiar gift of God alone. Thus God ſaith, *He will take away the heart of ſtone, and give an heart of fleſh*, Jer. 31. Ezek. 32. So, *He will circumciſe their hearts, He will give them a new heart*, &c. Now how can theſe be reconciled? If God do it, how can man? If man, how can God? Can it be Gods gift and our own work too? Now there is returned this anſwer by erroneous Teachers, that (ſay they) from theſe places its plain, our Converſion is partly from Free-will, and partly from Free grace, though Gods grace be acknowledged to be the principall: The one teacheth Gods operation, the other our co-operation. Thus they do not exclude God totally, yet they make him onely a co-partner with us in this work of Converſion: But this is quickly diſpelled, by thoſe places that deſcribe man *dead in ſin*; and ſo can be no ſynergiſt with God: as alſo by thoſe Texts which give the praiſe and glory of Converſion totally and ſolely to God, not dividing this glory between him and the Creature, no more than divine worſhip, of which God is ſo jealous, that he will have it alone. 6.

The true Anſwer therefore lieth in this; That the former kind of places of our duty & obligation, what we ought to do; They are not a meaſure of our power what we can do. When the Prophet ſaith, *Turn ye, turn ye*; He doth not here declare what we are able to do, but what we ought to do; and yet this is not in vain, becauſe by this we are convinced of our impotency, and are humbled under our infirmity; and withall God makes this a practical command to turn us: Even as that word at firſt, *Let there be light*; or that of Chriſt to *Lazarus, Lazarus come forth*; and the latter kind of places they argue the work of Converſion to be wholly of God, in which we are ſubjects receiving; not agents co-working. This is to be underſtood in reſpect of the initiall working of Grace; for this phraſe, *Turn ye*, doth alſo imply that wee act and work; being firſt acted and wrought upon by God, *Acti agimus*,

& hoc bene agimus, quod à bene agamur. So that to speak properly, turning to God, or conversion, is not so much that work of grace infused in us, which we receive, as *Adam* had the breath of life breathed into him; but is the actuall motion and turning of the soul, which floweth from the former: So that this is *actus secundus*, the other is *actus primus*, as they say. Hence a man is not said to turn to God, because he hath the habits and principles of grace, but because they are actuated, and by them the soul doth move to God, as is more largely to be shewed. Thus then you see how those places are consistent together.

7. Seventhly, *This Conversion or turning to God, is either the first Conversion or the latter.* The first Conversion I call that, when we are at first translated from the state of darkenesse to glorious light; when at first we are taken off the bitter root we were in, and ingraffed into the sweet Olive-tree. The latter conversion is that when upon faults or sins committed, we have in some measure turned from God again, but afterwards return. Thus *Peters* recovery is called a conversion, *Luke* 22.32. *When thou art converted strengthen thy brother*, and thus when the Disciples fell into pride & contention, our Saviour saith, *Except ye be converted, and become like little children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdome of Heaven*, Mat. 18. So that although there be but one main fundamental conversion, or turning to God, yet seeing every sin, especially those that are more foul, do turn remarkably from God; therefore even converted persons need daily to be further converted. Do not therefore rest in this, that thou art once converted, thou canst remember the time and instrument of it; but consider, there is a daily conversion, and turning to God requisite; Thou art to be converted from thy daily pride, daily hypocrisie, daily guile of soul, diffidence in the Promise. Some think, because of that great work, and remarkable change God once made upon them, that therefore they may say, *Soul take thy ease, for thou hast much good laid up for thee, and think to be clothed in all glory, like the Lilies, that neither labour or spen*; but the word of God tels us, that there are daily corruptions remaining, from which we must constantly turn away.

8. Eighthly, There is a twofold conversion. *The one from Heathenism and Paganism or Heresie, to the true Faith and Doctrine of Christ: The other not only from that, but also from ungodlinesse and impiety in our lives.* Now though the one be much admired, yet the latter is the chief of all. We see by the preaching of the Apostles many thousands were converted; but many of these were Hypocrites, and loved the world and their lusts still. Therefore they were only converted to receive the faith of Christ, not to obey his holy laws and commands. Thus some are said to *Turn from their Idols to the living God*, 1 Thes. 1. 9. But if they did not leave their sins, and their carnal confidences, which were as so many Idols, they found no advantage. Therefore diligently mark this; It's a light matter to be converted from Heathenism, Heresie and Popery, so as to come to acknowledge the Truth; but art thou also converted in thy heart and affections, to submit to, and willingly obey the Laws of Jesus Christ? This is all in all.

9. Ninthly, *Therefore in the last place, As every part & faculty of the soul & body hath been averse from God, so Conversion must be in them all.* The mind must turn from its vain, ignorant, blinde, & unbelieving thoughts and imaginations: The will must turn from its obstinacy, perverseness and disobedience: The heart and affections from their unlawfull objects they were placed upon; and from all this excesse, violence and immoderacy: for want of these comes that partiall & imperfect Conversion to God so often condemned in the *Israelites*. Oh then sit down and think, Lord, every thing within me is averse to thee, there is nothing but is turned from thee. Oh then vouchsafe thy Grace, which will make all within me turn to thee; mind, heart, affections, and all my might: You will finde that true Converts are very rare, half Converts and partial conversion is often; but this true, solid, and universal conversion is in a few onely.

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In the next place, let us consider, what goeth to the making up of this Conversion, or turning to God. And first,

What goeth to the making up of conversion.

There must be a true and sound understanding out of Gods Word, that the way we are in is a wrong way: That if we turn not at last, the end of those paths is in hell and damnation. A blind man, or he that walketh in darkness can see no necessity to turn out of the way he is in. Therefore if this Text may do any good to thee pray for Illumination of mind: Say, *Lord, open my eyes, that I may see the craggie & slippery, and dangerous places I walk upon.* Thus *Esay* 6 *Lest they hear with their eares, and understand, and be converted.* That understanding is antecedent to conversion: so that ignorant, sottish & brutish people, who know nothing of God, or of their own corruption, are very remote from conversion: till thou come to know and understand the danger thou art in, thou wilt not be willing to go out of the way: 1.

Secondly, *The wayes of sin must administer some wearinesse & trouble*; else the soul will never think of returning: *Come to me ye that are heavy laden.* When the Prodigal is almost famished, then he thinketh of going to his Father. When *Israels* way is hedged in with thorns, then she will go back to her first husband, *Hos.* 3. So that if thou wouldst ever turn to God, pray thou maist feel the weight and burden of sin in some measure, not to break thee, but to drive thee out of the way thou wast in, when thou believest lyons and all curses to be in thy way, then thou wilt quickly go back; whereas wicked men that live in jollity & prosperity, that have no trouble, no exercises, nor crosses in their sins, they are far from Conversion; they never think of going out of that broad way as long as they finde it so sweet and pleasant: and hence God in mercy afflicts, grieveth, and continually troubleth that sinner whom he intends to convert. 2.

3.

This Conversion cannot be, till God hath first infused a supernatural life in a man, for seeing this turning is a spiritual motion of the soul, there cannot be any motion, if there be not life first: and in this respect, no man in the world hath any active fitnesse or worthiness in him to be converted, no more than thorns have to become grapes, or stones children. The first step that must be taken towards heaven, must be after Christ hath said unto thee, *Arise and walk, live & gratiam ejus per gratiam, per eo, ipsam veniunt ad ipsam*, Prosp. 4.

Fourthly, *Its not enough to have this life infused, but there must be the actuating of it.* For to turn is an action, it is a motion; and therefore though a man be renewed passively by God, yet till actively he move unto God again, he is not said to turn to him: so that this conversion doth denote more than that generation, or a new creation; for in them its enough if God hath wrought a spiritual change; but here he doth not onely work to will, giving the ability and power, but to doe also, giving the exercise of this power. 5.

Fifthly, *This turning unto God is to be looked for in the constant & diligent attendance upon the preaching of Gods Word*; for that is instituted as an instrument to change and turn us. You have many examples of the great and glorious conversions, that have been upon the most indisposed & unlikely subjects. And how so? By the plain & powerful preaching of Gods Word. Its not humane Oratory, or artificial eloquence hath done this, so much as the authoritative & spiritual explication & application of Gods Word, & therefore all those who carelesly neglect, or despise the Ministery appointed for this end, no wonder they reject the good counsell of God; & its no wonder why Satan doth furage & fret against the Ministry of Jesus Christ, for this is the only Engine and Battery that destroyeth his Kingdome, and rescueth poor captives that were taken in his snares.

Use of Instruction. See & understand now the necessity of thy conversion. It is that which undoeth most, you love the same, come to Church, and go home the same, and you never think of a turn & a change that ought to be upon you. Doth not God say to thee, Turn from this and that evil way of sinning, why will thou dye and be damned in it? thou like the Serpent stoppest thy eare, *Use.*

if there were no other Motive to make thee turn than this, that thou liveſt in an age, where many turnings and changings of things have been, this might prevail. God hath turned peace into war, quietneſs into trouble; why then ſhouldſt not thou turn prophaneneſs into holineſs; ſecurity into godly fear and trembling? Oh turn from ſin, before God turn thee into hell; and the longer and further thou haſt gone on in wicked ways, know it is the higher time thou ſhouldſt return. He goeth far that never turneth (we ſay) and why then is it thy obſtinacy to do ſo?

SERM. LXVIII.

The Impediments & Obſtructions of Converſion;

And what kinde of perſons are moſt unlikely ever to be converted, not to drive them to deſpair, but to awaken them out of their Security.

EZEK. 33. 11.

Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye dye, O houſe of Iſrael?

THe particulars that clear the nature of converſion are diſpatched: Let us now conſider, what are the impediments and obſtructions of converſion. That converſion now adays is very rare, comparatively to former times, experience evidenceth; and yet how much reaſon, and what unanſwerable arguments may be preſſed on every mans conſtience? Therefore its worth the while to conſider, what are thoſe cauſes that make men continue in their accuſtomed ſins, when God and his miniſters do thus importune to leave them. Now although it be true, that in every unregenerate man, there is a natural impoſſibility to turn unto God, and ſo no hopes of any man in the world, if we reſpect humane power and ſtrength; yet there are many, who beſides this natural impoſſibility, have contracted on themſelves a voluntary impoſſibility of turning unto God; ſo that their converſion, is not the taking away the ſtone of the heart, but the ſtones, for they have laid one upon another: We ſhall then examine, what perſons they are, that have the Symptomes and viſible Characters of difficulty to be converted, rather than other men.

Who they are that have the Symptoms of difficulty to be converted.

1. Ignorant and ſtupid people.

And firſt, *Ignorant and ſtupid people, that have no knowledge or underſtanding about God or themſelves:* Theſe are notoriouſly indiſpoſed to turn to God; the reaſon is plain, becauſe underſtanding goeth before converſion, and is initial or introductory to it, as *Iſa* 6. 10. So that if there be no knowledge, there is no hope of any turning to God; therefore *Laodicea* is counſelled to buy eye-ſalve, *Rev* 3. 18. as that which would be the firſt means to help her; and this Prayer is ſtill to be continued, for thoſe whoſe converſion we deſire, *That God will give them eye ſalve:* Its ordinarily ſaid, As God in the firſt Creation wrought light before other things; ſo in man, who by nature is a miſerable Chaos and confuſion, God cauſeth light to ſhine out of darkneſs. The brute beaſts are not capable of converſion, becauſe they have no reaſon; and although our reaſon be naturally corrupt, and ſo a great enemy to God, yet there is by it a paſſive capacity, though not an active of converſion. Hence the Goſpel at firſt did take the beſt and moſt glorious effects in cities, where men were bread up in more knowledge and underſtanding: It's true, *Paul* ſaith *Not many learned are called*, 1 Cor. 1. and, *God chooſeth the fooliſh things of the world, to confound the wiſe*, and our Saviour Chriſt giveth thanks to God, *That he had hid the things of ſalvation from the wiſe, but revealed them to babes*: But by Wiſe and Learned, are meant ſuch, that with their learning are alſo puffe up with pride, and by babes, were

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not meant those that have no knowledge or understanding, but that are lowly and weak, comparatively to others: Howsoever, where conversion comes, it giveth light and knowledge, if there were none before. The consideration of this should much startle and amaze many of you, for how woful and lamentable is the ignorance of most? how little is known about original and actual sin, which is their disease? and how little about Christ, who is the Physitian? *God would have all men be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*, 1 Tim. 2. The knowledge of the truth must be first attained; and on the contrary, *It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them, will not save them*, Isa. 27. 11. Christ told the woman, *If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him*, John 4. 11. *If thou hadst known*; and this we may say to those, who lie still in the dungeon of their sins, if thou hadst known what thy condition is, what the curses of the Law are, how terrible God is, how few shall be saved and such like, thou wouldst not stand idle, as thou doest, but like the Hart, pant after the blood of Christ, as that after the waters: Oh then that God at last would perswade ignorant people of their damnable estate. To whom is the word without profit? to whom is it a savor of death, but to ignorant people? Where may the Ministers make their sad complaints, They have laboured in vain, and none believe their report, so much, as where this darkness, this night is upon mens hearts? You old men then, that know nothing; that understand very little, why are ye not afraid, being you are in such darkness? and you fathers, whatsoever you fail in, fail not here, about instructing your Children, though you cannot leave them wealth and estates, yet let them have the knowledge of God out of the Scriptures: How much would it affect you, to have children bodily blinde? would you not heal them, if you knew any remedy in the world? but to your childrens ignorance and spiritual blindeness, you are voluntarily accessary, and you willingly are the cause of it.

Secondly, *Men far from conversion, are such as have a Pharisaical Self-conceit of their own Righteousness and good Works*; by which means, they never think of going back, for none can perswade them, but they are in the right way already: This is a generation, that will sooner dye in their sins, then ever turn to God; and our Congregations have such, as well as the former. Observe our Saviours Sermons, and you shall finde, that he did least good, upon those that justified themselves; insomuch, that he tells them, *Publicans and harlots entered the kingdom of heaven, before such as they were*; and again, *I come not to call the Righteous, but sinners to repentance*, Luke 5. 32. so we preach, not to convert those who think themselves Righteous already, who applaud themselves in their good Moralities, or plausible lives; but to those who are convinced of their sinfulness, and groan under it: I know it is a very unpleasing thing for a man, to be found a sinner, to judge himself and condemn himself upon that account; he had rather sit down with a false, dawbed peace, and cozen his own soul, than arraign and terrifie himself after that manner, but it is a vain thing to hide and extenuate, when we have to do with God, we must judge our selves, else God will judge us. It was the Churches bold presumption, that would at last destroy her, to say, *She was rich, and clothed, and wanted nothing, when indeed she was miserable, and naked, and wanted all things*, yet in such a foolish Paradise do many place themselves, They be converted, they become changed, they are as good as any others already, they have as good an heart as any other: These men are most incurable, and are in the greatest danger, because they feel no danger: O then know, That quietness and security which thou hast in thy breast, and all that confident presumption in thee about thy self, will at last be like the cobweb, not serve to cover thee, when the tempests of Gods wrath shall arise.

2. Men that have a Pharisaical conceit of their own righteousness. Rev. 3. 19.

3. They who have been long accustomed to sin.

Thirdly, *They have but little hope of conversion, who have been long accustomed to*

to ſin, whoſe iniquities for many years together have been taking a deep root. *If a Blackamore may change his skin, then may you do good, who have been accuſtomed to evil,* Jer. 13 23. Hoſ. 9 9. *When Iſrael had deeply corrupted themſelves, then God would remember their iniquity.* A man that hath been a long while given to his luſts and ungodlineſs: Oh who can give hopes that ever he will turn to God! Take heed then of cuſtom in any ſinning, it is like a milſtone about thy neck, it will, like *Pharaoh*, oppreſs thee, and keep thee down; that thou mayeſt never leave Egypt. The Devils that poſſeſſed a man from his youth up, were more difficultly caſt out, than any others. The husbandman hath little hope of a crop in ſowing, when the ſoil hath a continual wont to miſcarry. Cuſtom in ſin, makes men like the tall grown Oaks, which cannot be removed, they have got ſuch deep hold in the earth; whereas at firſt ſin is more timerous, and leſs impudent, the Conſcience of a man is not ſo hardened: A continual uſe in ſin, takes away all the ſenſe and feeling of it, all the horridneſs and terrour of it: Thus men that are accuſtomed to curſing and ſwearing, they mind it not: Men given to luſtful & filthy ways, have no horrour upon them, after their unclean practices; and why? Cuſtom is like a great ſtone laid upon a man already dead and buried in the grave of ſin: And therefore a ſinner, habituated in an evil way, is compared to *Lazarus* who was dead and buried, and even putrified ere he was raiſed again,

4. Thoſe that have had the means of grace a long ſeaſon, and yet continue ungodly.

Fourthly, *Thoſe that have enjoyed the means of Grace for a long ſeaſon, and yet are briars and thorns:* Theſe give little hopes of converſion. The ground that hath often received rain and brings forth nothing but weeds, is nigh unto curſing, *Heb.* 6.7. Thoſe that refuſed the Prophets, *The duſt of their feet was to be ſhaken off, in teſtimony againſt them,* Mat. 10. 14. The word of God doth moſt good, and hath the greateſt effects, at its firſt coming to a place, as you may read in the ſeveral plantations of the Church at firſt, whereas the longer men live under it, the authority and majeſty of the Word is abated: *Ye did for a ſeaſon rejoyce in his light,* as our Saviour told the Jews concerning *John Baptiſt, John* 5.35. When God hath ſent his miniſters and Prophets one after another, admoniſhing, inſtructing, and vehemently exhorting and charging you, to part with your luſts, ſaying, You cannot have them and Chriſt too, you cannot hold them and heaven too: Its a ſad preſage, (& yet thou hardeneſt the neck againſt all theſe reproofs) that Chriſt hath ſaid of thee, as of that fig-tree, *Never fruit grow more on thee.* As there are ears of corn that are blaſted, that never thrive, or come to any good; ſo there are many blaſted ſinners, impenitent and obſtinate, which after many remedies applied, yet continue under the power of their diſeaſe: O then, conſider how much this concerneth you! you may by your unfruitfulneſs and barrenneſs under the means of grace, make your converſion leſs poſſible, than that of Pagans & Heathens. Did not our Saviour ſay? Mat. 11. 21. *That the Tyrians and Sodomites would have ſhewed more effects of a converſion, than the Jews to whom there had been ſo much preaching, if God would have vouchſafed the Goſpel to them?* Certainly you are in a more dangerous eſtate, than any people that ſit in darkneſs and have no light: If ſo many Sermons, ſo many Sabbaths, ſo many Exhortations, have done no good? who can but think it is in vain to plant and water any more?

5. Thoſe that have accuſtomed themſelves to rebel againſt the light.

Fifthly, *Thoſe that have accuſtomed themſelves to rebel againſt the light, and to live againſt the convictions of their conſcience:* As the Mariner uſed to ſtorms and tempeſts, is not afraid; ſo theſe continually uſed to the whips and ſcourges of their conſcience, at laſt are not afraid at all, yea, quite put it out: The Apoſtle calls this *A cauterized conſcience, ſeared with a hot iron,* 1 Tim. 4. 2. or *Quite out of* as ſome expound it; and certainly this muſt be a deſperate preſage: for ſeeing converſion is let into the ſoul, by that needle of conviction; if this be ſtifled, and continually beaten back, what hope is left at the bottom? Therefore this is the inlet to the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, from which never any

was

was, or ſhall be converted, of whom if we had certainty, we might no more preach to their converſion, than to the Devils and damned in hell. But whence comes this impoſſibility of turning to God? it aroſe at firſt from rebelling againſt light, living in thoſe ſins, which the ſpirit of God convinced thee of by the word, and ſo in ſome meaſure, *Doing deſpite unto the Spirit of Grace.* This makes thee at laſt inſenſible; even as frequent walking bareſoot, brings a ſenſeleſnes of pain upon the feet: Now whether this light be natural, ingrafted in thy conſcience, or ſupernatural, revealed by the grace of God, it is a wofull hardneſs, to reſiſt any of them: This indiſpoſition to converſion is very common; for what man is there, that liveth in groſs palpable ſins, that doth not rebel againſt his conſcience, and rebell againſt the light of Gods word: Oh! this muſt argue, thou haſt deviliſh wickedneſs in thee, that thou doeſt the things, thou knoweſt are ſins: I ſay, Deviliſh, becauſe the Devils have great light in their underſtandings, but malicious enmity againſt God in their wills: If therefore thou wouldſt prepare the way for God in thy heart, and have the gates of thy ſoul unbolted, that the King of glory may come in, be ſure, let thy converſation anſwer thy conviction; let thy heart in affections and practice, be proportionable to thy light and judgment; be ſo bleſſed, that when thou knoweſt, thou doeſt alſo: Therefore you that live under much preaching, are often in hearing, and miniſterial admonitions, you had need take heed to your ſelves, for as often as thou ſinneſt, thou goeſt againſt the Inſtructions of thy own heart: Thou knoweſt otherwiſe, thou haſt been taught otherwiſe, thou haſt heard otherwiſe; *This is kicking againſt the prick:* This daily uſe to the noiſe and ſound of conſcience, will at laſt take away the terriblenes thereof.

Sixthly, *Thoſe alſo are very far from turning unto God, even without any hope, that are by Gods juſt judgement, forſaken and given up to the power of their ſins,* to ſin with all greedineſs, wilfulneſs, and without any remorſe at all. There are ſuch who have this incurable diſeaſe upon them; and which is more terrible, it is to be found chiefly in the Church of God, and amongſt them, that have enjoyed the beſt means: Thus *Iſa.* 6. 10. Many of the people of *Iſrael* are to have their eyes ſhut, and their ears made deaf, and their hearts ſenſeleſs or fat, leſt they ſhould underſtand and be converted. To *make the heart fat,* is a metaphor from beaſts, that by the fatteſt paſtures, are ſooneſt prepared for the Shambles; ſo many people by the choiceſt and moſt excellent means of grace, are ripened for this heavy judgement of a ſenſeleſs ſpirit. Wo be it to thoſe perſons, that are ſmitten with this ſpiritual blindneſs: Behold then the ſeverity and terrour of God, to ſeverall perſons, who for a long while receive his grace in vain, and and reſiſt his ſpirit; God in his anger ſweareth, *This people ſhall never enter into his reſt,* give them blinde eyes, a deceived heart, a ſtupid conſcience, let no Miniſtry trouble them, let no judgement awaken them: Therefore howſoever thou boaſteſt in thy boldneſs and impudency in ſinning, and braveſt it towards God and man, yet thou art more terribly curſed than *Cain*, for he went trembling about under his curſe, and thou goeſt ſecurely in all jollity and mirth.

6. Thoſe that by God are given up to the power of thoſe ſins.

Seventhly, *A people of frequent reſolves and purpoſes to amend, while judgements are upon them, but when they are removed, returning to their former ſins again:* Such diſcover their inconſtancy and hypocriſie ſo often, that they give little hopes of a true and right turning to God. *Pharaoh*, while the hand of God was heavy on him, how ready then for his duty! then he will let the people go, then he crieth out of his ſin; but no ſooner is the rod taken off his back, but he is in the mire as before. The people of Iſrael are alſo a pregnant inſtance for this, while they were in fears of enemies, or under any of Gods ſore judgments, that they ſought and cryed mightily to God; but let them have reſpit, they fall from God again: Hence are they ſo often condemned for hypocriſie

7. Thoſe that after judgements are removed, againſt frequent reſolutions, return to their former ſins againſt.

and backſliding and ſuch whom God would wholly forſake at laſt; this is too often to be found. There are many people in times of fear, and dangers of death are as ſoft as wax; but when recovered, as hard as iron: Men of anguiſh diſpoſitions, ſometimes very hot, & again very cold; ſometimes in great fears, ſtreights and troubles of ſoul, ready to roar out like Bears, for the anguiſh upon their ſouls, becauſe they have ſinned againſt God; and other times as bold, and ready for the ſame ſins they complained of, as if they were not the ſame men. As they ſay of long ague fits, they end at laſt in a conſumption: ſo theſe changes and viciſſitudes upon thy ſoul, will at laſt end in final Apoſtacy. O then be ſure to keep up all thoſe Engagements and Obligations thou haſt taken upon thy ſelf: Be the ſame in health, as ſickneſs; in joy, as fear; after a ſermon, as when thou art hearing one, that fills thy heart with fears.

8. Deriders of holineſs.

Eighthly, *Such alſo ſeem remote from converſion, that are ſcorners and deriders at godly and holy things:* The prophane ſcoffer, is ſeldome turned an humble lover of the things he ſo deſpiſed: Hence he is a bleſſed man, *That ſitteth not in the ſeat of ſcorners*, Pſal. 1. 1. that hath nothing to do with them: The Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks of ſome men, 2 *Pet.* 3. 4. *whoſe damnation is of old ordained for them, and they are ſcoffers and deriders at the day of judgement, and Chriſts comming.* Solomon doth often ſentence a ſcorner. for a man that ſhall periſh in his wickedneſs. I know not why it is, but it falls out, that godlineſs and true holineſs is the object of ſcorn, deriſion and contempt to carnal and wicked men: Thus *David* was the ſong of drunkards, and what is more ordinary, then to deſpiſe and deride the practicall power of godlineſs? Now what hopes can ſuch give of turning to God? wilt thou come and be in the number of thoſe, whom thou mockeſt and deſpiſeſt? wilt thou eagerly purſue that way, thou didſt ſo deride? though this be too common, yet it argueth high prophaneneſs. Many wicked men, as *Herod*, though they did not turn godly themſelves, yet they reverenced and honored it in others: And wilt thou be ſo arrogantly wicked, as to ſcorn at that which thou ſhouldſt renown and imbrace? Who can think that theſe Dogs and Swine (for ſo the Scripture calls ſuch prophane wretches) ſhould ever be turned into Lambs?

9. Proud and haughty men.

Ninthly, *As ſcorners are far off from this priviledge, ſo proud and haughty men, they ſeldom are converted: The humble and meek he will teach his way*, Pſal. 15. Thoſe high Mountains are alwayes barren of good: *God reſiſteth the proud.* How is that? By not giving grace to them. Pride is a divers ſhapen ſin, it emptieth it ſelf into many channels: There is pride of Parts and Abilities, pride about Birth, Eſtate, and External Greatneſs; which way ſoever pride vents it ſelf, commonly Chriſt will not come into that heart and dwell there: They were the proud perſons, that did not care what *Jeremy* told them from the Lord: The Humble, the Meek, the Poor, the Hungry, the Empty, the Naked, theſe are drawn home to Chriſt; but the proud and the full are ſent empty away: Take heed therefore of any kinde of pride, for this will alwayes make thee at diſtance with God: This will make thee contemn the Word of God, and the voice of his Meſſengers. Oh! think the mountain of thy heart muſt be made a plain, ere Chriſt will own thee.

10. Revolters.

Tenthly, *Apoſtates and Revolters from former zeal and forwardneſs in the ways of God: when theſe fall away, there is little hopes for ſuch to turn unto God.* The Scripture is clear, *Heb.* 6. and *Peter* compareth ſuch, *To the Dog returning to his vomit, and the Sow to the mire; and that their latter end is worſe than their beginning*; yea, *that it had been better they had never known the way of Righteouſneſs* 2 *Pet.* 2. 21. yet ſuch inſtances of Apoſtacy and Backſliding, all times do ſadly afford; and truly, ſuch Prodigals, ſeldome go home to their fathers houſe again; Its true, the work of grace was never ſound and right in them; no, not when they moſt flouriſhed; for if they had been of us, they had not gone from us: Oh then! take heed how you abate of your former love and zeal; you once were

were more forward for God, once you delighted in holy duties, and holy companions; now thy heart is become like a dried Wilderneſs: the world, and thoughts of the world hath choaked all: Oh ſit and tremble, leſt this be but the beginning of thy ſorrows.

II. Thoſe that are intangled in wicked company.

Laſtly, *Thoſe are difficultly brought home to God, who are inſnared and intangled in wicked and ungodly company, who have ungodly relations, live in ungodly families:* For whenſoever ſuch are invited to turn to God, then their carnal friends become impediments in their way. *Paul* conſulted not with fleſh and blood in his converſion, if ſo, he had not turned to Chriſt: And this undoeth you, God and your conſcience calls upon thee, *Turn to God, why will thou dye and be damned in theſe ſins?* but then thou conſulteſt with fleſh and blood, ſour ungodly friends and acquaintance, and thus they hinder thee: Oh thou ſhouldſt ſay to the deareſt friend in the world that ſtops thee in this courſe, *Get thee behinde me Satan, for thou ſavoureſt not the things of God:* Hence our Saviour is ſo peremptory, *He that loveth not me, more than father or mother, cannot be my diſciple*; neither would our Saviour have one that would follow him, ſo much as go back to bid his friends farewel, or bury his dead father: Oh then conſider, that when a right eye, or a right hand offend thee, theſe muſt be parted with: *The Queens daughter muſt forget her fathers houſe*, when thy ſoul is eſpouſed to Chriſt, thou muſt forſake all thy former lovers.

Uſe. Uſe of Examination, put thy ſelf upon this ſevere and impartial tryal, whether thy name be not in one of theſe black ſcrols or no: Art thou not to be found among the ignorant & ſtupid, or proud and prophane ſcoffers: or among thoſe that rebel againſt their conſcience, or change in their reſolution, as good or evil floweth upon them? Haſt not thou a long while accuſtomed thy ſelf to an evil haunt or cuſtom of ſinning? If theſe, or any of theſe, Satan and ſin hath bound thee in ſuch ſtrong cords, that are not eaſily broken: while therefore there is any hope, though there be not ſo much probability; yet while God hath not declared an utter impoſſibility, *Go and commune with your own hearts, and ſtand in awe*, yea, cry out, *Lord turn me, And I ſhall be turned*; ſay, I am weary of my former courſes, they are a ſhame, a torment, an heavy burthen upon me: Oh! (ſay) I dare not go one ſtep further in the way I was in, I ſee hell gaping to devour me; and never let that trouble thee, to think how the world will wonder and laugh to ſee thee become a new convert: Thou hadſt better have frowns from men than God; thou wilt leave the company of wicked and ungodly wretches, to enjoy God and good men: There is a neceſſity of this turning, that wickedneſs thou liveſt in, muſt be turned from, or elſe wo unto thee that ever thou waſt born: If death and judgement finde thee with them, no mountains or hills can cover thee from the wrath of God: Hearken what thy own conſcience ſayeth, it is high time to leave off from being ſuch a beaſt any longer; take *Manaſſes*, take *Mary Magdalen*, take *Paul* for examples they ran far in a foul and dangerous way, but at laſt they turned: Oh this was their happineſs, they turned from their evil ways. Why do ye not take off all your cares and thoughts from other things, and fix them upon this buſineſs?

SERM. LXIX.

The Motives and Grounds of our turning unto God.

EZEK. 33. 11.

Turn ye, turn ye, Why will ye dye, O Houſe of Iſrael?

THE ſubject of the Text, viz. *Converſion*, is vaſt and large, like a living Fountain that always ſends forth freſh ſtreams: We have ſpoken of the particular difficulties in ſome mens converſions rather than others: Not that they were to be without hope, but to awaken them out of their ſecurity. Now motives & grounds for our turning unto God, are: in the next place to be conſidered. For in our Exhortations to be converted, we do not ſpeak as men deſtitute of reaſon, and forſaken of Truth: But it is even a wonder when all the Arguments out of Gods word ſhall be propounded, if every one do not ſay, Arme, let us go hence from our ſins.

Motives to converſion. 1.

And firſt, *The poſſibility of thy converſion may make thee fet about it.* Its not with thee as with the damned, and Devils in hell. Being thou art not yet in the grave and hell, there may be hopes for thee. Although the laſt day I ſhewed how difficule and unlikely ſome men were to turn to God, yet that was onely in reſpect of viſible ſecond cauſes; otherwiſe as when our Saviour ſaid, *It was as impoſſible for a rich man to be ſaved, as a Camel to go through the eye of a needle*; the Diſciples then cryed out, *Who then can be ſaved?* But our Saviour ſaid, *With man indeed it is impoſſible, but with God all things are poſſible.* So ſinners and wicked men under thoſe Characters thus deſcribed, are no more likely to turn to God, than a Camel with his bunch-back to go through the eye of a needle: but with God all things are poſſible. An abſolute impoſſibility of turning to God is only in thoſe that have ſinned againſt the Holy Ghoſt, or are for ever delivered up by God to an impenitent and a hard heart. But who they are, is rather a ſecret in Gods counſel, than a myſtery diſcovered to us: ſo that no wicked men under any Characters whatſoever (unleſs thoſe excepted) may conclude in deſpair, That it is not poſſible they ſhould ever be converted. God doth here invite the ſinners of *Iſrael* in what quality ſoever, to turn to God; now this is a great encouragement, the very poſſibility of turning to God. Ah, How juſtly might God ſtrike thee dead in thy ſins, ſend thee with thy goar blood to hell, and leave thee hopeleſs & helpleſs? But he hath not ſhut the door againſt thee: He hath not yet bid thee depart into everlaſting fire, he knoweth thee not. It ſhould be like oyl in thy bones to think ſuch a thing may be. O Lord, Is not my condition deſperate? Is there any hope left for me? Am I not paſt all favour? is not my time ſpent? Oh, What a mercy is this? But ſeeing the poſſibility is uncertain, thy life is ſo ſhort, time is ſo quickly run out, that it may be thy converſion is not poſſible for any longer than a day more, or a night more; then what an inexcuſable folly and madneſs will it be to defer it? It is many times Satans temptation to hold men a long while in ſin, and then to perſwade them it is too late to turn to God.

At

At first any time is soon enough, and afterwards every day is too late; but never believe that suggestion. Oh then, as the Husbandman ploweth in hope, which nourisheth all actions, so thou maist hear in hope, pray in hope, set on work of reformation in hope; for God Never bid a people seek his Name in vain.

Secondly, *Not onely the possibility, but the probability may much prevail with thee.* 2. For on Gods part it seemeth more probable thou maist be converted, than millions in the world. So that howsoever many men by abuse of the meanes, may make their condition far worse than that of the Heathens and Pagans: yet if we speak strictly in respect of the means themselves, it is far more probable thou that hast the means of conversion, shouldst be converted, rather than those that enjoy them not. The greatest part of the world sits in horrible darkness without any light: to them the world hath not come, which yet is the ordinary means of conversion; so that on Gods part, and the means, its far more likely that God wills thy conversion, rather than those to whom he sends no Prophets at all, It is true, the word is sometimes sent to harden men, and it becomes the savour of death but this is after men have horribly abused it: and it is not the proper and genuine effect of the word, but accidental through the indisposition and obstinacy of the hearers. Well then, let this encourage thee to turn to God, God hath not with drawn, or denied the means to thee: yet he sends his Prophets, and ministers to call thee to him. Why doth God vouchsafe all this to me? who should turn if I do not? Oh it is intolerable shame if any in the world turn to God, and thou dost not who art so often exhorted. Do any in the world repent, grieve for, and forsake their sinnes? and doest not thou who enjoyest the powerfull means of Grace.

Thirdly. *It is not onely probable, but thy turning to him is very acceptable and welcome.* 3. Thou art sure to have the door opened to thee, Never any man turned to God that was put back again: *Come unto me, ho, every one that thirsteth, come, come and buy without money,* Isai. 55. 1. *No man that cometh unto me, will I in any waies cast off,* John 6. 37. so that this should be like fire in every sinners bowels. Oh Lord, when men have been offended, and grievously injured, they many times become so implacable, that no submission, no satisfaction can content them. But God after all the despite and all the disdain done unto him, is willing to be reconciled: this goodness & mercy of God should abundantly change thy heart: And certainly thou dost not seriously and fully ponder these things in thy heart, if thou didst, thou wouldest not a moment longer stay from running to to him: Thou wouldest not only turn, but run to him; *Draw us, and we will run after thee* prayeth the Church, *Cant.* 1. God doth not onely powerfully overrule the soul, but so sweetly enclines it to delight in good and holy objects, that when the heart hath once tasted of the goodness of God, nothing can keep it from him: Seeing therefore thy turning unto God is so acceptable to him, is so vehemently desired by him, Why should it not make thee shake off all slothfulnesse, and address thy self to him.

Fourthly, *Therefore turn to God, because this will prove thy good, and thy happiness:* 4. It makes not at all to Gods happiness: God is all-sufficient, the Sun, to which the Starres contribute no light: *My goodness doth not extend to thee,* Psalm 16. 2. If a man drink of a fountain he bettereth himself, he doth not profit the fountain: If a man see any comfortable objects by the Sun light, he refresheth himself, he doth not advantage the Sun: So it is here; If thou turn to God, God is not made more happy by thee, he needeth not thy conversion, or thy Graces, but it is thy self onely that will reap the profit. Oh then let this move thee. What doth this at all avail God? If I turn to him, it is my good, not his that is interested herein? One would think that self-love would herein provoke thee, for will a man give all he hath for a Temporal life, and not much rather for Eternal?

5. Fifthly, *Therefore turn to God, because he is your God.* God is the God of a people two wayes, internally when he changeth their hearts, and indeed bestoweth all spirituall priviledges upon them; & thus he is a God onely to those that have true grace; that are the Children of the promise, and according to the spirit: but then he is a God externally to all such who outwardly own him, and call upon him: A God by externall Covenant and acceptation; and in this sense he is the God even of those that are the Children of *Abraham*, according to the flesh only. Now the scripture makes this externall relation to be a ground why we should turn from our sins, *Hosea* 12. 6. *Therefore turn thou to thy God*; to thy God, the propriety is a ground of Conversion; and certainly the motives are very attractive which are drawn from this: You all by your Baptisme have received God as your God; to be no more the Devils, or sins, or the worlds: if therefore thou hast Apostatized, and broken this Covenant, How necessary is it to return?

For 1. *By external Covenant, thou tookest God to be the Husband of thy soul.* The Scripture delights to expresse it, by betrothing, and marrying the soul to God, *Hosea* 2. 19. *Thou wast to leave Father, and Mother, and all Lovers, and to cleave to him only*. Now by thy sins thou hast turned from this Husband, and hast let thy heart upon other Lovers. Thus the Scripture doth not only call Idolatry Adultery, & going after other husbands, but all inordinate love of the World, or any thing therein, *James* 4. 5, *Ye Adulterers, and Adulteresses, know ye not the friendship of the world, is enmity with God?* Here all kinde of immoderate, and excessive affections to any Creature, is Adultery: so then whensoever thou art turned from God to any sin, thou hast run from thy Lawfull Husband; thou hast forsaken the true object of thy Love: is it not then all the reason in the World to take up the Churches resolution, *Hosea* 2. 7. *I will go and return to my first Husband, for then it was better with me then now:* say then, my soul hath been playing the harlot all the while it hath forsaken God; it was God, and not these that my soul promised to cleave unto.

2. *As an Husband*, so in the next place, *a Father also thou tookest him to be, and by this means thou art commanded to call him Father:* But if thou like a Prodigal hast left thy Father, and spent thy substance in the service of the Devil, With what face canst thou call him Father? Think of it seriously, you who live in grosse and palpaple sins: Is God the Father of such wicked sinners? Have they the Characters of sons, and not rather of enemies, who thus disobey him? remember then that thou hast forsaken thy Father, and by thy sins hast turned from him. Is it not time then with the Prodigall to say, *I will arise and go to my father, and acknowledge that I have sinned against him?*

And Lastly, *Then was he taken for a Lord and Master, for a King to rule and reign over thee.* Thy Baptism was a giving of thy self wholly up to Gods government to walk according to his Laws; now since that, How perfidiously hast thou violated thy Oath? Thou hast not been a servant to him, but to the Devil, Gods great enemy. It is usuall with Divines to say, Baptisme is *Sacramentum militiæ*, a Military Oath; because every Christian, being called to a spirituall warfare, doth there swear fidelity to Jesus Christ, as the Captain of his salvation. Now every wicked man is *Proditor militiæ*, a flyer from his Colours, and runs into the enemies Camp. Consider then what Rebellion and Treason against God is in every sin, after thy Baptism-ingagements; thou art a runnagate servant from thy Master. Now if so, is it not requisite that thou shouldest turn back to him. Every sinner is not only an Apostate, and Covenant breaker in *Adam* our first Parent, but a second time a revolter, and Covenant breaker also, by not living according to that stipulation in Baptism. Oh then it is high time for men to awaken out of this wretched estate. Go to the true husband of thy soul, return to thy Father, and true Lord and Master again.

6. Sixthly, *Therefore turn to God from sin, because sin is a state of thraldome*, and

and slavery, and our conversion unto God, puts us in a state of freedome and liberty. Of whom a man is overcome, that is he a servant to, saith the Apostle, 2 *Pet.* 2. 19. Now then, thou being daily Mastered by such lusts, daily overcome by such sins, thou art made a Slave and Vassal: And if liberty be *Bonum inestimabile*, a good that cannot be prized, yea, as the Rabbins say, If the heavens were Parchment, and the sea Ink, it could not sufficiently contain the praises of Liberty; How much rather is this true of spiritual Liberty, when the Son of God hath indeed made us free? Why then canst thou endure to ly in the Dungeon of sin, to be kept prisoner and captive in the Devils snares? And if thou sayest, I find no thraldome, I feel no misery or bondage in serving sin: It may be so, but therefore thy misery is far the greater: A man may desperately be sick, and yet not feel he is so: And so mayest thou be kept fast in the chains of sin, & yet feel no burthen at all. But thou art to believe the word of God against thy own sense and feeling, that makes it such a captivity and slavery. Oh therefore pray to have this captivity turned: Why do I live in a Dungeon, when God hath glorious mansion places? Why do I feed on husks, when God hath such dainties for a true convert? Leave off this drudgery to sin: The Devil is an ill master; fils thee with much trouble here, and eternal torment hereafter.

Seventhly, *Turn unto God, because he will then turn unto thee, for so he promiseth.* Do thou turn with an holy change, and he will with a gracious change. Thou hadst thy back on God, and God turned the back upon thee. Thou wast an enemy to God, and God was an enemy to thee: But who can stand under his enmity? Who can endure his wrath? But upon the souls turning to God, what an happy change and turn is made in all Gods dispensations? The Creatures are now turned when he is turned; for they groaned under him as under a burthen. The Angels are now turned to him when he is turned; for they are reconciled, and take him for a fellow servant. The Scripture that is turned also; for whereas before every page did speak terror, & breathing forth anger, now it breathes onely comfort and consolation to such. The providence of God is now turned; for whereas before every thing was a Curse, and wrought to thy Damnation, now every thing worketh to thy good, and furthers thy salvation, yea, now God is turned, (to speak after the manner of men though the change is properly in us, not in him) for he that was an enemy, that was angry, that accounted all thy prayers abhominations, that asked thee, What thou hadst to do to take his Name in thy mouth: Now he beomes a gracious Father, answereth prayers, and welcometh thee into his presence. Thus you see how happy a thing it is to turn to God, for then every thing in Heaven and Earth, becomes also turned for thy good.

Eighthly, *Turn unto Christ, for he is the true and proper rest for the soul.* You heard conversion was a motion, and all motion is at last for some rest: Now all the while thy heart moveth after any sin, or Creature, as if happiness were to be found there, thou art carried out in restless motions, thou turnest to one thing, and then to another, and in all there is vanity. Turn then to that God, which if once tasted of, thy soul will thirst no more, thou wilt be at thy journeyend, thou wilt desire to have nothing else. Thus *David*, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and whom in earth but thee?* When his soul was turned to God, he was like the Dove returned to the Ark: He was like an house on the rock. Whereas every wicked man is like a man in a burning feaver, or in exquisite pains and torments of body: he turneth on this side, and turneth on that side, and can get no rest or ease. Thus it is here; the wicked man turneth from one lust to another, from one sin to another, but can have no ease in all. If therefore thy soul be wise, thou wilt think on these things: Thy actions are a way, as the Scripture often calls them, and so they will lead to some end: if they be the way of sin, they lead to death and damnation: why dost thou not think of turning to God? for in any thing that is not God,

there

there cannot be full content and satisfaction in the heart: *Fecisti (Domine) cor nostrum, ut Augustin*, O Lord thou madest our heart, and it is restlesse till it come to thee again: Even as the waters that come from the sea, never cease running till they are at last emptied into that ocean whence they came. *Come unto me ye that labour, and you shall finde rest to your souls*, saith Christ: Think not then to say, *It is good for us to abide still in our lusts, it is better than if we turn unto God*; for in this thou speakest as one who never knew God, or his goodnesse.

Ninthly, *Set before thy eyes those Converts who are recorded in the Scripture, and see the joy and happinesse of their condition, and then do thou write after their copy. Manasses* a bloudy sinner, that did not only sin himself, but caused many others to sin, yet when he repents and turneth to God, God receiveth him, and his iniquities are forgiven as if they had never been. Oh blessed change! So *Paul* he had gone farre in bitter opposing, and persecuting the wayes of Christ, though in ignorance, but when converted, Oh how doth his heart burn with all thankfulnesse and praise to God? What unspeakable joy doth he finde in his heart to think he is what he was not once? If thou hadst never heard of any that turned from their sinnes to God, or if they did, that they have repented that ever they repented, they were sorry that they turned from their sinnes; it was better with them when they served their lusts, than when they served God. Then thou mightest have some plea. But when thou readest of the exceeding joy and wonderfull blessednesse and peace of Conscience they have had, who have been thus converted from their evill wayes, What cords of sinne can be so strong as to hold thee any longer? Oh say then, as I have sinned like a *Manasses*, like a *Mary Magdalen*, so I will turn to God with mourning and humiliation as they did.

Tenthly, *Turn unto God from the way thou walkest in, because it is a way of death and damnation.* We may truely say, Lyons are in the way, even those roaring Lyons that seek to destroy, And wilt not thou turn out of it? What passenger doth not take it for a great kindenesse, if travelling out of his way to be informed he is going a clean contrary way? and besides it is a dangerous way, many Robberies and Murthers use to be committed in that way, Will not he with much joy thank you, and speedily turn out of it? This is your case, who live in grosse and prophane courses: Thou art going the clean contrary way to heaven, men go not to heaven through such miery paths; and besides, there is Hell and damnation, and all the curses of God in the way, Why then should you not say, Blessed be God, and blessed be those watchmen that have given me this warning. Consider then, these are not wayes to live in, to dye in: The life that I live is not a life to have any comfort, any hope in. Oh therefore return unto God.

Eleventhly, *Therefore turn from thy sinnes to God, because these are thy enemies, thy deadly Adversaries, they are sugred poyson and venome.* Thy sins do as *Jael* to *Sisera* bid thee come in, come in, and it provides pleasant sweetnesse for thee, and puts thee in a secure sleep, and then it kills thee. Now is it not the highest madnesse in the world for a man wilfully to stay under his enemies power that seeks his blood, that plots his death, and no friend can perswade him to come away? This is thy madnes, so many sinnes thou livest in, they are so many bloody enemies to thy soul. They are called lusts which warre against thy soul, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. And wilt thou love thy enemies rather than thy friend? shall not God, nor the minister, nor thy own Conscience perswade thee to get out of thy adversaries hand? Neither think sinne the lesse enemy, because it is sweet and pleasant, or profitable for the season; for it is an enemy under a friends habit, and that is most dangerous of all. It takes thee as *Joab* did *Abner* by the beard, as if he would imbrace, but giveth him a mortall wound under the fifth

rib.

rib. It comes and kiſſes thee, as *Judas* did Chriſt when he had plotted the betraying of him into his enemies hands. Therefore judge thus of thy luſts, and thou wilt ſpeedily eſcape from them.

Twelfthly, *Therefore turn unto God, becauſe the end of all Gods judgements and calamities which are brought upon thee, whether publick or private, are for this, to make thee turn from thy ſins.* When *Nineveh* is to be deſtroyed, ſhe muſt turn from her evil wayes, elſe no hope: That threatning was to prepare for Converſion. Thus the Prophet *Iſai.* and others, *Amos* 6. complain, *I ſmote you with ſickneſs*, and reckons up many ſeveral judgements, & in the enumeration of every one, ſtill concludes, *yet are ye not returned to me, ſaith God*: So that the end why God bringeth his ſore judgements, is, That every one in the Land ſhould turn unto God. Haſt thou any perſonal Calamaties, any Domeſtick Afflictions? The leſſon God would alſo teach thee by theſe rods, is to turn from thy iniquities to him: Yea, as the end of all Gods Works, ſo of his Word alſo, of all Preaching, and all Hearing, is Converſion unto God. 12.

Uſe, *Of Exhortation.* Refuſe not all theſe Motives, reject not theſe grounds of Converſion: Which of them hath not reaſon and ſtrength enough in it to bring thee to God? Art thou not ſure to ſpeed? Will not all ſorrow be turned into joy, when all wickedneſs is turned into godlineſs? Can you do better, be more happy by turning unto thy luſts which have a moments pleaſure, and an eternities torment? Why do you not with all humility and thankfulneſs bleſs God that calls you to turn to him? Why ſhould he not ſuffer the Devill and his ſtill to reign over thee, whom thou doſt ſo willingly ſerve? Conſider what joy there is in Heaven, when a wicked man is converted to God; What joy there is on earth to faithfull Miniſters, to godly Friends, when this Converſion is vouchſafed unto thee: Oh ſay then, though many Sermons have heretofore moved me, and made me almoſt to leave my ſins, yet this ſhall turn me quite from them: I will be tempted no longer; I will no more conſult with fleſh and blood, and God grant you may go home with another ſpirit upon you; God grant that you might find the World like fire burning in your bowels, that it may be ſaid of every one of you as the Father of his Prodigal Son, He was loſt, but now he is found; He was dead, but now he is alive.

SERM. LXX.

Anſwering ſome Prejudices and Cavils of ungodly men, againſt Converſion, or turning unto God.

EZEK. 33. 11.

Turn ye, turn ye, Why will ye dye, O Houſe of Iſrael?

THis ſubject of Converſion, is like *Ezekiels* waters, that riſe higher and higher; therefore marvel not if we continue long about it, for the matter will ſtill be new, though it be the ſame Text. The laſt day our endeavour was, to uſe all thoſe forcible Reaſons, that might perſwade you to turn from your ſins to God; although indeed the very naming of it, doth carry ſo much light and truth with it, that it argueth incredible ſtupidity & obſtinacy in all thoſe, who yet wilfully continue in their iniquities: That therefore every mountain may be made level, and every valley raiſed, to make a prepared way for Chriſt, I ſhall anſwer thoſe Objections, or Prejudices, or Cavils, which are as a great gulf between them and Converſion. The Objections that ariſe from a carnal vain heart, I will call *The mountains that muſt be made low*; the Objections from a diſcouraged or dejected heart, that doubteth of its acceptance with God, if it doth return, or imagineth ſtrange impoſſibilities for its own particular; this I call *The valley that muſt be exalted*: And firſt, let us endeavour to prevail with the carnal man, to have ſo much faith, as to throw this mountain into the ſea. That Objection which I ſhall begin with, is this:

1. Carnal Objections againſt converſion.

To turn unto God, is to leave all thoſe pleaſures, that delight and carnal mirth, I have had in my ſinful ways: If ſo be I were to be a Cloiſtered Monk or a ſolitary Hermit; if I were perſecuted, flying into Caves & Dens, that it would deprive me of all my pleaſure, then ſuch contemplations, & holy meditations might be imbraced; but for me, that find ſuch pleaſure, ſuch jollity in my wicked ways, to turn to God with mourning and humiliation, is to bid me be no more *Naomi*, but *Marah*: Thus the voluptuous and the unclean man, the drunkard, the glutton, the earthly and covetous man; yea, all who find iniquity like honey in their mouth; theſe all ſpeak like the Fig-tree and Olive-tree in *Judges*, *Shall I leave my fatneſs, and my ſweetneſs, and forſake all my former pleaſures, to mourn and faſt, and reform, and to live a ſtrict life of mortification?* Thus every man is drawn aſide by pleaſure. To take you off in this reſpect:

Anſw. 1. Firſt conſider, *That the Scriptures judgement about ſins, is wholly contradictory to thine*: The word of God acknowledgeth no pleaſure, no deſirableneſs in ſin; but the clean contrary, Gall and Wormwood, and Bitterneſs, and Death, Wrath, and Terror, and Curſes, and Torments: How then comeſt thou to ſpeak of pleaſure and delight in ſin, when Gods word knoweth no ſuch thing? Now the Scripture is the wiſdom of an All-knowing God, and we are to believe that, more than our ſenſe and apprehenſion: We ſee diſeaſes do ſo infect the palate, that it many times judgeth bitter ſweet, and ſweet bitter; but the nature of things is not changed becauſe the palate is changed; and thus it is here

here, by reaſon of that corrupt frame of heart in thee, thou judgeſt ſin pleaſant; no Ordinances, no godly objects have any ſavour or delight in them: but theſe do greatly affect thee; know, all this is a diſeaſe, a ſickneſs upon thy heart, as ſome diſeaſes make the ſick parties eat black coals, and ſuch loathſome trash: This is a diſeaſe. The word of God, which onely revealeth true wiſedom, ſpeaketh otherwiſe: Oh then! call no more thy luſts ſweet, thy ſins pleaſant, its a diſeaſe on thee makes thee think ſo, if thy palate and taſte were ſpiritual, thou wouldſt with diſlike, reject every temptation of ſin, as Chriſt did the vinegar they gave him to drink. *Paul* told *Elymas*, *He was in the ſtate of gall and bitterneſs*, Acts 8. 23. *Elymas* did not think ſo, nor feel ſo: And thus is every wicked man, in a condition of gall and miſery; if his heart were truly qualified, he would cry out of the bitterneſs of thoſe ſins, which he now ſaith are ſweet: Judge then righteous judgement about thy iniquities, and thou wilt quickly forſake them.

Secondly, *Grant thy ſins have pleaſure and delight in them, yet they are pleaſant onely to the brutiſh and ſenſual part of a man; the eyes, the ears, the body, the imagination, theſe for the moſt part are pleaſed in the actings of ſin*: Now what an unworthy and irrational thing is it for thee to purſue thoſe pleaſures, which are common to thee with beaſts? Sin haply may bring bodily pleaſures, bodily delight; but how low ſhould theſe things be to thee that haſt a ſoul, whoſe true good and happineſs lies in godly actions, and enjoying of God? Did not the rich man in the Goſpel, ſhew himſelf like a beaſt, when ſpeaking of his barns full, he ſaith, *Soul, take thy eaſe, for thou haſt much good laid up for thee*, Luke 12. 19. Soul! O brutiſh expreſſion, what were theſe good things to his Soul? He might have ſaid, Body, take thy eaſe, but Soul he could not: when therefore the pleaſures of ſin, have painted themſelves, like *Jezebel*, to entice and deceive thee, reject them with diſdain: Theſe are not pleaſures for an immaterial, immortal ſoul; theſe are not a proper delight, for the chief and moſt noble part of me; if I were onely a body, and not a ſoul; then there might be greater reaſon to admit them. 2.

Thirdly, Grant further, that ſin hath pleaſure with it, *yet its ſuch a pleaſure, that cauſeth death, a pleaſure that brings damnation with it*; like ſome deadly and mortal herbs, that they ſay, will put a man into laughing till he dieth: Pleaſant delightfull things, do ſooner cauſe diſeaſes, than bitter: Much honey quickly turneth into much choler; ſo that ſins imbracement of thee, is like that of the Ivie, which ſecretly devoureth the thing it cleaveth to. Conſider what the Wiſeman that had got the true experience of all things, affirmeth, *I ſaid of laughter, it was madneſs*, Eccleſ. 2. 2. and, *It is better to go to the houſe of mourning, than of mirth*, Eccleſ. 7. 2. Do not then like thy ſins the better, becauſe ſweet and delightful. Poyſon that kills preſently, may be made ſweet; and ſo thoſe ſweet luſts, and thoſe ſweet ſports of ſin, convey death and hell in their pleaſure. 3.

Fourthly, Let it be ſtill granted, that ſin hath pleaſure in it, *yet it is but for a moment, it is but like the blazing of ſome crackling thorns in the fire*: That which the Scripture ſpeaks about a mans vanity of life, its but a Vapor, a Shadow, a Bubble, is true of all the pleaſures of ſin: they paſs away in the enjoying of them: The godly comfort themſelves in this, *That theſe preſent afflictions are but light and momentany, in reſpect of that eternal weight and glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 7. and the contrary a wicked man may ſay, That theſe preſent momentany pleaſures, are nothing to that eternal weight of torment: Thus the grace of *Moſes* is commended, *That he choſe rather to endure the reproaches of Chriſt, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*, Heb. 11. They are but pleaſures for a ſeaſon; O then! when thou art but a mortal ſinner, and thy joy a mortal joy, all is fading; why then are thou ſo importunate after theſe ſhadows? 4.

Fifthly, *Although ſins may have ſweetneſs for the preſent, yet they have a torment and a ſting afterwards*. A man that in his hot blood hath got a dangerous 5.

worn it, he feels it not presently; but when he is cold, then he begins to be sensible of it. And thus it is here, a man in the hot and violent pursuit of lusts, feels nothing, apprehends nothing; but when his Conscience is once awakened and terrified, then he crieth out, O the wounds, the sting, the blows that sin giveth him. Thus *Solomon*, speaking against drunkenness, not to be enticed with the occasions of it, he addeth his reason, *Look not upon the wine, while it moveth it self in the cup, for at last it biteth like a Serpent, and stingeth like an Adder*, Prov. 23. 32. Little doth the drunkard think, he had as good swallow down so many live Adders, or stinging Serpents. The Apostle tells us, *That sin hath a sting*, 1 Cor. 15. How then is it, that thou perceivest the honey, but not the sting of it? but it is no wonder, for this is at last: At last it biteth like an Adder, at the time of death, at the time of fears and grievous judgements, then it puts forth those sharp and poysonous stings. It was *Aristotle*'s advice, we should look upon pleasures going and not coming, they leave horror and terror behind them: Commune therefore with your own hearts, sit down and consider, This sweetness will be turned into gall; this is the Devils subtilty, to present the pleasure, but not the torment of a sin; see what a sting it made in *Cain*'s conscience, what a sting in *Jude*'s, and it will be such a scorpion in thy side one time or other.

6. Sixthly, Thou wilt not turn to God, because of the pleasure in sin? *Oh! but what pleasures and joy dost thou indeed deny thy self, by not turning to him*: If husks and dross hath pleasure, how much hath true repentance, and the exercise of the graces of Gods spirit, which is the true manna? If a wilderness be such a delight? what may *Canaan* be? If these drossie and filthy lusts do affect thee, then how may glorious objects move thee, if thy heart were spiritual? *At thy right hand* (saith *David*) *are rivers of pleasures for evermore*, Psal. 16. 11. and, *We believe with joy unspeakable and full of glory*, saith *Peter*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. Therefore if pleasure and sweetness do move thee, *Oh taste and see how good God is, and all the ways of godliness*. The pleasures of the world are like muddy puddling waters; but these are pure streams: Thou wilt find one hours praying, better than a thousand of prophane fudlings; one hours enjoyment of Christ as thy husband, by faith, than all the wanton dalliances and unchast imbracements of unlawfull objects. Oh then! thou art an enemy to thy true joy, to thy true peace, as long as thou doest not turn to God.

7. Seventhly, *Call not that pleasure, which when thy soul is powerfully wrought upon by Gods grace, will be truly bitter and miserable to thee*: Look upon all the true converts unto God, how have they been affected with sin: Did not *Mary Magdalene* with anguish of heart, cause flood-gates of sorrow to be opened? Did not *David* upon his after-conversion to God, being turned aside by Murther and Adultery, lie roaring through anguish of spirit? *What profit*, saith the Apostle, *have you of those things whereof you are now ashamed*, Rom. 6. 21. And so here, What pleasure and sweetness is there in that which you now find so bitter? And if thou hast not such a merciful time here to find it bitter, thou wilt have a terrible and just time to find it so in hell: What? Do the damned souls feel any pleasure? Is there so much as one drop of honey, in all the gall they are to drink? If not, where is thy wisedom and judgement, that thou doest not throw away thy sin as so much hemlock, and imbrace godliness in the room thereof, which brings its well-come with it, even much tranquility and quietness of conscience.

Thus we have unmasked this Objection, and made that appear to be a Serpent which was taken for so pleasant a fish, if we may allude to our Saviours expression.

2. The profit of sin. *The next obstruction in the way, which doth commonly keep men from turning to God, is the profit and great advantage they find in those sins they live in*: If they be sins of Injustice, Violence, Oppression, any unlawfull way of gain; Oh it is hard

hard then, not to cry out, *Great is Diana*: The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome, that thought gain was godlineſs, 1 *Tim.*6.5. not godlineſs gain, as it is indeed great gain: Thus ambitious men, covetous men, thoſe that are immoderately affected to any thing they care not what laws they break, what violation they offer to Gods Commands, ſo that they may be rich, and great, and honoured in this world, that is all they look at; ſo that a too attentive eye to worldly profit, is that many times which keeps from turning to God.

This is alſo eaſily anſwered, if a man go into Gods Sanctuary, or plough with his Heifer. For

First, *If there be profit in thy ſinful ways, it is about worldly fading things, which will leave thee at laſt, as Judas his thirty pieces did, in a tormenting hell*: Our Saviour tells us, *That if a man ſhould get the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul, it will not avail him*, Mat 16.26. whereas that is indeed profit, which is immortal, which will continue for ever, which is profit in life time, and profit in death time, which will be profit when thy body is buried, & rotting in the grave: Thou then that getteſt profit, and this earthly profit comes upon thee daily, ſtill remember thy grave will be a period to it: There is a ſudden ſtorm ariſing, that will make all this ſuffer ſhipwrack, and thou muſt ſwim naked, as it were, to Gods Tribunal, to be judged there. *Anſw.* 1.

Secondly, *Never call ſin profitable, for to that are all the curſes of God threatned*, How then can that be profitable to thee, which makes a man curſe at home, and curſed abroad, curſed in all his ſtore and abundance? Oh doe not deceive thy ſelf, it is not wealth, but Gods wrath thou art treaſuring up every day: Indeed godlineſs is profitable for all things, as the Scripture ſaith, and hath the promiſe of this world, and the world to come; but wickedneſs is profitable for nothing, but hath the curſes of this world, and the world to come: Do not then account of any increaſe by ſin, God hath threatned to blaſt it, it will melt away like the dew, it will turn to gravel in the belly; all theſe profitable morſels God will make thee vomit up. Hence the Scripture doth ſo commend a little with Gods favour and obtained in Gods way, than all treaſures with iniquity, call not then that profitable, which is either the moth to eat thee ſecretly, or the fire to deſtroy thee violently. 2. Pſal. 37.

Thirdly, *That is onely profitable, which is profitable to the greateſt good that we ſtand in need of, and to divert the greateſt evil that can befal us*: Now no ſins are profitable to that, but the clean contrary for the greateſt good that we are capable of, is the favour of God, the light of his countenance: This *David* doth ſo often pray for in his ſtraights, as being the onely Sun to diſpel that dark night which was upon him; and on the contrary, no evil, no not of miſery, torment, and pain, is like that of Gods anger and fury againſt ſin. Now take all the profit and advantages thou haſt got in a ſinful way, what do theſe help, for the obtaining of the one, or repelling of the other? Oh take *Cain* and *Judas* burning and ſcalding in the guilt of ſin, can they buy Gods favour? can they purchaſe the light of his countenance? Doth not the Scripture make the ruſt of their money, and the timber in the wall, to cry out, and witneſs againſt the wicked man? Then be aſhamed ever to pretend this any more, that the wicked ways thou liveſt in, are in ſo many reſpects hopefull to thee, for that cannot be, it deſtroyeth the main, and is contrary to the true happineſs. 3. James 5 3.

Fourthly, *That cannot be called profitable, which as it cannot help to the good we cannot want, ſo neither at the time, when we are in the greateſt extremity. Riches will not avail in the day of wrath.* *Judas* had the bitter experience of this, if therefore thou couldſt finde any true profit in the way of ſin, it might then be diſcovered when at the time of death, or at the time of fearful and heavy judgements, thou art in the greateſt extremity: But (Alas!) how truly mayeſt thou threw that, Ye are miſerable comforters all, who doth not then cry out of his ſins? who doth not then bewail the time, and his folly, that ever he 4.

entertained ſuch a bitter-ſweet as ſin is: Take up then at laſt principles of wiſdom, lay up treaſure for an evil day, provide againſt a ſad ſtorm ariſe, and what will that be? The hour of death, the hour of Gods judgements: Oh! then to have an Ark to run into, then to have a mark upon thee, that the deſtroying Angel may not conſume thee, is a great mercy: But this will never be obtained in a ſinful way; ſo that if thou turn to God, and art conſtant in the daily exerciſe of grace, then thou haſt the only Cordial, the onely Oyl to be poured in thy wounded ſoul.

5. Fifthly, *Never pretend profit, for all the while thou doeſt not turn to God, thou art in every thing a looſer:* Who can enumerate all thy loſſes which come through ſin. There is the loſs of all true joy and peace of conſcience; there is the loſs of eternity in happineſs, of heaven, and all the glory therein, which is more than can enter into the heart of man to conceive; there is loſſe of thy immortal ſoul, which is more worth than all the world; and laſtly, there is the loſs of God, the fountain of all good and happineſs, *Bonum in quo omnia bona*, That Ocean of good, in which all the ſeveral ſtreams of godlineſs empty themſelves: Oh then that ever thou ſhouldſt be ſo ſeduced, as to ſay, Its better to live in my ſins as I do, then to turn unto God! for what? is it better to have that preſent profit, than Heaven, Happineſs, and God to all eternity? Oh ſay rather! Theſe my ſins will never make ſatisfaction for the loſs I incur by them; theſe my corruptions will never get me as much, as I loſe through them: I keep coals and dung, and part with gold and precious pearls. Its the great ignorance and pravity of our corrupt natures, that knoweth not how to put a right prize and eſteem upon things.

6. Sixthly, If thy profit keep thee from turning to God, and thou thinkeſt it a great part of wiſedom and prudence to continue in this ſaving way, as thou calleſt it: *Then how doth this condemn all the holy Martyrs and Confeſſors for the faith of Chriſt, of the greateſt folly and madneſs that ever was;* They may then lay aſide thoſe Robes of Glory they are adorned with; For what did not they loſe? their wealth, their riches, their pleaſures, their lives to follow God; they thought turning to Chriſt more profit, than turning to any carnal ſafe way in the world. Did not the Martyrs take the ſpoiling of their goods joyfully? Did not they as willingly lay down their bodies at the ſtake, as men do their cloathes to ſleep? Certainly ſin and the world did then tempt them to turn out of Gods way, but they would go forward; and thereby our Saviour had given them an excellent Antidote, *He that will ſave his life, ſhall loſe it; and he that will loſe it, ſhall ſave it.*

5. And thus we have caſt his mountain down, that exalted it ſelf againſt our converſion.

The cuſtom and habit they have in ſin, which ſeems unpoſſible to overcome. *Anſw.*

The third Cavil is, *The cuſtom and habit they have in ſin*: That now they ſay, It is vain to attempt this work, had they in their yonger years ſet themſelves upon ſuch courſes, there might have been hope; but now, none can make this crooked thing ſtraight, they are too far gone, ever to turn again. To remove this ſtone: Conſider,

1. Firſt, *That God is ready to ſtretch forth his hand to thee, who art willing to come out of this ſea of corruption:* This very thought or deſire at laſt to turn to him, cometh from God: Thou art as unable of thy ſelf, to have a good thought of turning to God, as to turn unto God. The women could not remove the ſtone from our Saviours Sepulchre, and there comes an angel, who did it: Thou canſt not remove or ſtir thy heart, but God can: And

2. Therefore in the ſecond and laſt place (becauſe this may be more ſpoken to, when we come to remove the diſcouraging Objections that are in ſome mens hearts,) Although to change this cuſtom of ſin, and to make the black more white, be impoſſible to fleſh and blood, *yet with God all things are poſſible*; and therefore ſay, Though the work be too hard for me, yet it is not to God. *Lazarus* was many days dead in the grave, yet Chriſt raiſed him to life,

as well as those that were lately dead. Consider how Autoratively God speaks, *I will take away an heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh*, I will do it, who can hinder? I will not depend upon the consent and co-operation of Free-will. Can God do wonderfull things, and miraculous works upon the whole Creation, upon mens bodies, and cannot he also upon their souls? Is not he the Father of Spirits, as well as the God of all flesh? Therefore be thou awakened and look up to heaven, who changeth the natures of things? who cureth diseases that have been from the very birth? Ezek. 32.

Use. Use of Admonition to all those who are bound in any of these Cords. Arise, like *Sampson*, and break them in pieces: speak not of delight and pleasure when thou leavest the ways of God; speak not of profit when thou lostest God and Heaven. Oh, no man is in the state of bitterness if thou art not, none are undone men if thou art not. Why should not reason perswade you? Why should not Scripture counsell you? Suppose Wisdome (as *Solomon* describeth it) calling aloud to you; Why do ye passe by O ye simple and foolish? Come in to me, I have my Feast provided, my glory prepared: Why shall not this prevail with you? What, shall lusts and sin stand at the door and say, Come in, turn in to me; and you readily go in, though her paths lead to the gates of death; and do ye refuse Gods Calling? Will you not be justly condemned at that great day? Shall not heaven and earth bear witness against you? Oh turn from sin now, for in hell and torments; there is no turning from them. Prov. 6.

SERM. LXXI.

That ungodly Friends and Relations are great Hinderances of ones Conversion, with some helps or Directions to those that are thereby kept in their Sinnes.

EZEK. 33. 11.

Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye dye, O house of Israel?

The next Mountain to be made low, that so way may be made for our turning to God, is *The Temptation of evil and wicked companions*. Some have desires and resolutions to come to God, and leave their sins; but then they have carnal friends, and prophane neighbours, they stop them in the way, or else they live in wicked families, in ungodly places, where no fear of God is: and these precisely like *Herod*, kill all the young Motions and Desires that may be in any mans heart, lest their Kingdome and glory go down. So that we may say, *Bad and ungodly companions are that deep ditch out of which few do recover*. But if thou applyest thy self to the Throne of Grace, and importune for divine strength, thou wilt finde it not only possible but easie to break these bonds and cords of sin. Therefore to take off this excuse, let us consider this temptation of evil company and acquaintance.

First,

Ungodly friends great impediments in the way to heaven.

First, It cannot be denyed, that ungodly friends, especially if in neer relations, as Father, Mother, Husband, Wife, &c. are wonderfull impediments in the way to heaven. Many had in all probability, been turned to God, if they had had better parents, better kindred, lived in better families, where Piety and Religion might be more incouraged, and a good example given thereto. It was a great advantage to *Timothy*, That he had a Mother and a Grand-mother, both godly, and so from a youth he was acquainted with the Scriptures, 2 *Tim.* 1.5. And it is as heavy a judgement, where Children can see nothing but wickedness and impiety in those who are their superiors, or to live among men that are prophane enemies to godliness; Now the reasons why such men so yoked with unrighteousness do hardly throw it off, are,

1. Why men yoked with unrighteousness by wicked relations or acquaintance, do very rarely become godly.

First, *From the nature of a man*, who is a sociable Creature. Its a natural property to joyn in society with those amongst whom he liveth, & by that means doth easily partake of their sins. Therefore one great means of Conversion, is to set our selves apart from company, *To commune with our own hearts & be still.* Ps. 4. that upon this retirement we may come to a right and sound judgement in all things, Prov. 18.1. *Through desire a man having separated himself intermeddleth with all wisedome.* Man therefore being a sociable creature, it's the greatest part of prudence & wisedome that can be to make choise of his company, to see who they are that he acquaints with, for he will quickly be coloured, and receive the impression that others put upon him, *Aristotle* said, *That he who lived alone, was either a God or a Devil*, because retiredness would much improve a man, either in wickedness or piety; but that holdeth not in every respect; for many times wickedness is increased and drawn out by companying with others.

2. Secondly, Because evill acquaintance putteth so great a demur to Conversion, *Therefore the Scripture is so diligent, in giving many exhortations to avoid all the Society of wicked men.* If any man be a Drunkard, an Adulterer, a riotous person, no not to eat with such an one, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11 Not to eat, that is, to have no familiar, voluntary & unnecessary acquaintance with him, that may encourage him and imbolden him in his sin: so, If any walk disorderly, from such withdraw, that thereby the person offending may be ashamed, 2 *Thes* 3. 14. And *Solomon* the mirror of all wisedome, is very frequent in Precepts, concerning the adulterous woman; The young man must not come near her dwelling, he must passe on the other side of the street, keep off from such place, as places of the plague, & dangerous infections. So where unjust violent men are brought in, *Prov.* 1. entising the young man to cast in his lot with them, he is warned to have nothing to doe with them, he must avoid them, as the bird doth the snare that is laid for her. Hereupon the Psalmist begins his first Psalm with the blessedness of that man, *who doth not set nor walk in the company of the ungodly*, Ps. 1. 1.

3. Thirdly, *Therefore ill company is dangerous, because sin is of an infecting contagious nature; it quickly spreads through a family, through a parish, especially if any eminent in place and office give an example to wickedness.* The ground of that Church-censure Excommunication, is the contagion of other mens sins; *Purge out the old leaven*, that was in the incestuous person, 1 Cor. 5. 7. And why? because a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump: he that toucheth pich, cannot but be defiled with it. He that lieth in the dung-hil cannot but smel of it: so then thy delight with ungodly, and prophane men, cannot but in time make thee as black as they. Why should not men be as much afraid of being infected with sin, as with a contagious disease? but only we are carnal, fearing the evil of the body, which is death, but not the evil of the soul, which is sin and damnation. Oh then say, Why am I such an enemy to my soul? How can I ever turn to God as long as I live here, delight in such men? How can I ever go into *Canaan*, if I leave not this *Egypt*?

4. Fourthly, *He that is joyned in ungodly acquaintance, doth hardly turn to God, because there is not only evil got by them, but this is also a sure demonstration of that naughty and evil heart.* For it is the old rule, *simile simili gaudet*; similitude is

is a cause of love; and therefore if ye see a man delight in the society of that man who is prophane and wretched, that man is so too in his heart & disposition; for though many men will not outwardly be drunk or swear, yet if they love those that do so, it is plain their dispositions are against godliness as well as others: so that as *David* having a godly heart, did evidently demonstrate this by that expression, *His delight was in the Saints of the earth*, Psal. 16. 3. So it is a sure demonstration of a wicked man, though he may not do outward wickedness, yet if he keep company with those that do it. The Apostle makes it a sign we have passed from death to life, *If we love the brethren*, 1 Joh. 3. 14: and if we love those that live in the exercise of all evil, it is a sign we are still in the state of death; separate therefore thy self from that evil society, if thou wilt turn at any time to God.

Fifthly, *Therefore do evil companions so greatly hinder conversion, because they are daily hardening and encouraging one another in an evil way.* Thus they emboldned one another that said, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall dye:* and the Apostle alleadging this, saith, *Evil communications corrupt good manners*, 1 Cor. 15. 33. For as the godly are recorded in Scripture as so many live coals put together, enflaming one another with fire from heaven, thus those that feared God *spake often one to another*, saith Mal. 3. 15. and in *Esai*. 23. they are calling upon one another, *Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord, we will go also:* So the contrary is with wicked men, they put presumption and desperate boldness into one another; they harden one another: Where any hopeful seeds of good motions are rising up, they presently pull them up: What! you grow precise? What! you turn melancholy? What matter is it what Ministers preach? They must have something to say, thus they are able to blast all, and one wicked companion is able to doe more hurt, than many sermons good. 5.

Lastly, *Therefore are those, who are joyned in evil fellowship, hardly converted to God, because men are moved by examples, especially of a multitude*, Where corruption is universal, there not to be carried down the stream, argueth life of grace: Examples affect more than precepts, because they are visible and obvious to the eye, Thus *Peter* is said *to compel some men to Judaize, by his example meerly*, Gal. 2. 31. especially examples are more potent and violent, when they are general: Therefore you have a speciall command in this case, *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil*, Exod. 23. 1. In corrupt ages, where sin like a deluge doth overflow, then to have some men apply themselves to God, is a great wonder. Thus it is spoken as a great matter after that all flesh had corrupted his ways, *Then began men to call upon the Lord*, Gen 4. 26. as some expound it; Then some men began to set up the pure worship of God. Well, though this be such a mountain in the way, yet several considerations may make thee easily climbe over it.

1 Directions and means how to get through, or cast off the impediment of wicked companions and relations.

First, *You have the example of some who have lived in prophane places, have been compassed about with all wickedness, yet these even out of hell have cryed unto God, and drawn over unto him.* Thus *Hezekiah* was born of a wicked Father, King *Ahaz*, and all the family was likely very much corrupted, because he did after all the abominations of the heathens. Yet how wonderfully doth God bring a clean thing from an uncleane! Thus in *Nero's* Court, who was the monster of men, and no doubt but his family a monster of families, especially for cruelty & bloody persecution of the Church of God, yet the Scripture tells us, *there were a company of Godly men, even in Nero's Court*, Phil. 4. 22. Thus also *Nicodemus* a Pharisee, and a great man in the Pharisees counsels, yet he feareth God, & is not drawn aside by their examples. Do not thou therefore put it off, and say, if I lived somewhere else, if I had any to joyn with me, to take my part, I would then turn to God, but now I must do as those with whom I live, else there is no abiding for me: speak not thus, for the Scripture recordeth those that have broken through greater difficulties than thou art in, neither if thy heart were right, could this stop thee.

Secondly, *Lay this down for a rule, that it is not so much a friend, a father, a neighbour, as the devil in and by those that doth thus tempt thee to keep from God:* For 2.

ſuch is his ſubtilty to deſtroy thee, that he layeth all baits & uſeth the moſt likely inſtruments that may undo thee, as we ſee he did thus from the beginning: He doth not immediately ſet upon *Adam*, but upon Eve, & by her ſeduceth him. Oh, If *Adam* had perceived the Devil tempting him by her, How reſolutely would he have gainſaied her? *Rev.* 10. It is ſaid, *The Devil ſhould throw ſome of the Saints into priſon*, How ſo? The Devil would ſtir up the malice & venom of wicked men againſt them; eſpecially this Truth is manifeſted by our Saviour when *Peter* took him aſide, and diſſwaded him from the ſuffering which he was to undergo; ſee what entertainment our Saviour giveth him, *Get thee behinde me, Satan, for thou ſavoureſt not the things of God*, Mat. 16, 23. Oh thus ſhould thy zeal and anger work: It is not thy friend, thy father, thy husband, thy neighbour; but the Devil in all theſe, that ſeeks to deſtroy thy ſoul.

3. Thirdly, *Remember this, that Chriſt makes it a fundamental qualification in every one that would be his Diſciple, to hate Father, and Mother, and Brother, and Siſter, for his ſake*, Luke 14. 26. Be not then ſtartled at this: Oh my parents, my kindred, my friends would never endure me, ſhould I turn to God, and live a holy ſtrict life. Think of this Text; he that hates not the deareſt relations for Chriſts ſake, is not worthy of Chriſt. Therefore our Saviour calls for a man *to cut off his right hand, to pull out his right eye*, Mat. 5. 30. the deareſt things in the world, that may be an offence to him, and keep him from God; for as Chriſt ſaith, *it is better to go with one eye, and one hand to heaven, than both eyes and hands to hell.* Its better to go with the frowns and anger of thy deareſt friends to heaven, than with all their love to hell. Never then urge this, any more, I dare not for my friends, for my acquaintance, for thou canſt never be Chriſts Diſciple, if any thing be dearer to thee than Chriſt. We ſee Chriſt himſelf though a pattern of all holineſs, yet when his mother would have had him done ſomething when it was not Gods time, *Woman*, ſaith he *What have I to doe with thee?* John 2. not mother, but woman, and what have I to do with thee?

4. Fourthly, Whenſoever the Lord begins *to ſhake and trouble thy heart for ſin*, and thou art thinking of another life, to take another courſe, then it is thy ſpecial duty *not to ask counſel and advice with carnal and unregenerate friends*: alas they think thou art mad: now thou wilt be undone; they know not what ſuch troubles for ſin mean: Why then ſhouldſt thou diſcover thy diſeaſe to ſuch who are no Phyſitians? Take rather *Pauls* example, when God wrought wonderfully from heaven to convert him, *He obeyeth God immediately, and never conſulted with fleſh and blood*, Gal. 2. Thus do thou: Doth God by the Miniſtry, by Preaching, convince thee of thy ſinful waies, of becoming a new man, give up thy ſelf to this call immediately, do not conſult with fleſh and blood? But as *Eliab* when he threw his cloke upon *Eliſha*, and the ſpirit of God moved his heart, he preſently followeth *Eliah*, wil not go home to take leave of his friends, but immediately followeth him: ſo let it be with thee. And we ſee when ſome proffered voluntarily to follow Chriſt, onely they deſired to bid farewell to their friends, and one asked leave but to go and bury his dead Father, that our Saviour rejected them, *Mat.* 8. 21, 22. and would admit of none of theſe excuſes: ſo that theſe inſtances ſhould teach thee, when God by his Miniſters calls thee from thy ſins never to ask counſel at home, never to enquire what my kindred and acquaintance will ſay, but preſently follow God.

5. Fifthly, Doth the ſtriſe and variance thou ſhalt have with thy Natural friends and acquaintance move thee? Oh, *Conſider that Chriſt hath foretold this a long while ago*, and therefore be thou the more encouraged to endure ſuch aſſaults. *Mat.* 10. 31, 32, 30 35. Our Saviour there inſtructing his Diſciples how they ought to confeſſe him before all men, leaſt they ſhould be amazed to ſee the jarrs and contentions that will be becauſe of godlineſs: He tels them, I am come to ſet a man at variance againſt his Father, and the Daughter againſt the Mother, and a mans foes ſhall be they of his own houſhold: mark this Text, for it

it may ſeem very offenſive and harſh. Shall Chriſts Doctrine be a make-bate? Shall that ſet families all on a fire, and a contention? This ſeemeth to be little credit to his Doctrine. But it will be thus, not from the Nature of Chriſts Doctrine, for that is a Doctrine of peace with God, and peace with men: But wheresoever his truth is received in the practical power of it, ſuch is the violent oppoſition even of the dearest friends againſt it that are not godly, that it raiſeth up all their hatred and violence againſt it. Hence we read in Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, that ſometimes even children have been perſecutors of their Fathers: Let not then thy ſpirit ſink under this, That by thy turning to God, and condemning the wicked waies that the family liveth in where thou art, thou ſhalt make much contention, ſtir up an hornets neſt; for this is no more than Chriſt hath foretold. Conſidering the venemous, and malicious diſpoſitions men have naturally againſt God and his truth, it cannot be otherwiſe; onely let this teach thee wiſedom, and courage to prepare for a ſtorm.

Sixthly, *How many times do evil and wicked men, though never ſo great one with another, fall out in deadly enmity about worldly ſinfull matters?* For although theſe Swine and Bears do many times agree well among themſelves, eſpecially againſt godlineſs, which they look at as the common enemy, yet there is no true love among wicked men; they hang together as ropes of ſand, any matter of profit, luſt, or pride, will preſently make them rage at one another. Now what ſhouldſt thou care for the love and friendſhip of ſuch men, who can love no body but for ſelf-reſpects? The Heathens have excellently debated this, that there is no friendſhip among wicked men, but onely good men; for when profit or pleaſure is the knot that tieth them, that is eaſily broken; when wicked men agree, it is not peace but conſpiracy. Never then let that diſhearten thee: Oh if I ſecure my face for godlineſs, be once accounted in the number of thoſe that walk ſtrictly, all my neighbours will reproach me, every ones mouth will be open. Art thou ſo weak a creature to regard this? Their love is not worth the owning; no wicked man can love another, but for carnal ends; and therefore they are very hypocrites, and ſecret back-biters of one another, where it makes for their advantage: So that in this thou ſheweſt thy ſelf unworthy of Chriſt: There are many men that it is a glory to be ſpoken againſt by them; and it is a mans diſhonour to have their good word, yea, a man ſhould preſently ſay as the Heathen, *nunquid mali feci?* What evill have I done that ſuch a man commends me? 6.

Seventhly, Conſider this thou who art hindred by natural friends and carnal acquaintance, that if thou forſakeſt theſe to cleave to God, *Thou wilt never repent of thy loſs.* For Chriſt will be inſtead of a Father, Husband, or the moſt neceſſary friend that can be. Thou wilt find thou haſt made an happy exchange; for what friend could quiet thy conſcience, forgive thy ſin, ſupport thy ſpirit, fill thee with ſpiritual joy? Now Chriſt will do all theſe: Imbrace that promiſe, *for it is worthy of all acceptation*, Mat 10.29. *Every one that forſaketh Houſes, Siſters, Father, or Mother for my ſake, &c. ſhall receive an hundred fold in this life, and ſhall inherit everlaſting life.* Here will be a two fold ſatisfaction, thou wilt have in this life an hundred-fold comfort for that one comfort thou haſt forſaken, though indeed *Mark* addeth, *It will be with perſecution.* Oh then never think thou ſhalt be undone, thou ſhalt loſe all the favour and love of thy friends, for thou doeſt but part with a drop to have an ocean; and conſider that comfortable place alſo, Mat 12.50. *For whoſoever ſhall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the ſame is my brother, and ſiſter, and mother:* Suppoſe thy friends will never own thee more, never take thee for brother, or ſiſter more, yet ſee Chriſt will be theſe, thou wilt be in a more comfortable relation. 7.

Eighthly, *Conſider that all thy merry company will be ſo far from eaſing thy torment, that they will encreaſe it the more when thou comeſt indeed to be forſaken by God.* When thou lieſt a dying, ready to give a dreadful account to the great God, What will 8.

thy companions say? They will come and stand by the bed side, and take thee by the hand, remember we have been thus merry together, we have played the fit pranks; Oh miserable and wretched comforts! thou wilt cry out, What does all this avail me now I am a dying, and know not what will become of me? Oh I have no ease, no quietness, What shall I do? Oh I cannot abide to see you, I cannot endure to look on you, you bring all my wickedness to my mind. Thus it will be with thee, if God do but in the least manner awaken thy secure conscience.

Let the Use be, first of Admonition to you that are Parents, Masters, Friends, or Neighbours, take heed of checking and quenching any little spark of a good motion that God may work in your children and servants: It is an heavy sin to murther their bodies, but far greater to murther their souls, and yet thou doest this, when thou canst not abide to see in thy wife, child, or servant, any desire to become a new creature. Thou callest it Melancholy, madness, folly, and thou despisest it in thy heart. Oh know this is to act the Devils work in an high degree: As *Herod* sought to kill Christ as soon as he was born, so thou endeavourest spiritually to kill Christ in the heart of him who is almost converted. There is too much of this deviliſh wickedness in the world; men that had rather see their friends and neighbours any thing in the world, than professe godliness.

Use 2. Of comfort to those who will cleave to God, and follow Christ, though they have all the hatred of Friends, though Parents, Husbands make them have a weary and sad life, yet they love Christ more than all: Oh blessed art thou above others, thou art a kind of a Martyr; all the hardship and grief thou goest through for godliness, it is a Martyrdom: The Scripture giveth thee many encouragements in this way.

Use 3. Of Exhortation to all those who are intangled by evill company, by ungodly society. Oh come out of that *Egypt*, come from that *Babylon*; never expect to be Christs Disciple till thou leave that accursed fellowship. What is it to be affected at a Sermon, to be almost perswaded on the Sabbath day, and then presently after to fall into the company of those that hate & abhor piety. Oh hadst not thou better say to them, depart from me, I will know you no more, than have Christ say to thee, depart into everlasting fire, I know you not: And know godliness will help thee to excellent company, to excellent mirth: A good Conscience is an continual feast: Thou wilt enjoy God, Christ will dwell with thee. The innumerable company of Angells, and the spirits of just men made perfect, will be of the same fellowship with thee; Oh what an happy exchange wilt thou quickly find.

SERM.

SERM. LXXII.

Some Helps and Encouragements to those that are discouraged, because of the fruitlesness of their Resolutions to Repent, or the hainousness of their Sins.

EZEK. 33. 11.

Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye dye, O house of Israel?

WE have endeavoured to make plain those Mountains, that are in the way to our Conversion, and turning to God: Now it remaineth, that we exalt some Valleys, and remove those discouragements that are on mens spirits, while in the general they seem to desire and purpose to turn unto God. I acknowledge, these valleys are not so many as the mountains, discouragements and dejections, not so frequent as presumptions; more are fondly perswaded of the easiness to turn to God, than the difficulty; which is clearly evidenced, by the secure and negligent disposition of most, that though they hear never so much about this duty of turning to God, yet never consider or apply, never make any matter, whether they are turned unto God or not. Ile not be too long in the enumeration of the usual dejections in this kind; I shall instance in one or two, which in effect serve for the rest: And

I. Discouragements in some mens spirits, hindring them from turning unto God. That they often resolve, but find no power to turn.

First, There are some who say, *They have many purposes and desires to turn to God, they have frequently resolved to forsake their sins, but these they quickly perish again, and so they think it is in vain to try any more*: They do but as the man, that is rolling a great stone upon the hill, which presently returneth with the greater force: They are as a man striving and rowing hard against the stream, but immediately is forced as much backward, as ever he got forward: And I cannot but think, that this is a sad objection upon many mens hearts, who have their times of relenting, of much sorrow and trouble, and then take up high resolutions, They will never live, or be as they have been; in the mind they are in, all the temptations in the world shall never prevail over them any more. Now to help such out of their disconsolateness; Consider,

I. Helps.

First, *That it may be these purposes they have, are not hearty, real, and fully commanding the heart*: They are but a kind of wishes and desires, such as *Balaams*, *Oh that I might dy the death of the Righteous*: They are but faint wishing and woulding, as we say, and this will never do any good: They are such desires as the Sluggard is said to have, which yet doth scarce draw his hand out of his bosom to help himself: It is not as the phrase is, *To cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart*; as *Paul* said in another case, *I could wish to be made an Anathema, so thou couldest wish to be separated from thy lusts*, thou couldest desire so be a new convert; but these are such languishing motions, that they are like those living Creatures, ἐφήμερα, that live but for a day; there comes up a worm, that quickly

quickly conſumes theſe gourds. The deſires of a man in his converſion, are compared to hunger and thirſt, to panting & breathing, all which are alſo moſt violent and impatient motions of a man: Can a man be hungry, ready to be ſtarved, and ſit ſtill crying, O that I had food? No, it will break through ſtone walls. You ſee what the hungry Lepers did, 2 *Kings* 7. 3. deſperately ventured even into their enemies quarters, that they might be ſatisfied: And thus, if thy purpoſes and reſolutions were full and ſtrong, no luſt, no temptation could be ſo ſtrong as to hold thee any longer; but now they are half deſires, and faint wiſhes, and God hath made no promiſe to ſuch, that they ſhall be ſatisfied. *Auſtin* ſpeaks of himſelf before his converſion, how he had many deſires and reſolutions to leave his ſins, which made him pray to God, that God would give him grace to part with them, yet at that very time he was afraid (he ſaith) that God ſhould hear his prayers; he was afraid God ſhould do that for him, he deſired: And thus it may be with thee, thou haſt many affections and deſires to forſake thy ſins, frequent relentings, yet if it ſhould come to it indeed, that thou muſt be taken from them, it would be a trouble to thee; all which argueth, thou art not real, fully bent againſt them.

2. Secondly, *As theſe purpoſes are but weak and faint, ſo it may be they are ſlavish in thee, extorted onely from outward conſiderations of danger and puniſhment, in fear of death, and of publique judgements*: Now if ſo, its no wonder if theſe thorns do not bear grapes: This is often in the Scripture exemplified, *Ahab*, *Pharaoh*, the *Iſraelites*, while the ſtroke of Gods judgement was upon them, then they would turn to God: Thus the *Iſraelites* turned and turned very often, but they turned from God again, as often as they turned unto him: Now the ground of this miſcarriage was, becauſe theſe purpoſes were violently wrung from them; they dared not to do otherwiſe; and ſo when the cauſe was removed, the effect preſently ceaſed. Look then, what it is that is the riſe of thy reſolutions; thou reſolveſt and reſolveſt ſometimes, even with ſad and bitter tears, but thou art afterwards where thou wert before; Is not this that which marreth all? Theſe reſolutions never are but when thou art in ſome fears, in ſome terrours, and theſe violent things therefore will never hold long: They will hold as long as the principle of their violence holdeth; but when that ceaſeth, all thy purpoſes fall to the ground again. Never then wonder to ſee the *Iſraelites* commit thoſe idolatries, and that injuſtice, which ſometimes they cried out off, and confeſſed to God; for all this was ſqueezed from them, not willingly done by them: O then! if thou wouldeſt at laſt ſee a ſweet harmony, between thy reſolution and thy converſation, begin to mend thy purpoſes; let them not be reſolves out of fear, but out of love: O Lord (ſay) not onely in time of danger, but in the midſt of all mercies and comforts, my ſoul breathes after thee: It is not fear of Hell and Death makes me take up theſe concluſions, but love to thee and what is holy: Thou mayeſt be ſure this will hold, thou wilt be the ſame, if this move thee firſt. Thou wilt be no longer as the man that purgeth his ſhip, which leaketh, and water comes in at one place, as faſt as it is emptied at another; but thou haſt laid a good and ſure foundation to build upon.

3. Thirdly, *Thy purpoſes vaniſh away without execution, becauſe it may be they are onely ſudden and fleſhy, they continue but for a ſeaſon*: They come like a ſudden lightning, that makes an aſtoniſhment for the preſent, but immediately is gone: Thus *Balaams* deſires were upon a ſudden apprehenſion of Gods glorious providence to his Church. *Agrippa* was almoſt perſwaded to be a Chriſtian, for that time while *Paul* was preaching; ſo that thoſe purpoſes, which are not conſtant, nor rooted, will dy as ſoon as they begin to live. As our Saviour ſpeaks of a temporary faith, which doth immediatly ſpring up and immediately wither; ſo theſe reſolutions, they do preſently riſe up, while we are preaching, and while you are hearing, but then as ſoon as the duty is over, thy purpoſes are over: Therefore

Mat. 13.

Therefore as *David* prayed for the people, that offered so willingly, *God keep this always in their heart*, 1. Chron. 29. 18. so shouldst thou, O Lord, not at this time onely, but always make my spirit thus resolute, thus fixed against iniquity, let not these holy motions of thy good spirit dy within me. It is not the dying of godly resolutions to turn unto God, but the powerful retaining of them, and making use of them in time of need, that doth avail and help us: Why then art thou so disquieted within thee? the cause is plain, thou mayst hear clearly what is to be done: Let not those resolutions of thine, be as pilgrims and strangers, that lodge but for a night; let them rather be as fire upon the Altar, that never went out. As it is said of the wicked man, that he cannot sleep, till he hath accomplished his mischief; so do thou take no rest, till the godly purposes of thy soul be fulfilled.

Fourthly, Thou complainest that thou art driven from thy resolutions to turn unto God: *Thou resolve more in the grace and power of God*, not in thy own humane strength and confidence: This makes men fall again as often as they rise, they think to stand by their own power. Certainly, if in ordinary common things, we may not peremptorily resolve to do such and such things, but to expect his aid and providence, if God will; much more in spiritual duties; say then to all thy sins, which have so frequently conquered thee, as *David* to *Goliah*, *I come unto thee in the name of the Lord, whom thou hast defied*; I set upon the mortifying of these sins, not by my own strength, but in the power of Christ, whose glory and honour my sins would take away. When *Paul* spake of that excellent temperament of grace, *He knew how to abound and how to want*, he concludeth, *I can do all things, through him that strengtheneth me*, Phil. 4. 13. Overcome nature, remove mountains, make the dead to live; thus it will be with thee, if thou adherest to God. Alas, what can an hand do, if separated from the body? What the branch, if divided from the vine? No more can thy purposes or resolutions, unless partaking of Christs influence: If therefore thou wouldest not have yea and nay, as the Apostle excuseth himself in another case, but thou wouldest be settled in thy conversion to God, go out of thy own strength, lean no more to thy own power, but cry out, Oh thy weakness, Oh thy impotency, Oh the guile and falshood of thy heart; there is no more trusting of it, no more believing in it; & therefore Lord, let thy right hand uphold me. Do as the little child, that hath attempted to go alone, but finding it cannot, holds the father by his hand, and then he is not afraid to go. Do as *Peter*, when ready to sink in the waters, then he crieth out, then Christ holds his hand out to sustain him. 4.

Fifthly, *If thou find thy self thus prone to break thy promises and resolutions, this should not so much dishearten, as make thee the more wary and diligent*: Difficulties do not dishearten, but inflame a resolved spirit, even as stirring doth the fire. If oppositions and temptations should take away all hope and confidence; then every man might sit down with fear in the way to heaven, and say truly with the sluggard, *A Lyon is in the way*, yea, many Lyons; but God hath made the way to heaven narrow and straight, that so we may the more strive to enter therein, and the violent must take heaven by force, even as the *Israelites* did the land of *Canaan*: So then, though thy turning to God, put thee to many stonder, many fears, sometimes in hope, sometimes again in despair; yet let not this make thee cast away the Anchor of hope, and say as they did, It is in vain to pray, to resolve, to seek any longer: That expression of the Apostle, calling *Hope an Anchor*, Heb 6. 9. is excellent to this purpose. Would it not be a strange mad thing in a Mariner, when the waves arise, and strong gusts beat his ship back, if he should in that conflict throw away his Anchor? no less is thy folly, while thou art thus unconstantly tossed up and down, sometimes in high resolutions towards Heaven, sometimes as low as Hell; thou castest away thy hope, which only would support thee; Oh rather say, these difficulties 5.

argue

argue a duty of the greater watchfulness, there is more reason for me to watch and pray, to fear and pray.

6. Sixthly, *Let that encourage thee, while climbing up this high hill, That God hath made gracious promises, even to the least sparks, the least beginnings of true good in a soul.* How comfortable is that? *The bruised reed he will not break, the smoaking flax he will not quench*, Mat. 12.20. as God said about his Temple, *Never despise the day of small things*; so it is here, Let not small things be despised: What is less than a grain of Mustard-seed, and yet how quickly doth that overgrow into an herb! so that there is no doubt on Christs part, but that he is ready to grant thee, and to give legs to thee, the onely question is, Whether thou doest seek him with thy whole heart? let that be, and the Ministers of God may assure thee, that he will make little sparks flame into a great fire. There is an excellent promise in *Isaiah*, *The faint and weary shall renew their strength like an Eagle's*, Isa. 40.30,31,32. Oh then, sit down and meditate on these gracious promises that are made, even to the Hungry, to the Thirsty, to such who seek, though they have not found: never doubt on Gods help, onely be sure thou art sincere and hearty in thy purposes to turn unto him. Certainly, God that nourisheth the young Ravens, and gives them food, will hear those young and infant cries and resolutions of thine to better things.

7. Seventhly, *This may also greatly encourage thee, though thou hast many sins, That grace is far more potent than sin*: Though thy sins be pleasant, be made natural to thee, though they grow up like weeds, of their own accord; and grace is a stranger, and a plant in an unnaturall soil, while in thy heart, yet it is far stronger than thy strongest corruptions, so that thy diseases are not such incurable ones, but that grace is a medicine and plaister potent enough to help thee, there is balm in *Gilead*. For as Christ is stronger than the Devil, therefore he judgeth him, and casteth him out of the strong holds he had: so grace is more effectual than sin. Fear not then to grapple with thy lusts, say not they are above me, they are too strong for me, for the seed of God, whereby a man is born of God, is stronger than this. Hence faith is said to overcome the world, 1 John 5. 4. and as for outward helps, Greater is he that is with us, than those that are against us, so for inward help also, if thy sin be great, let the power of grace be also apprehended greater: The house of *David* will grow greater, and the house of *Saul* lesser, make therefore thy arguments from without thy self, not within; say, O Lord, thy grace can cure me, thy grace can deliver me out of this miry clay.

8. Eighthly, Doest thou complain thy resolutions take no effect? thou art still where thou were, consider, If it be not, because though thou purposest against sin, *yet thou dost not abstain from the occasions of it*, and if so, no marvel if thy labour be in vain. Never think to turn to God from thy sins, if thou dost not turn from the occasion of them: Alas, if thou hadst not strength to avoid the occasion of sin, which is less? how canst thou sin it self, which is the greater? He that resolveth not to be burnt in the fire, will never come too neer the flames, he that will not be inticed by the adulterous woman, must not come neer her dwelling. Job, that resolved against uncleanness, made a covenant with his eyes: Paul that feared to be a cast-away, kept down his body: thou mayst then easily see what undoeth thee. No marvel, if the Bird that endeavoureth to fly up to heaven, fall down again, when a string is on her foot. Thus thou hast sometimes heavenly resolutions, heavenly meditations, but there is a string on the foot, or rather a millstone about the neck, and that is, the occasion or temptation to some sin, from which thou canst not part. Separate thy self therefore first from the occasions of sin, then the sin will be more easily subdued, as the husbandman first cuts away the under-bushes and brambles, before he layeth his axe to the root of the tree: This is to grant a matter, that our Saviour teacheth us to pray, *That we be not led into temptation*, he doth not say, lead into sin, but temptation,

tion; for that is opening the gate, that is the first tumbling down the hill, and it is hard to stop afterwards.

Lastly, to quicken thee in thy resolutions to turn unto God, though thou often get alia, *Consider what the strong appetites and purposes of men in natural and worldly things put them upon. Those that will be rich*, saith the Apostle, *pierce themselves through with divers cares*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. Their earnest desire after these things puts them upon all labor & toil day & night; every difficulty is easily devoured, *per mare per terras, &c.* they compass sea and land, and all to possess themselves of these fading riches. Take the ambitious man, that hath a boundless & vast desire after honour and greatness, he doth not onely resolve and resolve, but is very industrious to compleat his designs: Take the malicious man, how unquiet in his sleep, how restless in his thoughts, till he hath vented his poyson! How shall men in sinfull and unlawful ways, not only imagine wickedly, but constantly and effectually practise it? and shall not thou be as active in the ways of godliness? Never then let this temptation binde thee hand and foot; and certainly if thy conversion to God could never be attained, if thy turning to him were impossible, yet it is better and more safe to dye in combates and conflicts with these lusts, than out of diffidence to give up thy self a prisoner to them: Its more noble to goe lame to the grave, with thy struglings against thy dear corruptions, than to become a voluntary slave to them. 9.

The next valley to be exalted is the greatness of a mans sin (for other objections will come in more seasonably elsewhere) and of this onely very briefly: Thou art perswaded to turn to God, thou couldst readily set upon the work, but thy sins have such a gastly look, and are of such a bloody nature, that thou doubtest, God will never accept thee: But this is a vain fear; For The second discouragement is the greatness of a mans sins.

1. Help. First, *The Israelites in the Text, were sinners in as high a degree as ordinarily could be*: If you regard the nature and quality of their sins, if the means against which they rebelled, the obstinacy and refractarinels in them; all these things made them bloody and crimson sins; yet to these how pathetically and compassionately doth God speak, *Turn ye, turn ye* and it is universal; he doth not say, Turn ye only, that are sinners of such a degree, but as for the rest, they are incurable, but he speaks generally: So *Jer.* 3. 7. *I said unto her, after she had done all these things, Turn ye unto me*, and in that Chapter many times, though they were an adulteress and a backsliding people, yet he inviteth her to return: Therefore let not that cast thee down.

2. Secondly, Fear not acceptation, because thou hast been a great sinner, *for thy acceptation and Justification is not found upon thy turning unto God*: Thou art not pardoned & received into favour, because thou art turned from thy evil ways: No, its Christs blood, not thy tears which maketh the atonement; yet mark, without this turning to God, there is no sanctus to be had from him, but he will not because of this: So that thy Conversion and thy Justification are two distinct things, they are severall priviledges, and though never separated, yet are always to be distinguished.

3. Thirdly, *Therefore turn unto God, even because thy sins are great*; for the greater they are, the more dangerous it is to continue long in them. As a man sick of a grievous and dangerous disease, he hath a great cause to seek out for help: Thou hast so great cause to turn, as those that are so far gone out of the way, more than others.

Use. Of Admonition, to you who are not yet given up to a reprobate heart, but have serious spirits, that have many secret desires, yea, and serious purposes to turn from all your evil ways. Oh take heed how you quench these coals; be afraid of every thing that may suffocate & stifle these beginnings; take heed, God may never give you these good thoughts any more, the Angel may never come to stir the pool again. Oh what a sad thing is it to suffer shipwrack after the very haven to be descried, when thou hast even been entering into

into heaven! Oh that you were not almoſt, but altogether perſwaded to turn from your evil wayes; it may be God may inſpire this holy purpoſe at this time in thy heart. Oh go home and cherish it, pray over it, mourn over it, say, O Lord, keep this alwayes in me: As thou haſt planted it, ſo water it, and give it ſure encreaſe.

SERM. LXXIII.

Of Gods framing and deviſing evill of Calamities, That men might turn from their evil doings; Alſo what God's framing and deviſing evil implies; And why Judgements and afflictions, which are the good effects of God's Juſtice, Wiſdome, and Power are called evil.

JER. 18. 11.

Thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I frame evil againſt you, and deviſe a device againſt you, return ye now every one from his evil way, &c.

IN the former part of this Chapter, you have an injunction laid by God on [illegible] *Jeremiah*, and the execution of it. The injunction and execution, is in going down to the Potters houſe, and beholding a work upon the wheels which was marred, the Potter made it another veſſel, as it ſeemed good to him. This was a Type, or outward viſible ſign, in a lively and ocular manner to repreſent the power, Soveraignty, and Omnipotency of God, in reſpect of all Kingdomes and States, and more particularly of that of Iſrael. Every Kingdom is but as the Potters unformed and rude clay; God is the Potter, and he can eaſily make it into a faſhion a veſſel of honour, or diſhonour: He can eaſily make it, and then break it in pieces again. This is the meaning of that Type, as appeareth by verſes, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Now my Text is a concluſion, or inference from this Type explained, wherein is partly information and partly exhortation; only to make theſe the more prevalent, you may obſerve Jeremiah's Commiſſion, given him by God himſelf, which ſhould make him bold and courageous. Go to, ſpeak to the men of *Judah*, &c. 2. The ſubject or thing he muſt perform this embaſſage in the Hebrew, *To the men of Judah and Jeruſalem*, to every man; which denoteth the univerſal and general corruption that was on every man. This coming from God ought to be received by him with all fear, reverence, and ſubmiſſion. The manner of his Commiſſion is partly to inſtruct, and partly to exhort, as you heard. To inſtruct, and that is in the beginning of the 8. verſe, *Behold, I frame evil againſt you, and deviſe a device againſt you*; wherein is the efficient cauſe, 1. God: Our Calamities and Judgements come not by chance, or by inferiour inſtruments only, but God is the principal agent: And he by his ſword, his famine, his plague, his War, becauſe arrows ſhot out of his quiver. 2. The manner of his efficiency, or cauſality,

causality, *He frames it*; a Metaphor alluding to the Potter spoken of before. This Metaphor is plainly expressed, *devising a device*. How much is observable in this you shall hear afterwards. 3. There is the effect, which is called *Evill*. There is a twofold evil, an evil of sin, and an evil of punishment: This latter is here spoken of, as being the effect of the former; why afflictions are called evil, is a-non to be spoken to. The second general part of his Commission is exhortation, wherein is the duty, *Return ye*. 2. The time, *now*, *Return ye now*. 3. The term from which, of their motions. 1. Particularly, *Every one from his evill way*. 2. Generally, *And from your evil doings*, which is more positively, and affirmatively urged; Make your waies and doings good. Lastly you have the peoples incorrigibleness, and obstinateness notwithstanding, and they said, *There is no hope, but we will walk after the devices of our hearts*: You will perceive that the excellent matter to be derived from this Text, will like the widows oyl, or our Saviours bread, multiply exceedingly in the use and spending of it. But that I may frame a body, and not a monster of discourse, I shall put my self in a methodical way. And first I shall treat of the Information, which is Gods forming, and preparing of judgements for this end, to make men turn to God; so that not onely the Ministry, but all Gods Chastisements, whether publique or personal, are for this end, to turn us unto God from our evil waies.

Obs. *God doth frame and prepare evill, calamities, and desolations, that so wicked men may turn from their evill doings.* Obs.

God brings his evil (which is indeed a good act of Justice) that we may part from our evil. The same Hebrew word is used for the evil we do, and the evil God doth, though they differ exceedingly; so that we see God preacheth not only by his word, but by his works. His turnings of a Kingdome by Wars and others judgements, is to cause our turnings: God removeth a peoples peace, mercies, & externall good things, that they might remove far from them all their evil things. To open this Doctrine, let us consider these particulars,

1. What is implied in Gods framing and devising of evil.
2. Why Calamities are called evil, seeing they are the good effects of his Justice, Wisdom, and Power.
3. How conversion is intended by all these, and why.

For the first, Gods framing of his judgements hath these observable particulars contained in it.

First, That our miseries and calamities come not by chance, or peradventure, they rise not out of the dust. We are not to blame instruments; but they all come from Gods hand. The Arrow falls not of it self, or by accident, but as it is directed by the Archer: a piece of clay is not of it self made into such a shape and form, but it is as the Potter pleaseth. The stone of it self pierced not into *Goliahs* head & killed him, but as with skill and power flung by *David*, so that when it is said God frameth evil, this should teach us, That there is no evil of punishment in the land, but he doth it. The Evangelist calls diseases *ταγαι*, Strokes, because they come from Gods hand. Now this is a great matter; for such is mans sinful, and prophane security, that he conceiveth of God, as keeping himself within the circle of heaven, & not acting & governing the world by his providence here below. The Church was better taught, when in her Captivity and other judgements, she makes her moans, but still looks over all instruments to God, *Why hast thou, O God, cast us off? & why art thou angry with us?* Ps. 74. 1. *Job* also was better taught when he considers not the *Sabeans*, but God spoyling him of all his comforts, *The Lord hath given, & the Lord hath taken*, *Job*. 1. It hath been the great sin of England in judgements upon her, that she hath cried out of instruments; some lay all the blame on one side, & some on another side; but the anger and displeasure of God for our sins hath not been acknowledged.

1. What is implied in Gods framing or devising of evil.

Secondly, That perase, to frame evil, *supposeth Gods Soveraignty, and unresistible power over all people.* He can as easily destroy a flourishing happy Kingdom, as

the potter can marre his veſſel on the wheels, *Iſa* 41. how excellently is God deſcribed in his majeſty and greatneſs, holding all the world in his hand, *Ut bomo nidum*, as *Tertullian*, as a man doth a birds neſt; yea, all the nations of the world are but a drop, but as ſmall duſt, as nothing, yea leſs then nothing. Oh what little cauſe have men to truſt in greatneſs, power, forces, fenced cities and ſtrong places, when they are as ſo much duſt, when God breatheth on them; and it is as impoſſible for any earthly power or greatneſs to ſubſiſt and keep from ruine, when God is angry, as duſt to lie ſtill in the air, when a ſtormy wind doth ariſe: Well then might *Jeremy* cry out, *Jer.* 10. *Who would not fear thee, O King of the Nations?* Let us not then account any thing great but God; we are clay, and he is the potter: And as it may diſcourage, when we are a ſinful people, though overflowing in all external mercies; ſo it may incourage a people when converted, though in a deſolate confuſion, for God can make this rude clay, a glorious veſſel of honour; he can make dry bones to become living men: Hence is his Soveraignty extolled in this phraſe.

3. Thirdly, *It argueth, that God can ſuddenly and quickly bring judgements upon men:* Gods wonderful works of his wrath, are not only ſeen in the matter he doth, but alſo in the manner: On a ſudden, in a moment calamities riſe before any man thought or look'd for them; even as the Church ſaith, *When he turned their captivity, they were as men in a dream*, Pſal. 126. 1. ſo when he brings their captivity alſo: Hence you have the expreſſion in this Chapter, *At what inſtant I ſpeak to a land to pull it down, or build it up*: He can do thoſe things in an inſtant, which humane power could not produce in many years. *I create light and darkneſs, Creatio ſit in inſtanti* they ſay; God makes the deluge of his wrath to overflow in an inſtant: Thus he overthrew *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* on a ſudden; and that wonderful work of God, in bringing dead bodies out of the grave to appear before his Tribunal, will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, 1 Cor 15. 52. ſo that when God is ſaid *to frame evil againſt a people*, it implieth, that he can bring this in a moment, on a ſudden, before men think it poſſible. How often doth the Prophet tell them, *That their miſeries ſhall come upon them as travel upon a woman with childe:* Oh how ſhould this make every wicked man ſpeedily turn from his evil ways, for God can bring his judgements on thee in a moment; thou mayeſt have no time, no ſpace to bewail thy ſins, but his anger will conſume thee in the twinkling of an eye; yet how ſecurely do men live in open rebellion againſt God? how do they put far off from them the evil day? They put it far off in their thoughts, when God puts it very near in reality upon them: Could men eat and drink, and riſe up to play, if they did conſider how obnoxious they are to the ſharp arrows of God, which may be ſhot into their hearts every hour? who can tell thee what evil the next day, the next night, the next hour, may bring upon thee?

4. Fourthly, *Gods framing of evil, as the Potter doth his clay, doth denote an impoſſibility to reſiſt, and to eſcape his judgements:* Can the clay refuſe the Potters hands? no more can wicked men Gods Government, whereby he puniſheth wicked men for their ſins: There is no running from God, *If thou getteſt into heaven, or hell*, as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *his right hand will finde thee out*, Pſal. 139. 1. *Gonella Lucifer*, that is *Nebuchadnezzar, Though he build his neſt in the clouds, yet he will pull him down: He that eſcaped the Lyon, the Bear would devour him; and he that eſcaped the Bear, the Serpent out of the wall would ſting him*; Amos 5. 19. If then God prepare and frame evil againſt thee, its not all the policy or power in the world can ſecure thee. Who art thou, O piece of clay, O mortal man, duſt and aſhes, that thou ſhouldſt be able to flee from Gods anger, when it purſueth thee?

5. Fifthly, *As it argueth irreſiſtableneſs, ſo a neceſſity of ſubmitting, and yielding to him*: Not to ſtrive or repine at his chaſtiſements: Thus the Scripture often, *Shall the potſheard riſe up againſt the Potter, and ſay, Why madeſt thou me ſo?*

Rom.

Rom. 9. 21. *The fooliſhneſs of a man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth againſt the Lord*: Thus when we by our evill deeds cauſe Gods wrath to fall upon us, we are ready to ſay with the Jews, *His wayes are not equal*; it is part of the ſin and puniſhment which the damned have in hell, that they curſe, and rage, and blaſpheme God continually: Oh take heed of being like the damned in hell, fretting at that evill which God frameth againſt thee! Do thou, as *Jeremy* here, *Go down into the field of the Potter, and conſider the clay there*: Remember thy own ſelf, thy duſt, thy clay, and thy ſins; all which will make thee not open thy mouth, becauſe God doth it. How ſhould this humble the proud and lofty ſpirits of haughty and obſtinate ſinners? God he frames his judgements againſt thee, and canſt thou refuſe them? Muſt thou not yield the back to his ſcourges and blows? Why ſhould a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſins, *Lam.* 3.

Sixthly, *This phraſe doth imply, how unwilling God is to exerciſe his wrath which he hath purpoſed*; for here he tells the Iſraelites, *He frameth and deviſeth evil againſt them*, as his purpoſe and reſolution; *therefore let them return from their evill wayes*, to prevent the actual pouring out of his wrath: Thus in the former part of the Chapter, God ſpeaks to a people about pulling them down, before he doth indeed deſtroy them. To frame and purpoſe evil, is not preſently to bring evil; No, if that people, againſt whom it is framed, repent of their evil practiſed; God will of his evil framed and reſolved on: Thus God ſpeaks of *Whetting his gliſtering Sword*, before he run it into the bowels; and he is ſaid *to roar like a Lyon, which giveth warning before he tear in pieces, and there be none to deliver*. The Prophet expreſſeth this way of God excellently, when having inſtanced in what judgements God purpoſed to viſit them with, *And becauſe I will do this, prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael*, Amos 4. 12. Take thou our Saviours counſel, *Agree with thy adverſary in the way, before he bale thee to the judge, & thou be condemned*, Mat. 5. 25. from whence thou canſt never be reprieved: So that this expreſſion of framing evil, ſignifieth much love, goodneſs, and unwillingneſs of God actually to deſtroy. 6.

Seventhly, *To frame evil, and deviſe it, doth excellently repreſent the juſtice of God, that he dealeth with men according to their wickedneſs*; for as this people would not turn to God, but go after the devices and imaginations of their own heart; ſo God he will imagine and deviſe from his heart evil againſt them; ſo that it is a very ſuitable expreſſion to thoſe wicked men. As in another place when the *Iſraelites* were ſo obſtinate, that they would walk in the way which they ſhould chooſe; God to anſwer them, tells them, *He would alſo chooſe out their deluſions*, Iſa. 66. 4. ſo true is that of *Pſal.* 18. *With the froward thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf froward*: So that this ſhould exceedingly humble and terrifie wicked men; for God will ſhape out puniſhments, and frame out ſuch judgements, that will be very anſwerable, and proportionable to thy wickedneſs. 7.

Eighthly, *To frame evil, and deviſe it, implieth the wiſdom of God.* 8.

First, That he afflicts in counſel and deliberation (to ſpeak after the manner of men) not in ſudden, irregular paſſion; he frameth it, he deviſeth it: Thus when God was to deſtroy the whole world, he ſaith, *Let us go down and ſee whether it be ſo or no*: These are expreſſions to humane capacity, to ſhew how juſt and wiſe God is in all the calamities he brings upon a people. When *Theodoſius* had in cruel paſſion, cauſed the people of *Theſſalonica* to be put to the ſword, for ſome offence done againſt him, *Ambroſe* would not admit him to the ſacraments, till he had repented of that cruel paſſion; and withall, made a Law, that when any man was condemned to death, there ſhould be thirty days reſpite between ſentence and execution, that ſo nothing might be done in paſſion. 1.

Secondly, Gods wiſdom is ſeen, in that it is not every kind of judgement he 2.

takes, but what is fit for his end he propounds: As the Potter doth not make every veſſel in one ſhape, but one, one way; another, another, as his uſe is of it. Thus God ſheweth wonderfull wiſdome in the variety of his afflictions, one is one way exerciſed, another, another; becauſe they come not at randome, but are framed by God, at his pleaſure. Hence *Dan.* 9. he is ſaid to watch over evill, to bring it upon them. God watcheth over evil, to ſhew what he conſiders what is the fitteſt judgement, what is the fitteſt ſeaſon, who are the fitteſt ſubjects. Oh how well is it, that the framing and deviſing of all evil, is not in the Devils hands, and wicked mens hands! they indeed frame evil, and deviſe malicious devices; but they are onely inſtruments, every way limited, in power, in time, and place, and therefore they cannot devour as they deſire: And thus much for the phraſe, *To frame and deviſe evill, when attributed to God.*

Why judgements and afflictions are called evill.

In the next place, conſider briefly, why judgements and afflictions are called evil; For, is not God juſt in diſpenſing of them? Are not his judgements righteous and holy? Do not the people of God with much joy and praiſe, acknowledge them? Why then ſhould they be called evil? This hath ſtruck ſo much upon ſome of the Ancients, *Arnobius* and others, that they thought onely that good came from God, which was pleaſant and comfortable; and that theſe bitter ſore afflictions, come onely *permiſſive*, as the Orthodox ſay, about the evill of ſin: And the error about this made the *Marcionites* hold two firſt and chief principles: One Good from whom came onely good; the other Evill and wicked, from whom came only evill. But the Scripture is very clear, and the Prophets are very diligent to inform, That all the judgements they lay under were brought by God upon them for their ſins.

1. Firſt therefore, *They are called evill, becauſe though in their nature and uſe, the good fruits of Gods juſtice, yet they deprive us of our temporal and ſpiritual good we might enjoy*: So that as the happineſs and quietneſs we might have in body and ſoul is truly called good; ſo that which depriveth us of theſe may well be called evil. Thus the Prophet, *Your iniquities withhold good things from you*, Jer. 5. 25. Oh how ſhould this, if not the love of God, make thee ſet againſt thy ſin; for it is that which depriveth thee of all temporal and ſpiritual good; it is that which turneth all thy honey into gall, all thy wine into vinegar, all thy bread into a ſtone.

2. Secondly, *It may well be called evill, becauſe it is the fruit of that which is truly evill.* The evill of puniſhment is the neceſſary daughter of the evill of ſin; now it is uſual to call any effect by the name of the cauſe, and nothing is more ordinary in Scripture; to call both ſin it ſelf, and the puniſhment of ſin, by the name of ſin: Thus ſin is ſaid *to ly at the doore*, Gen. 4. 7. *Chriſt became ſin for us*, 2 Cor. 4. *Your ſin will find you out*, Numb. 32. 23. that is, ſin and puniſhment: So that no man may commit the evill of ſin, with hope to eſcape the evil of puniſhment, for they are both chained together.

3. Thirdly, *They are evil, becauſe upon all men naturally where they fall, if not prevented by grace, they draw out their evill, they make them more wicked, & we may ſee in the damned*: So that afflictions and judgements of themſelves, have no poſſible power to convert and turn from ſin, but rather ſtir up the fire of corruption in men, to a greater flame. They are as Garlike, and other unſavory herbs, the more they are pounced, the worſe is their ſmell.

Sin the greateſt evil.

But although they be called evill, yet they are nothing to evill, as the evill of ſin. The breach of Gods Law, the offence done to his Majeſty, is infinitely a greater evil then any temporall or eternal miſery; yea, this ſhould be endured, rather than the other committed: Oh! Who muſt perſwade the world of this? that to be poor, to be miſerable, to be tormented with all kind of cruel deaths here, and eternally tormented hereafter, is nothing ſo bad as to commit the leaſt ſin; yet nothing is more true than this thing. Oh that we

judged

judged sin pleasure and profit; hearken to this; few have *Anselms* resolution, That if sin be on one hand, and Hell flames on the other, he would chose rather to run into this latter, than commit the former. *Job* was charged for an hypocrite by his friends, though falsely, in this, that he chose sin rather than affliction: An hypocrite will rather fall into the evill of sin, than fall into the evill of affliction.

Use. Use of Admonition, To take heed of all ungodly and wicked wayes, for you see you have to do with a wise and just God, who frameth punishments for thee: Do not think to escape, do not please thy self with impunity, God seeth & looketh on, and accordingly is preparing to smite thee: Oh while you are jolly, secure, and merry, what is doing in heaven against you! Be not any longer prophane Atheists, but set faith on work; imagine with *Belshazzar*, thou doest not only see an Hand-writing on every wall against thee, but on every cup, on every pot, on every bed, on every piece of ground thou treadest upon: O turn to God, before he put his purposes in execution, then thou canst not resist, but art undone for ever.

SERM. LXXIV.

Of Afflictions; The difference between Penal-Destructive Calamities, and those that are Medicinal; And how Afflictions are operative to the Conversion of men.

Jer. 18. 11.

Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device; Return now every one from his evil way.

THe Doctrine gathered from these words is, *That God purposeth evil and calamities against a people, that they might return from their wicked wayes.*

In this point three things are to be considered; 1. *That God frameth all calamities.* 2. *That these calamities are called evil*; both which are dispatched. The third thing which remaineth is, *That Gods end in all these exercises, is to make men turn from their sins*: Conversion is the end of all Gods scourges and strokes; if men did throw away their evil, God would quickly burn his rod. As *Absolom* sending for *Joab*, who would not come to him, till his corn was set on fire, and then he came quickly to speak with him; so it is here, God speaks once or twice, even to us, to turn from our evill wayes; but we stop the ears, and will not hear; at last God afflicts us in our body, or estate, or name, or wife, or children, and then we cry, or at least should say, Come, let us return unto the Lord. So that Gods judgements, they are real sermons, God preacheth to us, as well as by his Word; insomuch that he puts a remarkable expression upon their obstinacy and impenitency, *Amos* cap. 4. from the 6. verse to the latter end, upon five several judgements, he addeth, *yet have ye not returned*

Amos. Cap. 4. 6. &c.

ed unto me, ſaith the Lord: So that publique and perſonal evils which come upon us, ſhould make us turn from ſin: And Oh take heed that God ſaith not, *Yet have ye not returned unto me*: Thus alſo God complaineth again, Iſ. 12. 13. *For the people turneth not unto him that ſmiteth them*: So that you ſee, God looks for converſion, from every one whom he doth any way chaſtiſe for ſin: For opening this point: Conſider,

Afflictions branched into three heads.

First, *That Gods afflictions upon a people, may be branched into three heads*: Some are firſt, meerly *exploratory*, or by way of tryal, to draw out a Chriſtians graces, and to encreaſe his glory. Thus perſecutions and troubles for the Goſpel, imprisonment and Martyrdome; theſe were not ſo much evil framed by God, to make them turn from their ſins; but conflicts and combates appointed by God, for his choice and valiant Champions, that ſo they might receive the greater weight of glory: And hence the people of God are commanded, *to count it all joy, when they fall into ſuch temptation*, Jam. 1. For what the fire is to the droſs, the water to a ſpotty garment, the winnowing to the wheat, the ſame are theſe combates to them, they ſtrengthen their graces, they weaken their luſts, and they advance their glory; ſo that the ignorance of this end, doth ſometimes put Gods children into great perplexities; for becauſe they fall frequently under Gods afflictions, no ſooner is one over, but another ſucceeds, like the waves of the ſea, they begin to doubt preſently about the main, they call the very foundations into queſtion, Why doth God thus follow me with loſſes and troubles? is it not becauſe I am an hypocrite? may I not fear the great work of converſion is yet to be done? But this is a temptation; had not *Job* been well exerciſed to diſcern between good and evill; theſe very temptations had broken his heart.

2. A Second branch of Chaſtiſements, *are indeed for ſin, and flow from Gods anger, but they are wholly medicinal*; They are to let blood, like the Phyſitian who intends health, not like the Butcher, who is to deſtroy: and theſe by the Scripture are called *rods*, becauſe God would not diſcipline us by them as children, not puniſh us as condemned malefactors.

Queſt. And if you ſay, *How can theſe be for converſion, when ſometimes they fall upon thoſe that are converted, ſuch as are made Gods children already?*

Anſw. To Anſwer this, you muſt remember what was ſaid heretofore, that even thoſe who are converted, do yet need daily to draw nigher and nigher to God; they are to be converted daily from thoſe frequent corruptions, which eſtrange them from God; and thus when Gods own people have their afflictions, they are to conſider, Is not this to turn me neerer to God? Is there not ſuch pride, ſuch dulneſs and coldneſs in the ſervice of God, that I am to be turned from? Well, it is clear to Gods own children, they are thus medicinal; but by the Texts forementioned, and in ſeveral other places, it is alſo evident, that even to thoſe who are ſinners, and remain in an unconverted eſtate, God reacheth out his gracious offer in their troubles: That as it is ſaid of ſeveral *Pſalms*, which more principally contain the ſubjects of affliction, *A Pſalm to give underſtanding*; ſo ſhouldeſt thou write, as it were, upon every trouble, upon every affliction, *An affliction to give underſtanding*. Do not Phyſitians command men diſtracted, and out of their wits, to be kept in dark dungeons, to be bound in ſtrong chains and fetters, to have hard and miſerable fare, that ſo by all this hardſhip, they may come to their underſtandings again? Thus God doth: men by their ſins are turned mad, they are grown out of their right reaſon; they indeed think ſtrictneſs and preciſeneſs is the way to make men out of their wits; but thy luſts and thy wickedneſs deprive thee of all ſound judgement; now God, that he may recover thee, binds thee in chains, afflicts thee with ſeveral judgements, that ſo at laſt thou mayeſt ſeriouſly conſider of thy ſelf, and thy condition; ſo that there was never any trouble befell thee, but thou ſhouldeſt make as good uſe of it, as ever thou didſt of the beſt Sermon thou haſt heard. Hence *Puritanes* will not call theſe afflictions evill, but good; and therefore

divideſ

divides Gods dispensations into *Bona Attractionis* and *Bona Retractionis*; Good things drawing or attractive, these are Gods mercies; good things withdrawing or retractive from sin, and these are afflictions.

But thirdly, *There are some judgements of God for sin, wherein God doth not aim at conversion, but utter ruine:* Therefore when we say, God by his calamities, intends the conversion of men; it is not to be understood universally, not of all men, nor at all times; God hath some judgements which are called *vastum*, punishments and torments, which proceed from the meer hatred and implacable enmity of God; and so conversion is no more intended by these, than the flames and torments in hell are appointed to convert, or to bring the damned to repentance: Thus was the overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, fire and brimstone was a fit declaration of the hell they had deserved; and although it may not be peremptorily said, that all the whole world that perished save eight persons, were all damned, for that is disputed among the learned; yet it is plain, the greater part were incurably wicked, and so the deluge, though of water, was not to wash their sins, but God did first throw them into water, and then into eternal fire presently; and wo be to those wicked men, to whom their miseries here are but the beginnings of sorrows hereafter. 3.

Now we may observe a difference between these penal, destructive evils, and healing medicinal ones, in these respects: The difference between penal evils, and medicinal.

First, *Destructive calamities come violently and totally upon men*; So that the wrath of God comes upon such to the extremity, to the uttermost: Thus *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* were overthrown in a moment; and God threatens incurable *Israel*, *That affliction shall not rise up the second time*, Nahum 1. 9. he will strike them dead with the first blow: *Whereas Gods converting scourges, they come by degrees*: As God removed his glory from the Temple, being unwilling to stir up all his wrath, as the Psalmist expresseth it, *Psal.* 78. 38. When therefore God doth first threaten before he smite, and when he doth smite, he doth it with moderation; when if he doth rebuke, yet it is not in his sore displeasure; then all these dispensations are to purge out thy dross; then thou art set on the fire, that thy scum may go over. *Jeremy* makes an excellent difference between these two dispensations, *Jer.* 10. 24, 25. *Correct me, O Lord, but with judgement, not in thine anger, least I be brought to nothing*; so then, never repine or grudge under any sore hand of God upon thee, if it be with judgement, with measure, not in wrath; then it is but the shepherds crook, to bring the wandring sheep in: As the waters of the flood overflowed the mountains, and drowned all the Royal Palaces and great buildings, that were extant at that time, but advanced the Ark higher to heaven; so do afflictions to incurable men, that mind earthly things onely, and glory with greedinesse in them; but those that belong to God, will be advanced to heaven thereby.

Secondly, *Afflictions are converting, and not destructive, when God, doth vouchsafe inward teachings of the soul, inward meltings and humiliations of the spirit with them.* Gods judgements upon *Pharaoh*, had no gracious operation upon him, because his heart was more hardened every day. Hence the *Psalmist*, *Blessed is the man, whom thou chastenest, and teachest thy way*, Psalm 94. 12. when Gods chastening and Gods teaching go together, then there is hope of an hearty conversion unto God; when God strikes on the back, and opens the eyes at the same time, then are afflictions blessed and happy to such men; The bitternesse of them is quickly recompensed with the fruits of righteousnesse they bring forth. Consider then, doth the rod give thee wisdom and understanding? doth God speak wisdom to thy heart, while the outward man is so sharply exercised? then these things come from love, and will end in love: Oh this undoeth us in our calamities! we attend to the outward burden and grievous nature of them, we say, when will they be gone? we cry out, How long Lord? but we never remember

member that we are by our calamities in Gods School; we conſider not, neither do we hearken to what God ſaith unto us; look then to have teaching, as well as ſtriking: Oh wo be to that man, whom God onely beats and beats, but teacheth him not at all: This is a forerunner of ſad deſtruction.

How afflictions are operative to the converſion of men

Having premiſed theſe things, I come to ſhew in the next place, how afflictions are operative to the converſion of men, what influence they have to make us turn to God: And here are two errors to be avoided:

Not of their own nature.

The firſt is, As if afflictions of their own nature, in their own ſelf, could beget any ſuch heavenly change upon men: No ſuch matter, for if the word of God it ſelf, and the Sacraments, if deſtitute of Gods Spirit and his power, are uneffectual, how much more muſt theſe outward calamities be? Therefore as *Ezekiel*'s wheels could not move, unleſs the Spirit drive them, nor the pool of *Bethesda* communicate health, unleſs the Angel deſcended and ſtirred the waters; ſo neither do any afflictions or troubles at all, do any good, but where Gods Spirit moveth upon theſe waters. Experience confirmeth this. How many times do people grow more deſperate, more obſtinate and impenitent in every evil way, by the judgements upon them? The Prophet *Iſaiah* complaineth of them, *O Lord, when thy hand is lifted up they will not ſee*, Iſa. 26. 11. *Though a fool be brayed in a morter, yet he will not learn wiſdom*, Prov. 27. 22.

Nor by way of merit for the patient bearing of them.

The Second error to be avoided, is to attribute any merit or worth to a patient bearing of afflictions, as if by this we could merit either grace or glory. The Apoſtle indeed ſaith of afflictions, *That they do work an eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. but the word doth not there ſignify a proper cauſality, onely God doth make afflictions advantagious for his childrens glory: Do not then think, that becauſe thou haſt a miſerable life here, God is bound to make thee amends in the life to come: thoſe that ſay ſuch things, know not that their ſins have deſerved all wrath in this world, and in the world to come. This ſtone being removed out of the way, I proceed to deſcribe the manner how theſe outward calamities may further converſion.

But firſt by ſetting the word preached upon our hearts.

And firſt, *They are very advantagious to ſet the Word preached upon our hearts*: *I ſpake unto thee in thy proſperity, ſaith God, but thou heardeſt not*, Jer. 22. 21. The word of God is never ſo likely to have a powerful impreſſion, as when men are in miſeries; then their proud ſpirits, their lofty hearts are tamed: As the rod in the School, and diſcipline makes inſtruction eaſily enter into the negligent child; ſo when God teacheth you by his Word, and afflicts you by his works, this may provoke to converſion: Doth God therefore put thee in this fiery furnace? Say, This is to bring all that hath been preached to me to my mind; God hath a ſpecial regard to his Word, it is the precious ſeed ſown, and therefore he plougheth and harroweth the ground, he afflicts and humbles Hearers, that they may get good by it: This is the proper uſe of all chaſtiſements, to make way for the Word preached, to mollify and ſoften, that it may enter; and therefore what Hearers are more obſtinate and oppoſite to the Word, than ſuch as live in jollity and ſecurity, that have their hearts eaſe? Theſe have a fat heart, and ſo are not ſenſible.

2. Afflictions help to make men ſober and wiſe.

Secondly, *Affliction helpeth much to make men ſober and wiſe, to give our ſelves to underſtanding*; and by underſtanding we come to be converted. *Solomon* often tells us, *That the rod gives wiſdom*; and therefore God takes this way with us, we being far more ſtupid & ſenſeleſs in ſpiritual things, than any child can be to humane learning: Now when God depriveth us of our joy, of our comforts, of all outward delights, this is apt to make a man to conſider the vanity of all things, What are Riches, what are Honours, what are External mercies to me thus afflicted, thus broken and bruiſed? When thou rebukeſt man for his ſin, all his deſirable things periſh; when then God takes away the deſire of thy eyes, the deſire of thy heart, this is to make thee wiſe; as you take away the childes babits, to make it learn its leſſon: It is better to go to the houſe of mourning,

mourning than laughter, for the living will lay it to heart. The Prodigal never came to his true minde, till he was brought to bitter extremity: Oh then if thou find Gods hand heavy upon thee, ſay, This is the time to get Wiſdom, ſpeak now, Lord, for my heart is ready to hear: If thou doeſt not know more, and underſtand more than ever, thou loſeſt the benefit of thy affliction.

Thirdly, *Affliction may further converſion, in that it doth ſenſibly teach a man, how ſad and bitter a thing it is to ſin againſt God*: Sin is compared to gall and wormwood, but it is never perceived to be ſo, till God brings us into external miſeries: Thus *Jeremy*, Jer. 2. 19. *Then ſhall ye know, it is a bitter thing to depart from God*: Therefore though men in jollity and outward eaſe, never think of turning unto God, yet how is it that you refuſe, whoſe ſins have found you out. Theſe Serpents have now put out their ſtings upon you, you find your iniquities no longer ſmiling on you, no longer tickling and pleaſing of you, but they have laid you in a tormenting bed of ſorrow. Thou haſt received thy good things, but now thy time is come for evil things: Every man doth quickly ſettle upon his lees, if he be not removed from affliction to affliction: How fit then & congruous is it for that man, who lieth under the ſmart of his ſins, to depart from them. What is the cauſe of thy preſent miſery, of thy preſent trouble? is it not ſin? What hath brought thee into that deep gulf thou art in? is it not ſin? What hath turned all thy waters into blood, as it was with the *Egyptians*? all thoſe comforts and delights thou uſeſt to refreſh thy ſelf with? is it not ſin? Then why doeſt thou not ſay? If ſin make all this evil, if that bring all this miſery, why ſhall I imbrace it any longer? And a Chriſtian will further argue, If theſe beginnings be ſo heavy, what will the after end be? if in this life it ſting and wound ſo deeply, what will it in the life to come? What is hell and the tormenting flames thereof, if now ſin be ſo terrible?

3. By ſenſibly teaching a man how ſad and bitter a thing it is to ſin againſt God.

Fourthly, *In theſe afflictions may alſo prepare for converſion, becauſe they are apt to dead a mans heart, and all his delight that he took in the creatures*: Sin is an averſion from God, and converſion to the creature; now grace is an averſion from ſin and converſion to God; and there is nothing doth ſo prepare and take off the heart from the creature, as when God afflicts us in them, & by them: As then the breaſt is made bitter, to wean the child; ſo God puts bitterneſs in every comfort, in every condition, makes affliction to grow up with every mercy, a thorn with every flower; that ſo thou mayſt ſay, It's not good to be here, we muſt ſeek a better good than theſe theſe things are: *In their afflictions they will ſeek me early* ſaith God, *Hoſea* 5. 15. Oh when God ſhall make every thing briars and thorns to thee, when thou looke ſt for good, and behold nothing but bitterneſs, now is the time to allure thy ſoul to God: ſay, What wilt thou do? whether wilt thou go? Hath not that Star wormwood fallen into every ſtate thou art in? Hath not God bid thee be called no more *Naomi*, but *Marah*: Why then doeſt thou any longer ſeek for grapes on thornes, for true happineſs in the way of ſin? God took the Church into the wilderneſs, & then he ſpake to her, *Hoſ.* 2. 14. Oh when God hath brought thee into a wilderneſs, all comforts are kept from thee, then take the advantage, then pray, then mourn; now, if ever, that iron of thy heart is in the fire, & it may be beaten into a good frame; and therefore the more univerſal thy affliction is, if it takes thee off from all refuges, leaveth thee not one drop of comfort, the likelier it is to do thee good, for thy ſpiritual diſeaſe and corruption is contumelious, that it muſt be ſtrong phyſick, elſe it will not work on thee: As long as thou canſt catch upon any twig, any branch to ſave thy ſelf, thou wilt not throw thy ſelf into the arms of Chriſt: Therefore God hedged the Churches way with thorns, *Hoſ.* 2. 6. that ſhe might not any way break through for her ſins; and when ſhe was thus ſtopped, then ſhe reſolveth to go back to her former husband again. Thus afflictions in theſe particulars may help on our turning to God, not but that the word is the pro-

4. They are apt to dead a mans heart to all creature-delights.

pel instruments, only this may smooth and prepare the way for the word to enter; insomuch that a man, who hath no afflictions, and who liveth in all the ease and delights of his soul, he may be in a desperate condition, and not dream of it, though he believe himself. It is related of *Ambrose*, that being in the house of a man, who boasted he never had any calamity in all his life, Come, said he, let us make haste out of this house, lest some remarkable vengeance of God fall upon us; he thought those were most unhappy, that had so much earthly happiness, *Nihil infelicius semper felici.*

Quest. Here is one doubt to be answered, and that is, Why should men be pressed in times of calamities and miseries to turn unto God, seeing that is usually branded for hypocrisie; all is out of fear, and extorted, and so not thank-worthy: If *Israel* return to *God*, because he is framing evil against them, its meerly for fear of evil, and not love of *God*, or what is good. Doth not the Prophet call the Israelites fastings and mournings, when they were under Gods judgements by no other name, than howlings, as if they were so many beasts kept up in a den, ready to be famished, that cryed for food only, Why then should this be urged upon us?

Answ. I answer, *These calamities must be the occasion only and initial motives*; they must prepare and make way, but they must not be the principal ground, nor the only. Even as the needle draweth on the thread; or as in matter of faith, the true Churches Authority makes way to receive the truth of God, but afterwards we believe for the divine Authority thereof; so these outward miseries they give the first thrust, they begin to make the first shake, but afterwards the soul forsakes sin, and cleaveth to *God*, not out of fear only, but love to him: We do not therefore press you, to make your afflictions the only ground, but let them be sanctified introductions: And I proceed to the Uses.

Use 1. First, That no man hath cause to boast and rejoyce of his outward prosperity, that he is not afflicted as others, he liveth and is dandled, as it were in the worlds lap: Who knoweth, but that this is the fatting of thee for the slaughter? Who can say, but that God is most angry with thee, while he seemeth not to be angry: Oh how much better were it, that God did follow thee by one affliction after another, by one misery after another; this great calm is but the forerunner of a terrible storm; know sin hath it stings, and it will one time or other be terrible. As it is said, the Magistrate hath not the sword in vain, so neither are all those threatnings, all those arrows and swords of Gods vengeance in vain, *But who believeth our report?*

Use 2. Secondly, That we the people of *England*, of any Nation in the world, should be a converted generation to him: It should be matter of amazement and admirement, if every sinner be not turned from his evil ways; for God hath not only framed evil against us, but poured it on us; he hath not onely whet his glittering sword, but run it in our bowels; the Lyon hath not only roared, but torn in pieces: In vain do we speak and hope of Gods turning his wrath from us, till we have turned from our iniquities. We look not to the true cause of all our judgements; the sins we lie in, we live in; the sins that every Town and Village wallowes in, these have been our undoing. Oh then you who say, You have lost thus much and thus much by the times, be able to say, You have lost your sins also, and found God.

SERM.

SERM. LXXV.

Of the time of turning unto God (viz.) *presently.*

JER. 18. 11.

Return ye now every man from his evil way.

THe Prophets Commission consisted of two parts, The first Instruction; The second Exhortation. We are upon this latter, and in it are observed, 1. The duty, *Return*; the nature of which hath hath been already discussed. 2. The time now, *Return now*. 3. The term from which, with the appropriation of it, *Every man from his evil way*. 4. The extent also of it, *From your evil doings*. The next thing in our method to be handled is, the time when this duty must be set upon, and that is now; *Turn ye now*.

From whence Observe, *That Conversion, or Turning to God is a duty required at the present time*. Thus in other places parrallel in the margent, where this duty is often commanded; still the time is prefixed now, *Return ye now*.

For opening of this necessary practical point: Consider,

First, *That it is a very prone inbred thing in a man to procrastinate, and still to put off the day of repentance, and conversion to God*. He resolveth, and he purposeth, and hopes in God to do it, and God gives him grace to do it, but he never sets upon the work. Do but commune with your own hearts, and see if there be not something or other ready always to stifle and kill those purposes to return, and so thou art always delaying, and delaying, hoping for a time at last, till it may be thou falleth into the grave, and so all thy hopes cut off. Now the causes of this delay to turn to God may be several: *Sometimes it may come from sluggishness, and idleness*: Even as the sluggard hath a desire to eat, but he rolleth on the bed, and saith, *Yet a little sleep, and a little slumber*, & so he refuseth to set his hand to work. Thus it is here, he desireth to part with his corruptions, to sin no more, but then he crieth a little more ease; so much praying, so much hearing, so much humiliation, so much fervency and violence is very tedious to him: *The Kingdom of heaven is to be got by violence*, Mat. 11. 12. and the way to heaven, is striving, running in a race, wrestling and combating; all which the idle man will never do.

Man is prone to put off the day of repentance.

Causes of mens delays to turn to God.

A second cause is, *Dear, and excessive love to the lusts we live in, when we have at the same time some conviction, and yet strong corruptions*. Conviction that it is high time for us to break off our sins by repentance, and yet strong corruptions do so entice us, and perswade us, that we are not able to break these bonds, and cast them asunder, then conversion is delayed. Thus *Agrippa* was almost perswaded to be a Christian, Acts 26. 28. but yet his present lusts withheld him.

3. The third *Cauſe of delay to turn unto God may be, the immoderate and exceſſive love, and cares of the things of this world.* Thoſe are apt to ſurfet, and over-charge the heart: This duſt got into the eye, is apt to blind them. Thus the young man that ſeemed ſo forward, when he was bid to ſell all, could not bear that Doctrine, but went away very ſorrowfull, *Mat.* 19.22.

A fourth *Cauſe, may be recovery out of ſome dangers, diſeaſes, or calamities that we were in.* The *Iſraelites* often turned unto God, but they proved deceitful, they went backward, as well as forward, and what was the matter? They would turn to God from violent fears that were upon them; they then cryed, and mourned, and prayed unto the Lord; but this fountain preſently dried up when a Sun-ſhine day came. So that proſperity and freedom from trouble, makes a man put off his reſolutions, as much as ever he put them on in times of adverſity. Thus you ſee what are the cauſes that make men uſe that *Corvinum Cras*, as *Auſtin* calls it, *The Crows note, Cras, to morrow, to morrow.*

It is a grievous ſin to reſolve to turn to God, but not yet.

2. *Conſider, that it is an high, and a very grievous ſin, for a man obſtinately and formally to have this expreſſion, I will turn to God, but not yet.* I ſay to have this formally, and not with attention to it, it argueth very great rebellion, for it ſuppoſeth light in thee; thou ſeeſt thy ſelf out of the way, thou ſeeſt thy ſelf undone, and wandring in wayes to hell, yet thy rebellion againſt this light is ſo great and manifeſt, that thou wilt oppoſe it: Beſides it argueth much contempt; for if thou didſt highly prize God, and his favours, thou wouldſt immediately forſake all other things, and cleave to him.

VVhy men ſhould return to God preſently.

Theſe things premiſed, now let us conſider why we ought to take the preſent *Now*, not to put off, no not a day, an hour, not this moment; and there was never any duty had ſuch reaſons for it: As

1. Firſt, *The vanity and uncertainty of a mans life is ſo obvious a reaſon, That it is ſtrange every one doth not reſolve, Now I will forſake my accuſtomed ſins, I will do it now.* The ſhortneſs of our days is frequently aggravated by the Scripture, therefore we ſhould apply our hearts to wiſdom, we ſhould not look ſo much to this moment, as provide for eternity: Who art thou then, O mortal man, that doth yet put off thy repentance? Who hath given thee ſecurity for to morrow? Why doſt thou not take the Holy Ghoſts counſel? *To day, and while it is called to day, hear his voice*, Pſal. 95.7. Oh duſt and aſhes, Why art thou not afraid of being blown away with every breath of Gods diſpleaſure? In worldly matters you are careful to make every thing ſure, you know not what will fall out, it is good to be certain, and in heavenly things, there you content your ſelves with any probabilities. The Pſalmiſt gives a convincing Epithet, Pſal. 4. *Oye mortal men, how long will you love vanity.* Let us then beſeech thee who art intangled in thy luſts by that body of death thou beareſt about with thee, by the conſideration of that ſentence of death paſt upon every one, the execution whereof may be this night, ſo that thou never mayſt hear this Exhortation more, by the conſideration of the grave into which thou art falling, that thou wouldſt no longer put off, but turn from thy ſins. Oh ſay, contrary to thoſe Epicures, Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall dy: Let us pray, and return unto the Lord, for to morrow we ſhall dy.

2. Secondly, *Turn now, becauſe the day of Grace and ſalvation offered unto thee, is a uncertain in continuance as thy life.* Thus the Apoſtle, *Behold, now is the time acceptable, behold is the day of ſalvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. therefore receive not the grace of God in vain. And our Saviour, *Work while ye have day, for the night is coming, and no man can then work*, Joh. 9. 4. If a black night for Ordinances and the Miniſtry ſhould be coming upon you, the Sun and the Stars be turned into blood: Oh then, whither wilt thou run? And what wilt thou do? gather the Manna therefore while it falls, come in while the door of grace ſtands open: Take heed of being like *Eſau*, coming too late for a bleſſing, like *Saul*, that can not have God anſwer him any way, by *Urim*, or *Thummim*, or any other manner: The Prophet *Jeremiah*

Jeremiah might well say, *Return ye now*, for shortly captivity, or the sword will deprive you of all means of grace: How diligent is the husbandman to take the season for sowing, the tradesman his season for buying and selling: but for our souls we are not wise: We say not, Oh my soul, now if ever let this sermon pierce thee, now if ever let this exhortation prevail with thee. Oh unwise man, go and learn of the brutish Creatures, they are so wise as to lay up their store in summer against winter: And thus it ought to be with thee; if there may come a sad time of famine for the Ordinances, and the means of Grace, do thou as *Joseph*, who laid up provision for that time of scarcitie. Now while God calls, do thou say, here, Lord, I am.

Thirdly, *Therefore turn now from your evill wayes, because the longer you put off, the more you hinder your peace and happiness.* All the time spent in sin is lost time, it must be all redeemed again as the Apostle exhorts, *Thou art an hinderer of thy peace and comfort all the while thou art labouring in the way of sin*, thou art with the Prodigal feeding on husks, when thou mightest have a fatted calf; thou art eating onions when Manna may be gathered: What are the pleasures of sin, to the enjoyments of God, the peace of a good Conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost? How wilt thou cry out when once set at liberty from this prison, Now I begin to live, Now I begin to have happiness, now I begin to have pleasure, but never till now? Thou wilt finde a damage, and a losse which cannot be repaired, but by that happiness in Jesus Christ: So then bethink thy self, What a loser am I, exchanging dirt for gold? It is my own advantage and happiness, if I betake my self to God immediately.

Fourthly, *Therefore turn to God, because the longer thou puttest off, the greater difficulty it will be to leave thy sins.* At last Conversion will be every day more remote than at first, for the difficulty will arise several waies, here will more than a threefold cord be to be broken.

For 1. It will be more hard, because sin is every day hardening of a mans heart more: Now all hardness of heart makes turning to God more difficult: Wax is sooner melted than gold Iron: therefore saith the Psalmist, *To day, if you will hear, harden not your hearts*, Psal 95. implying that every delay doth freez the soul, & make it more benummed: if thou are not fit to day, thou wilt be lesse fit then to morrow: & hence it is why men rooted in sin, & inveterate in old customary iniquities, do seldom change their black skins: the beginnings of a wound are to be healed: if you let it rankle & canker, then that groweth incurable at last. Oh then take up betimes, while there are any relentings, any meltings, go presently to God: If thou gettest cold after this heat, then thy disease will be more mortall. 1.

2. Therefore it is more difficult, if thou delay, because to thy naturall hardnes thou wilt adde *adventitious, & acquisite*. Every man naturally hath a stone upon his heart, and grace must remove that in conversion; but when thou hast refused often to come at Gods call, then there is a second and a third, yea many stones laid upon thee while thou art buried in the grave of thy sins. Oh then, woe be unto thee who dost make thy condition worse at last, than at first. Who knoweth if thou hadst regarded the first impressions, and motions of Gods spirit, but that thy condition had been more hopeful? Oh take heed of growing bankrupt in the way of sin, then the more thou spendest, the likelier to be cast into that dungeon out of which there can be no redemption. Take heed then of adding hardnesse to that which is inbred in thee; Thou hast enough to presse thee into the lowest hell; thou needest not have more millstones hung about thy neck. 2.

3. It is therefore more difficult, because the judgment of God is more terrible to such in a spiritual manner. The Lord hath spiritual judgements, as well as temporal, & although we grone and complain more under bodily miseries, yet these spiritual have the greatest danger: & of all spiritual ones, this of hardnesse of heart is the most grievous, as by the Prophet appeareth, *Esai 6. Go and make their hearts fat, their eyes blinde.* Oh then fear the longer thou putst off, lest God will 3.

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sure also with more stupidity, more senselesnesse, and so at last thou fall into an hopelesse condition, that all means used for recovery, do make thy sickness more desperate.

4. 4. Therefore it is more difficult, if thou delayest, because the devil hath thereby got the stronger possession on thee, for every man hath either God & his spirit dwelling in him, whereby he becomes a lively temple, and his house, and so all things are according to his government, or else the devil he hath a full possession of him; but now his hold in thee is stronger and stronger, as thou delayest, & therefore it will be the more hard to cast him out, when he hath had so many years possession. The devils that possessed the man from the womb up, could not be cast out but by some extraordinary way. The devil was in *Judas* his heart long before, yet saith the Scripture, *The Devil entred into his heart*, Joh. 13. 27. How is that? was he not before there? Yes, but now more than ever: he had sinned more, and resisted the grace of Christ more, and therefore God gave him up to the greater power of the Devil: And thus it will be with thee, the more thou putrest off, the more thou delayest, the greater Tyranny and reign will Satan have over thee.

5. Fifthly, *Therefore turn now to God, because the sooner thou goest to him, the more service and honour thou wilt bring to him.* Suppose a man be called at the Twelfth hour, yet how little can he do for God before night? Alas thou hast lived a long while in the service of sin and satan, and thou needest even *Methuselahs* age to do God service, for all the disservice and dishonour thou hast done him. Paul because he had been very active for the Devil, and so laboureth more than many of his equals in pulling down the Church, therefore when once converted, see how he rejoyceth as a gyant to run his race, and he laboureth afterward more than all to build the Church. Oh then think the greatest honour thou art capable of, is to do the Lords work: Angels rejoyce in this, & all the while thou art in the course of sin, then thou are doing the Devils service: Although now there be no greater delight to thee, than fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, yet when thou art once turned to God, thou wilt labour abundantly in the work of God, and it will be an heavy trouble to thee that thou hast been an enemy so long to God, & promoted the work of his adversary. Therefore get betime into the vineyard of the Lord, and so thou wilt have time to do him the more service.

6. Sixthly, *The sooner thou turnest to God, thou wilt prevent the more sin, & so the more shame and trouble of heart.* Those that have gone far in the wayes of wickedness, they have the greater falls, and so their broken bones put them into the more pains ere they can be healed. Oh what a deal of peace would *Manasses*, & *Mary Magdalen* have enjoyed, if they had been converted in their younger years? So if *Paul* had been betimes drawn home unto God, he had not had all that trouble and grief of spirit for persecuting the Church of God. Those that are aged women, they say, have the sorest and most dangerous travails, if they had never any Children before: and so are they have the more difficult conversions, the greatest anguish and pain of Conscience, who have lived long in sin, and committed great sins. Therefore *Solomon*, *Remember thy creator in the dayes of thy youth*: and it is good to hear the yoke in the youth, so it is here, it is good to feel the bitterness of the bitternesse, it is good in our younger years to feel how sad a thing it is to offend God, this advantage hath early conversion. So then let young ones hearken to Sermons, let them attend to what the Ministers of God shout for, conversion doth not only belong to the old, but to the young, yea commonly conversion is sooner wrought upon the younger sort of people, for they have not resisted the grace of God so much, they have not provoked God to give them up to their own hearts lusts & desires, as many aged persons have.

7. Seventhly, Suppose thy conversion and turning to God for the future, were not only possible, but sure, if it were, yet why wouldst thou put off that God would

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before thy death make himself known in a gracious manner to thee, yet how unfit is old age, or a diseased sick body to turn to God? When thou hast given the Devil all thy service, and power, and strength, then to give a Carkasse to God it is unseemly; like those Heathens that keep the honey to themselves, and offer the wax to their gods: say then to thy self, as the Prophet in another case concerning those that offered blinde, and lame Sacrifices to God: Offer it now to thy rulers, and governours, see if they will accept of it: And thus it is here, thy lame, diseased, infirm service; How fit is it for God, when it is not fit for any man? The command is, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy minde, and with all thy strength:* if this be required of thee, then it is most unworthy and dishonourable dealing, to put off God to thy feeble age.

Eighthly, *Consider the nature of sin, what it is, and thou must needs say, There is no way, but presently to go out of it.* It is the poyson of the soul, and that is not to be kept long in the body. It is the bloody wounding of it, and thou must not let it lye long in this bleeding: it is the meer mercy of God that sin doth not give a damning stab and blow to thee, to undo thee to all eternity. Why then wilt thou stay for an hour, for a moment in this estate? Who would abide long in a place, where fire is ready to burn and consume all before it? Yet this is thy condition; it was *Lots* great stupiditie, that when fire and brimstone was ready to rain from heaven upon him, he would not go out till the Angel came and pulled him out, *The Lord being mercifull to him,* saith the Text, *Gen.* 19. 16. And thus it is here, our sottishness, and stupidity is so great, that although heaven above be against us, and hell beneath ready to devour us, yet we think not of conversion to Him. 8.

Ninthly, *If so be thou wouldst ever turn to God at all, then why not now?* Do not deceive, and delude thy own soul; If ever thou wilt part from thy lusts, begin presently, for what can be more necessary? Commonly this is our method, that we will do the necessary things in the first place; we will first provide for our lives, before we do for ornaments; Nature teacheth us to do that which hath the greatest necessity: now then what is more necessary than to turn to God? if this be not done, thy sins are upon thee, thy lusts will overwhelm thee, thy damnation is sure and unavoidable. Turn now unto God, because it is most necessary: one thing is needfull; neither riches, honour, or any advantages are like to this. Besides, if ever thou wilt turn to God, do it now, for there can be no reason hereafter, which will not be much more now. Is sin of a terrible damning nature, then it is so now? Doth Gods anger belong to sin, so it doth now: Is God also to be loved, and chosen before all things? then now as well as at any time hereafter. Thy comforts will be greater, thy honour more, thy service to God more; therefore return now unto God. 9.

Use of Exhortation, to be perswaded to this duty, *Return now,* set immediately upon the work, Why should Gods work be done last of all? Oh think rather I will turn unto God, and that presently, because I may dye before I think of it. If I dye before I have setled such and such worldly business, there is nothing but a temporal losse; but if I dye before I have setled the peace of my soul, then I am eternally undone. Oh how many have been surprized by Gods stroke, before ever they thought of it? then they cry out, *Lord spare me one year longer, Lord give me space once more, I am not ready to dye, I have not quitted my sin. Oh if I dye now, I shall dye and be damned in them.* Come then and take the good counsel of the Prophet, *Do it now,* are your hearts yielding and consenting? you will have the comfort of sincerity, if you turn to God while in your health and strength, whereas when fear and danger works upon thee, then shall thou wilt doubt of thy integrity in what thou doest.

SERM. LXXVI.

That Conversion puts a Man upon leaving his Beloved Sin; The reason of the difference of Darling-Sin in men, and the Signs by which a man may know his beloved Sin.

JER. 18. 11.

Return ye now every man from his evil way.

THese words (you heard) were the second part of *Jeremiah's* Commission, the matter whereof is exhortatory, and in that the duty, and the time of the duty have been considered. The third thing in order to be prosecuted, is the subject, with the appropriation of it; *Every man from his evill way.* Besides the common and general sins, wherein all had defiled themselves, there were also peculiar darling and beloved sins, that every one had espoused particularly to themselves: If therefore they would declare their sincere and unfeigned Conversion unto God, they were to throw away these *Dalilah's*, to sacrifice these *Isaacs*, their onely sins, which they loved so much. A man may leave many sins without any trouble, so as it be not that to which he is dearly ingaged.

Obs. *That true Conversion will put a man upon the forsaking his dear and beloved sin:* He will not as *Lot*, desire to have a little one spared: So, Lord, I will pray, hear, turn unto thee; onely in this spare me. Some say, that *Naaman* the *Syrian* was not truely converted, because he stuck at one beloved sin; for when he proffered his service to the true God, promising to take him for the only Lord, he addeth, *Pardon thy Servant in one thing, that when I go down into the house of Rimmon, and my Master lean on me, I also then bow down*, 2 King. 5. 18. They that make him not a true Convert, say, here was hypocrisie. This Office was a place of honour and profit, and so though he would acknowledge the true God in many things, yet this his evill way he would not leave; I will not determine that point of his true Conversion; but certainly this is a very frequent miscarriage in these dayes: Many hear the Word gladly, receive it with some joy, and do many things willingly; but then they are held in one string, there is one dead Fly, and that marreth the Box of ointment, so that it passeth a Diminitive *but* on a man and all his Religion. As in that *Naaman* we instanced in, it is said he was a great man & of great authority in the land, but he was a Leper, & that marred all: So it is here, he prayeth, he heareth, he conformeth to many godly things; but there is such a sinne, such a lust, and that undoeth all; and as every man may have his particular sin, so it is observed, that Nations have their proper sins. The *Jews* in former times were above all sins prone to Idolatrie, therefore its thought God did

did exercise them in such a bodily way of worship; and so many external and glorious Ceremonies were commanded them, that if possible, they might not desire Idolatrous worship. The *Corinthians*, their sin was uncleanness and wantonness, therefore the Apostle doth so much presse Arguments against that. The *Cretians* are branded to be alwayes Lyars; and the Apostle confirmeth this testimony. Thus Nations have their proper sins, as well as particular persons, yea, particular Towns and Villages, by one reason or other, are observed to be more prone to some kind of sin than others: But I shall limit my self to particular mens darling corruptions, which is the root to be plucked up, the Fountain to be dryed up; and every Christian should be so far a spiritual Physician to himself, as to be able to know, what is that particular sin to which he is most inclined; for at that breach hell and damnation will enter.

Considerations about beloved and darling sins.

I.

But to make this point naked and open, consider, *That Originall sin, though it be the seed of all kind of wickednesse, and there cannot be an instance given of any horrid crime in the world, but this would carry a man unto it, yet the poison in every man vents it self in one way rather than another*: Even as in every mans body there is a seed and principle of death; yet in some there is a proneness to one kind of disease more than to another, and this may be called that mans proper sin, his evill way. As Philosophy tels, Though all the individuals of one kinde agree in one common specifical nature, yet every one hath a particular differences, whereby it is distinguished from another, which they call *Heceity*; so its here, though there be many sins acted in common by all, yet several men have their particular corruptions, which are like the Prince of Devils, that commands all their other sins. Its true, there is no sin committed by any man but thou hast cause to blesse God, that thou art not as desperately intangled in it, as others. Therefore what the Psalmist speaks of the worst of wicked men, and highest enemies to the Church of God, the Apostle *Romans* 3. applyeth to every man. Yet every man hath his inclination to one kinde of sin rather than another: and this difference of darling-beloved sins may arise from two grounds, the one internal, the other external.

The reason of the difference of darling sins in men.

The internall cause of a beloved sin is the complexion and bodily constitution of a man: For as one mans body inclines to cholerick disease, another to melancholick; so the very natural constitution, while a man is under the power of sin, hurrieth one way rather than another: Not that this excuseth a man, to say, its his inclination to do thus and thus, he cannot help it, for sanctifying grace will work in a man a contrary inclination, put another predominant principle within him; and besides, this doth not extenuate, but aggravate his sin; for the more it is rooted, and cleaveth to him, the more difficult will his recovery be; so that a mans peculiar sin, that he is most addicted unto, may arise from his bodily constitution, that may be a more prepared instrument for some vice rather than another. *Or our darling sin may arise from some externall cause*, and they may be these,

1. *First, Custom and use in same kind of sin.* Frequent custom doth at last breed an habituated delight, and becomes a second nature, so that men who have been in long Captivity and service to lusts, they willingly have their ears boared, and are never willing to leave that Service. We see daily sad experience of this truth: Men, who though long continuance in sin, have now turned it into their nature, They say of that sin, as Christ of grace, One thing is needfull; *They adde Drunkennesse to Thirst*, as *Moses* calls it, *Deut.* 29. 19. Hence after they have committed sin, they are vehement and fervent for it again.

2. *Secondly, A darling sin may arise from the condition, or relation we are in.* There may be some temptations suitable to the low and lustful frame of our hearts, that we cannot leave such sins, unlesse we quite forsake such a condition, or calling: *Judas* his beloved sin was Covetousnesse, and his condition he was in, carrying

the Bag, that was a continual blast to blow up the fire of lusts; so if ambitious men get to the pinacle of honour; if covetous men to places of profit and gain, here the Serpent in their breasts gets the warm beams of the Sun, there is a daily incentive to add many Cubits to the stature of their lusts; and its a very ill and malignant constellation, when a mans outward condition, and his peculiar sin meet together, he had great need to pray to be delivered from the mouth of such Lions.

II. Secondly, *In the next place, that may be called a mans particular way of sinning, which yet we cannot call his beloved sin.* For it may be a great grief and torment to him, it may be a tyrant usurping power over him, not the delight of his soul. Some say *David* was very prone to the sin of lying; its plain, that being in many streights by *Saul*, he used many unlawfull shifts: Now this was an heavy burden to him, *Deliver me from the way of lying*, Psalm 119. 19. He doth earnestly pray against this Sinne: And so in another place, *Psalme* 31. 10. He speaks of being kept from mine iniquity: so the godly may be more prone to fall into one sin than another; some into inordinate passion, some to cowardly fear, some to diffidence in the promises; yet these are not their beloved sinnes, but their hated enemies, they mourn and complain with *Paul*, That this Law of sinne within them leadeth them Captives; They cry out, and say, Their souls suffer violence within them: No sinne, but Christ, is the beloved of their souls, he is the chiefest of ten thousands; yet some corruption or other beateth them often downe, they are more overtaken in such a corruption, than in any; Therefore they say, This is my iniquity, this is the *Saul* that is always pursuing of me, It is necessary the godly should understand this difference between a sinne beloved, and a sin violently tyrannizing over them: for this is most certain, whosoever giveth himself up willingly to one kind of sin, he is yet in the state of nature and wrath, he is not turned unto God.

III. Thirdly, *As many of Gods people have found their hearts weakest to resist some kind of sinnes, so the godly have for the most part some grace or other wherein they do most excell.* They have their way of grace, wherein they are most admirable: Thus *Moses* is marked for his meeknesse, *David* for sincerity and a faithfull heart, *Paul* for zealous labour in promoting the Gospel. Hence the godly are exhorted to think better of one another than their owne selves; because their is no grace, but one man may exceed another in: This should teach the head or eye not to despise the foot; for even that member hath some peculiar serviceableness which the other hath not.

IV. In the next place, consider the Signs or Discoveries of a beloved sinne, and they will appear thus.

1. First, *That which swallows and devours all thy other sins.* All other sins are but streams emptying themselves into that Fountain, and Ocean; this is the darling sin. The Pharisees peculiar sin was vain-glory, because all things were referred to that: For seeing such a sin is in the room of God to them, whose belly is their God, saith the Apostle, *Phil.* 3. 19. Therefore they refer all to that. The Adulterer, if he be greedy to get gain, it is but to consume upon his lusts; for that is the Idol of his heart; so Covetousnesse in an earthly man is called Idolatry; because all the sins he commits, all the fraud and wrong he doth, it is to satisfie this: As in a mans body, where there is one great wound, all the humours will run thither.

2. Secondly, *A beloved sin is that, wherein a man cannot endure to be reproved and rebuked sharply.* They can with great delight, hear you preach against such and such sins; but then come to that wherein they are most entangled, then all their malice and venome works, so that there is no such discovery of a darling sinne, as a mans impatience, and fretting against those who do faithfully rebuke. When *Herodias* desireth *Johns* head in a Platter, it was because his Tongue had

had reproved her beloved sin. Thus because the Pharisees were reproved by Christ for their beloved sins, hypocrisie, and Self-righteousness, they were moved with envy and hatred against him. Try then thy self, canst thou endure the sharp Rasor should come upon the soreest part? Is there nothing that is in the Word cutting like a two-edged sword, but thou art willing it should enter into thy very heart? This is very comfortable.

Thirdly, *This is a mans beloved sin, on which his mind, his heart, and all his labour is spent.* The Voluptuous man is described to be one that maketh provision for the flesh. The Adulterer is brought in by *Solomon* diligently observing the time for his Lusts. The malicious Enemy to godliness is said by *David* to go up and down the street like a Dogg waiting for an opportunity, & cannot sleep till he hath accomplished mischief. As *Joseph* was known to be *Jacob*'s Darling, because he bestowed a more excellent coat upon him than the rest, and so the elder Son was to have a double Portion, as most beloved; So that sin which hath a double Portion above others that which hath more of thy Cares, thy Thoughts, thy Heart; that is thy Darling sin: Oh kill that, crush that in the Egg, before it come to be a Cockatrice. Men should commune with their own hearts, and study themselves more than they do in this matter. 3.

Fourthly, *That is thy darling sin, which thou wouldst have spared above all.* Thou wouldest never stand delaying, but turn immediately to God, but for that. That which thou hidest in time of danger, as *Jehojadah* did young *Joas*, hoping in time to make him King. This is the *Goliah* of all the *Philistims*: Commonly when the Grace of God comes close to a mans heart, begins to wrestle and combate with sin; then there is no such sturdy and potent enemy as that beloved sin. All the difficulty is in throwing down that mountain. When there was a man very forward, and not very far from the Kingdome of Christ, our Saviour to try his sincerity, presently puts him upon the leaving his indeared sin, and then saith the Text, *He went away exceeding sorrowful.* This was the cup of Jelousie-water that did presently make his thigh to rot. What then is the sins that hinders thee alway? That is the τὸ κολόχον, the milstone about thy neck: If it were not for that, thou couldst gladly run in the way of Gods commandments: This is the great enemy to thy souls peace, spare it not but destroy it. 4.

Fifthly, *The darling sin may be found out by the easinesse to be overcome by it.* *Sampson* is easily perswaded by *Dalilah*, when none else in the world could steal away his heart. The Apostle bids us lay aside the sin that doth so easily beset us, *Heb.* 12. 1. Its the general rule of the Scripture, of what a man is overcome, that he is in bondage unto: And if a man be easily without any resistance overcome, then its an argument he is the more in bondage. Consider then what that sin is, which thou canst hardly refuse, what that is which finds the door alwayes open, and there know all thy calamity ariseth by that. Its an heavy slavery (if the soul could be sensible) to be at the command of any sin; when it saith, Go, thou goest; and when Come, thou comest: Thou canst deny nothing to it, as *Herod* could not to *Herodias*; Ask not half, but the whole Kingdome of Heaven, and thou wilt part with it to enjoy thy lusts. 5.

Thus you have heard how this particular sin of a man, which is his own indeared corruption may be found out.

Now let us consider, Why Conversion to God doth in a special manner make a man leave this: The work of Grace doth in a peculiar manner take off this yoke: That what *Ammon* did by unnatural, carnal lust; he hated *Tamar* as much and more than ever he loved her: So when men are once truly humbled for sin and turn to God, those particular lusts which were their delight, their sport, their constant practice, they are now most set against them; of all sinnes their Why conversion makes a man leave his Darling sins.

hearts do moſt riſe and ſwell with an holy indignation againſt them. Now the grounds are theſe:

1. First, *This beloved ſin was the ſtrength and power of all other ſins.* They all run into this: This is a kinde of an original mother ſin, that bred and nouriſhed all other tranſgreſſions. As *Sampſons* ſtrength lay in his hair, ſo all the power and efficacy of ſin in a man, ran into that Channel of his beloved ſin. That was the *primum mobile* which carried all the reſt with it: ſo that as it was given in command to the Souldiers, that they ſhould not fight with little, or great, but with the King of Iſrael: ſo grace in the heart of a man doth not ſo much aſſault leſſe ſins as this great one. Come, ſaith grace, let us deſtroy this, and all is ours. This is the ſtrong man that muſt be bound ere the houſe can be taken: This is the Damme that muſt firſt be deſtroyed. No wonder then, that a man intangled in any cloſe beloved ſin, can promiſe himſelf any true comfort or hope, for he is under the ſtrong power of ſin and Satan, as long as this is upon him.

2. Secondly, *Therefore a man muſt forſake this beloved ſin, becauſe in true converſion unto God, we are to leave ſin upon ſuch ſpiritual and Scripture-grounds, which are true in every ſin, as well as in any.* The grounds of turning from ſin are, becauſe its contrary to an holy God, it oppoſeth an heavenly and pure Law, it grieveth Gods Spirit, its the noiſome filthineſſe and dung of the ſoul: Why then if this be thy ground, then all this is true of thy beloved ſin as much as any; for that is againſt Gods holy will, that is oppoſite to a ſpiritual Law, that is contrary to purity and the beauty of the ſoul. Its an hypocritical Converſion, when men leave ſome ſins, and not others: they can part with ſome kinde of corruptions, but then there are others of which they ſay, as was of *Goliah's* ſword, none like that. Now all this is but deceit and frowardneſſe of heart, this is but halting before God; for if thy beloved luſt be ſin, if an enemy to God, if an adverſary to his glory, how canſt thou lodge it in thy ſoul? Oh that people would attend more to the true ſpiritual and acceptable ground of leaving any ſin, for that would ſweep all away, it would not leave an Hoof in *Egypt*.

3. Thirdly, *Therefore in Converſion, a man will be ſure to leave his peculiar ſin, becauſe all repentance and humiliation is a kinde of revenge, and ſpiritual judgement and condemning of our ſelves.* If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged of the Lord; ſo the *Corinthians*, that had been too conniving at the inceſtuous perſon, not indeavouring to purge out the old Leaven as they ſhould: when they began to turn from this ſin, then ſaith the Apoſtle, *What fear? yea what zeal, what indignation and revenge?* 2 Corin. 7. 11. *In all things ye have laboured to clear your ſelves in this matter.* Thus it is with a godly man; of all ſins that which was his greateſt delight, his greateſt practice, now his greateſt zeal and indignation is againſt: Was uncleanneſſe his beloved ſinne? Now he doth eſpecially abound in purity; ſo that all the world, yea, and God alſo may ſee him clear. Was Pride his darling ſin? then of all graces he is moſt cloathed with Humility. *Pauls* great ſin was perſecuting and deſtroying the Church of God once: but when converted, who had ſuch Fatherly bowels? who had the Church in his heart ſo much as he? As *Cranmer*, that had ſubſcribed with his right hand to that which was againſt his Conſcience, afterwards with revenge put that firſt into the Flames; So doth the true Convert; Of all ſins I will be revenged moſt of that, by which I moſt diſhonoured God. Thus *Mary Magdalen* takes that hair of hers, which had been uſed to allure others, and waſhes Chriſt Feet with it. And thoſe eye that had been wanton ſnares, do now ſtand beblubbered with Water. Thus the godly man will be avenged upon his ſpiritual luſts.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, *Converſion to God is the bringing of a man to true and ſolid Wiſdome.* Now that will preſently adviſe him to take heed of that ſin which will moſt eaſily ſeduce him. He will take heed of that fire which hath ſo grievouſly ſcorched him; He will remember the deadly wounds and bloody ſtroaks ſuch ſins have given his Conſcience; and therefore he is afraid, and trembleth at the very approach of ſuch ſins. *David* when he had been throughly humbled for his Murder of *Uriah*, afterwards refuſed to drink the Water that men jeoparded their lives for: This is the blood of man, he cryeth out: So will the true Convert be afraid to come near the borders, near the temptations of his old former ſins.

Laſtly, *Therefore doth Converſion make a man leave his darling ſins, becauſe it puts a man upon ſhewing the greateſt love he can to God, who hath ſhewed ſo much to him.* 5. Now wherein can he ſhew more ſervice and love to God, than by killing his *Abſolom*, by offering his Iſaac? Now, ſaith God, *I know thou loveſt me, becauſe thou haſt not ſpared thy onely beloved Sonne.* So God, Now I know thou art truly converted to me, for thou doeſt not ſpare thy dear luſts, thou doſt not hide thy beloved ſins any more: Love to God will put a man upon this; and no wonder, for it puts a man to loſe his Wife, Children, yea his dear life for Chriſts ſake: is it then any wonder, if it parts a man and his beloved ſinnes?

Uſe of *Inſtruction*, That all they are ſtill in their Hypocriſie, and lye under Gods wrath, who retain any beloved ſinne. What though thou doeſt many things; yet if thou wilt not part with thy *Herodias*, thou art in Gall and Wormwood. And this is the rather to be obſerved, becauſe a man may go far in the profeſſion of Religion, yet have ſome ſecret beloved ſinne that he hugs in his Boſome all the while. Oh throw that Toad out of thy heart; Chriſt cannot will not dwell in thy heart, till that enemy of his be diſlodged. Oh be a *Judas* be a Pillar of Salt to ſeaſon you. Did not he pray, hear, work Miracles in Chriſts Name, and yet lived in a ſecret beloved ſin? God will unmaſk ſuch Hypocriſie, and make thy ſinne finde thee out. *Uſe.*

SERM.

SERM. LXXVII.

Sheweth that all Persons have needed to turn unto God, and sets forth the true acceptable Motives to Repentance.

JER. 18. 11.

Return now every one from his evil way

IN this exhortatory conclusion hath been considered, 1. The duty, (*Return*) 2. The adjunct time (*Now.*) 3. The subject to whom, with the appropriation of it, *Every one from his evil way*: This latter part admits of a sub division; 1. The general term from which a man must turn, and that is, *An evil way.* 2. The restriction of it, *His evil way*: The restriction hath also been absolved. There remaineth onely one thing more in this Exhortation, and that is the general term, (*Evil way.*) Conversion is a motion; and as local motions have a term from which, and a term to which; Thus it is here, in spiritual Conversion; and you cannot clearly understand the nature of this duty, unless it be considered in both the terms: And of the term from which, at this time from this Text.

Obs. 1. The Observation, *The term from which we are to turn in our conversion unto God, is the evil and sin we live in.*

VVho must be converted. That which we are to move from, yea, run and fly from, is the impiety and transgression of our lives, every one that lyeth in any sin, must be turned upside down, as it were; his love must be where his hatred was; his grief where his delight was; his back, where his face was; and his face and affections upon that, on which his back and all contempt and scorn was. To turn and change from a mans former sins, is no disgrace, but a necessary duty, and a great dignity: Thus Conversion is a motion from sin, not like the turning of a door upon the same hinge, never moved out of his place. Wonder not that I am long on this subject; for I am not yet nere the bottom of this excellent Fountain of matter, and we shall draw up new and fresh water, not troubling you with the same matter that hath already been handled. For the discovery of this point; Consider,

First, *Who they are that are in sin, or live in sin, and therefore need Conversion:* For many a man is eternally undone, because he doth not see a necessity of his turning to God; he either takes for granted, that he is already converted, or he thinks conversion is onely for Pagans or Hereticks, to the true Christian faith; or some notorious gross sinners, whose sins are of a crimson colour. Therefore to undeceive and convince you herein, know and consider, what it is to be in sin, or who may be said to be in sin, and every such person needs conversion.

Every man. For, 1. All by nature are in a damnable state of sin.

First therefore, *Every one by nature is in the damnable state of sin, although he never*

never committed any actual impiety: Thus ſin was unknown to Heathens, and denyed by ſome Heretiques; but the Scripture doth plainly aſſert it, concluding us *To be children of wrath by nature* Eph. 2. he doth not ſay, by actions, by cuſtom, by practice, but *by nature:* This is the firſt ſtone, and the deep foundation that muſt be laid: This is called native, original, natural, and hereditary ſin. Till a man be inwardly and powerfully convinced of this, he cannot ever think of turning unto God; ſo that converſion is requiſite to every one that hath this birth-ſin: We come naturally with our back to heaven, and face to hell; now here muſt be a converſion unto God: Begin here, and ſtudy here, How were it poſſible that men ſhould ſit and hear ſo much of turning to God, and never begin to move towards him, but becauſe they feel not this natural averſeneſs in their whole man from God, and what is holy? Let no man, free from groſs ſins, and walking in an orderly civil way, think this duty of converſion doth not belong to him; for if thou hadſt no more ſin in thee than the childe new born, thou wert yet to turn unto God, as being in a dangerous path of death and deſtruction: yea, this converſion and turning from this innate corruption, is far more difficule, than from any actual impieties, for this is more cloſely bred in thee, and ſetled in thy bowels: The Scripture calls this thy body, thy fleſh, thy members, as if thou were turned into this ſin: This is the fountain, this is the root, this walketh with thee, riſeth with thee, dwells in thee, as in its proper poſſeſſion: ſo that in your turning from ſin, be ſure you go as deep as to this native filthineſs: Its not to turn thy coat, or thy skin, but thy very heart and inwards, when you are to turn unto God: We ſhall ſhew in time, of many turnings to God, but they laid no good foundation, they laid not the ax to the root of the tree, they cut off *Sampſons* hair, but plucked it not up by the root, and ſo the ſtrength of corruption prevailed over them again; ſo that this turning from ſin, is to turn from thy own ſelf, to leave thy own ſelf, and joyn with God, to be one with him: As iron put into the fire along while, loſeth its coldneſs, and its black colour, and looks like fire: Its a true and good ſaying of *Ambroſe, Homo recedens malè a Deo, cecidit in ſeipſum,* Man falling from God, fell into his own ſelf: So that he is like a beaſt tyed up in a cloſe dungeon; his thoughts, his affections, his deſigns are onely for himſelf, original corruption hath brought this perverſe diſtemper on a man; look then that thou break this Dragons head: Thou wilt finde thy ſelf within (how glorious ſoever in thy externals) like *Ezekiels* wall, whereon were pourtrayed the forms of all creeping and abominable things; or like *Peters* ſheet, that had all the kinds of unclean beaſts within, Thus thy heart hath all manner of vile and foul luſts cleaving unto thee; and therefore though thou were as innocent from actual ſin, as once in thy cradle, yet thou art to turn to God, and to forſake that preſent condition.

Secondly, That man is ſtill in ſin, and ſo needs converſion unto God, *who hath daily inward delights and luſts after ſin, though it may be, fear, and ſhame, and outward puniſhment keep them from acting the evil they would do.* It was a received opinion among the Phariſees, and many Heathens, that the meer will and purpoſe to ſin, did not deſerve puniſhment, no not from God: From man indeed it cannot: but to think thoughts, deſires and inward purpoſes of ſin, are free alſo with God, is to deny the Law to be a ſpiritual law, forbidding all the inward motions and affections of ſin; it is to deny God to be a father of ſpirits, who beholdeth and tryeth the inward man, and doth moſt abhor ſpirit filthineſs. Hence *Peter, 2 Pet. 1. Beſeecheth as ſtrangers to abſtain from thoſe luſts that war againſt the ſoul:* Grant therefore that thy life be unſpotted from all the groſs ſins of the world, yet as long as unruly luſts prevail in thy heart, as long as inward ſecret motions of ſin prevail over thee, thou art far off from God, and therefore needeſt turning to him: Oh how well were it, if all thy filthy luſts within were diſcovered to thee! if thou didſt judg thy ſelf a ſerpent, which,

2. Having inward delights and luſts after ſin.

though it hath a glittering, glorious skin, yet is full of poiſon and venom within.

3. And ſome live in the conſtant and daily committing of groſs and known ſins.

Thirdly, he is ſtill in his ſins, and ſo needeth turning to God, that doth conſtantly and daily live in the committing of groſs and known ſins. This is as clear as that thou liveſt and breatheſt, and to this man properly the Text ſpeaks, *Return from his evil way.* An evil way, is the trade, cuſtom, and ordinary practice of a man: Oh then if we behold the lives of moſt men, who is there that doth not need converſion? who doth not walk in one evil way or other? who doth not live in the practice of one known ſin or other? Then what an heavy judgement is this of God, that no more are converted? that ſo few ever turn from their wicked way, , but live and dye in it? How often, as the Scripture cryeth out, *Return, O Shunamite, Return, Return,* have the Miniſters of God cryed aloud to ſuch, Return, O return, and yet men go on diſperately in paths of rebellion againſt God! Oh why is it, that when ſo many in our Congregations need this grace of converſion, ſo few obtain it! Know, thou that liveſt in the cuſtomary commiſſion of any known groſs ſin, thou art ſpeedily to get out from it, as *Lot* was out of *Sodom*, when fire and brimſtone were ready from heaven to deſtroy him.

4. Or if they never yet repented of them.

Laſtly, They live ſtill in their ſin, and ſo need converſion to God, Who though now they do not commit their ſins they once did, *yet never have truly and unfeignedly repented of them*: Oh its again and again to be conſidered, upon what terms men leave their ſins; Thou waſt ſuch & ſuch a prophane wretch once, but now thou art not; How comes this forbearance of time? if it be not from godly ſorrow, & a true apprehenſion of Gods diſpleaſure, thou art ſtill in thy ſins, though they were committed many years ago. Ica one thing not to commit ſin again, & another thing to turn from ſin: The former may be done upon many grounds that are not heavenly and gracious, but the latter is only upon pure grounds: But of this more in the counterfeit work of converſion.

Thus you ſee how every Auditor is not to let theſe ſermons paſs as general things, like a tale that is told, wherein they are not concerned, but to conſider, Is not all this ſpoken to me? am not I in the number of thoſe, who yet need converſion? was it ever done upon me? when did God ever make this change upon me? Oh this undoeth you! notwithſtanding all preaching, and all your hearing, no man ſaith, What have I done? am I turned to God? you ſee every man by nature is a Blackamore, that muſt be made white: If thou haſt not outward wickedneſs to turn from, thou haſt that inbred pollution, yea, thy own ſelf to turn from. Thus you ſee who are to turn from ſin.

II. The acceptable motives and grounds of repentance.

Secondly, Which is the quinteſſence of this point, Let us conſider what are the motives and grounds which are acceptable with God, when we turn from ſin; for, as you heard, Men have left their ſins, they have not ſo much turned from them, but even run from them. *Ahab*, the *Iſraelites*; *Judas*, thoſe turned from their ſins, would do ſo no more, at leaſt as their preſent condition was: yet they never truly turned from any one ſin: Therefore conſider, that every kinde of forſaking ſin, is not preſently a turning unto God. That you may underſtand this, conſider what are the right motives with a true convert to leave ſin; he will never do or live as he hath done, no, not for all the world; And

1. Firſt, *There are inferior or leſs principal motives, which do lawfully work upon a man, to make him turn from ſin, ſo long as they are in the ſecond place.* And that is the Argument in the Text, *Gods framing and bringing evil upon men for their ſins.* When God complaineth that he had thus and thus ſcourged them, yet they did not return unto him; this argueth, *That its lawfull to turn from ſin, becauſe of the fear of puniſhment, and Gods judgements accompanying it.* And commonly this is the firſt motive in place, though the laſt in dignity and worth: Let then all the threatnings, all the wrath of God denounced againſt ſin, make thee ſpeedily turn from it, for God (as the Magiſtrate) doth not bear his ſword in vain, neither

neither doth the Scripture threaten in vain; but if there be no more reason than this, if this be the principall and the onely, than thou lovest sin still in thy heart, thou art kept from it, as the Dog by a clog on him, from doing his mischief. The godly, though they may be first awakened to turn from sin by these shoots in their sides, and yokes on their necks, yet they stay not in these; but they have more Noble and Divine grounds why they turn from sin; And they are these:

1. First, *The offence and displeasure that is given God, by their iniquities*: Oh this prevaileth with them more than all external punishments in the world: Alas, what is losse, or death, or hell it self, to Gods frowns, to Gods displeasures? Thus *David* in his conversion to God, after his grievous relapse, is affected with this, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evill in thy sight*, Psal. 51. It was not losse of childe, and many other sad chastisments that followed him and his posterity, did so much affect him as this; He had displeased God, and done evil in his sight. This is a sure and everlasting ground, those that walk by this rule, will never prove a deceitful bow.

2. Secondly, *They turn from sin, because of the contrariety it hath to the pure, spirituall and holy Law of God*: And this is a sure sign of a true convert, when a man parteth with his sin, because of the enmity and repugnancy it hath to the holy Commandment of God: This is to leave sin, because of the nature of it, and for no false cause. Now though God had not confirmed his Law by any threatnings, or made it penable in such an high way of punishment, yet the heart of him, who thus turneth to God, could not close with it, or imbrace it. The Apostle maketh the very nature of sin to lie in this, that it is a transgression of the Law: Now then when a man shall leave sin, not onely because it hath the curses and the punishment of the Law, but because it is the transgression of the Law; this is a good sign. You may behold this excellent disposition in *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. What is that which makes him so sadly bewail his captivity and thraldome to sin? see the motive, *Because the Law was holy and spirituall, and he was carnall*: The purity of the Law, and the impurity of his spirit, made such anguish and conflict in his soul: Oh then consider, what is that which sets thy soul on turning from sin, is it merely an external punishment, not the loathsome and contrary nature of sin to Gods pure commands? this is not compleat and sincere; doth not argue thy turning to be from a true inward principle, but from external violence. Even as the wheel in the mill moveth as long as the force of the waters compell it, but when they cease, there the wheel ceaseth; all see this motion is not naturall, but violent; so it is here, as long as the waters of afflictions are upon thee, they set the wheel of thy heart moving in prayer and other duties, but when they are dryed up, then thou standest unmovable in thy sins. Oh then hunger and thirst for this frame of a true convert, that thou mayest say, O Lord, though sin hath so many inducements of pleasure and carnal advantage on one hand, and though it hath so much wrath and terrour on the other hand, yet neither of these prevaile so much with me, as because sin is contrary to so holy a rule, opposite to so heavenly a principle. He that can upon good grounds say this, needeth not doubt of the integrity of his heart.

3. Thirdly, *The true Convert leaves his sin and turneth from it, because of love to God, and those great mercies which sin doth thwart*: *Ye that love the Lord, hate evill, hate that which is evill, and cleave to that which is good*, Rom. 12. Men may turn from sin, and yet love it for all that; they part with it, because sin is either taken from them, or they from it: Who can say, but that *Pharaohs* dismission of the people of Israel, was wholly against his will? had it not been for the hard prodon his back, he would never have yeelded; now all these things are by force and constraint. God loves a willing giver, so he loveth a willing forsaker of his sins, one that doth it with love and delight in him. When two things are so united and knit together, they may either be violently separated by forcible

breaking the ice, or kindly by the thawings and melsings of the Sun: Thus it is here, when men and their sins are congealed together, the Devil hath married them together; now these may be separated violently, by some forcible judgments of God, that they cannot sin, though they would, as they have done; or else in a kindly, gracious manner, and that is by the love of God shed abroad in their hearts; for whatsoever is not done out of love to God, is not thankworthy, neither doth God accept it: But the hypocrite, when he is forced to leave his sin, it is with him, as it was with the Devils that possessed bodies, they came out indeed when Christ commanded, for they could do no otherwise, but sore against their wils, therefore they were vexed, and tore and rent the possessed party as they went out; thus they leave sin as unwillingly: Therefore let the love of God be kindled like a fire in thy breast, and that will separate thee from sin.

4. Fourthly, *He turneth from sin, because of the unkindnesse and ingratitude that is in every transgression*: All sin hath rebellion in it, against God as our Soveraign, and unkindnes against him, as a merciful father, and the fountain of all the good we have: Now he that doth truly turn from sin, is much moved thereunto, because of the unkindness therein to all Gods mercies, because God was so ill recompensed after his love to us: Thus God aggravates *Davids* sin, by enumerating the several mercies that were bestowed on him, *If all this had been too little, I would have given thee more*, saith God; so many mercies, so many hot coals of fire, and this makes a man escape from his sins. We might also shew, that because these grounds of turning from sin, hold in every particular transgression, therefore their conversion is universal; but of that hereafter.

III. Now let us instance in those things that hinder this motion or turning unto God: And

The hinderances of it.

1. *First, Want of spiritual life*: You wonder not if the dead carcass lie always in the same place, and do not stir it self; neither is it strange to see men dead in sin, and buried in the grave of it, never taking one step forward to heaven.

2. Secondly, As in corporal motion, there are two things requisite, the eye to direct, and the feet to walk; so for the soul to turn from sin, there must be a right and pure eye, and there must be sound and good feet. The eye is understanding, especially faith, which is the pupil of the eye, that discovers the danger we are in, the judgements imminent over us, and this will make us stir up and walk. When that thick *Egyptian* darkness was, the people sat still, and did not stir out of their places for several dayes together; and thus men in darkness of mind, that know nothing of God, Heaven, or their own damnation, they sit still and see none of this evill coming on them.

3. Again, Affections are often called the feet of the soul; by these we turn from sin, when we are converted, love to God, grief for sin, and hatred of it, desire and hope of pardon, and enjoyment of Gods favour: But the natural man is like the poor Cripple, that lay thirty years by the pool of *Bethesda*, he cannot move himself to be healed. As the poor bed-ridden man, he cannot stir or move himself; so neither can such, who lie sin-sicken, under the power and command of all foul iniquities.

Use of Instruction, how much this Text, and this point of Conversion, concerneth most of our hearers; for who is not in one evil way or other? Conversion is not onely to be preached to those that are in the High wayes, Gamblers and Heathens, but to you who frequent the solemn assemblies; yet what heart goeth home, and thinketh with himself, I am yet to be converted, I am yet to turn from my evil way: Do not easily perswade your selves, that the work is done already, no such a change as this would make more noise in thy conscience, it would make more alterations in thy life, thy soul would have been in travel and pangs ere this man-childe had been brought forth. How art thou turned from that, which thou art committing every day? how art thou turned from thy

thy prophaneness when it is still in thy mouth, in thy words, in thy hands, and actions. Oh if you did consider you had to do with God, and Scripture Truths will abide so, when he hath cursed and damned thee into hell, thou wouldest not let these things passe away as thou dost. You will know that conversion hath been preached unto you, and that all thy destruction and damnation is of thy self.

SERM. LXXVIII.

Of the wilfull obstinacy that is in some men, with the causes thereof; and that ignorance of ones duty is no excuse.

JER. 18. 12.

And they said, There is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evill heart.

WE have considered *Jeremiahs* Commission in the two parts of it. The next thing to be considered, is the successe, or the event of it: and here we shall find blasphemy writ (as it were) on their foreheads. Nothing but peremptory and wilful obstinacy against this so just, necessary, and reasonable an Exhortation. And yet were this denial like that of the younger son in the Parable, who said, *He would not, but afterward repented, and went*, it had been more tolerable; but they persevere in this impudent disobedience: So that we may take notice of the aggravation of their resolved wickedness. 1. In their peremptory Negation, *And they said there is no hope*: Although it was Gods goodness to invite them to turn to him, as it was their advantage, not his; and although he threatens them with that evil he is preparing for them, yet they say, *No*: And herein their rude and obstinate rebellion is more evident, in that they make no excuses, pretend no reasons, but barely say, *They will not turn unto God from their sins*. Note in our Saviours Parable, that were invited to a feast, though it was their sin to make any thing in the world an impediment to their coming, yet they feigned reasons, & were willing to be excused; but how they tel the Prophet plainly sets forth, *They will be what they are, and they will not change*. And this their obstinacy is further declared in a twofold amplification. First, in that Phrase, *There is no hope*: There is the same expression, and the Hebrew word in Chapter 2. 25. some render it *Desperatum est*, It is desperate; we are resolved to go on whatsoever it costs us *Vatabl. expectoratio est*, in this sense, our heart is wholly turned aside, and plucked off from God; we cannot love him, or obey his commands. Others, *Obfirmati sumus*, we are setled, and obdurate in our wickedness *Jeremiah* preaching is in vain to us; he may hold his tongue, for we are set upon that which is evil. Our Translators render it, *There is no hope*, and that may be in this twofold respect. First, We have for so long a time given our selves up to the ways of wickedness, we have thus long accustomed our selves to them, that now there is no hope that ever we should become better. Or, 2. we have for so long a time provoked God by our wicked rebellions, that there is no hope for us to be accepted with God, if we would return to him: But this seemeth not so proper, because at this time God did hold out his Scepter of Grace to them, if they would

come in, and turn from their evil ways. Now you may demand, Whether the Israelites did in plain & direct terme answer Jeremiah thus? For it might seem improbable that they would acknowledge their way an evil way, & yet live in it: whereas they must needs do so, if they did *in terminis* thus refuse the Prophet; *For* (say they) *we will walk every one in the imagination of his evil heart*: Or whether doth not the Prophet say, *They said so*, because by their lives and conversations, wilfully persisting in their former impieties; They said thus by their actions, though not by their words? They might do both; for we see the Israelites sometimes telling *Jeremiah* to his face, *That they would not do what God had commanded them by his mouth*, Jer. 44.16. a notable place to discover their avowed and open disobedience to God.

Obj. Obs. *That there are some men, who though they bear never so much of their duty to turn from their sins unto God, yet are wilfully resolved to continue in the same.* It was not *Jeremiahs* portion onely, or the Prophets and Apostles in former times, but in all ages the Ministry of God meets with such incorrigible and desperate hearers. Let the word of God sound as terribly, as that Trumpet will at the day of judgement: Let all ways be used, *Johns* austerity, or Christs meekness: the mountains of their sins cannot be removed into a sea of tears, and godly sorrow. Do we not every day see this fulfilled? How few are the hearers that come with this purpose, and prayer unto God, that they may go out from Gods presence, cleansed from their leprosie? That they who came swine, may return sheep? That they who came Crows, may go home Doves? This undooth you, that you come not to hear, that ye may be changed, made other men, but build still upon your old rotten foundation?

Two kind of wicked hearers

To make this Doctrine like fire in your bowels, consider, That under the Ministery of the word, there are two kinde of sinfull and wicked hearers.

I. Ignorance.

First, Those that live in their sins, and in an unconverted estate, by cloke of affected, or a grosse ignorance. Or 2. Such who have knowledge, and yet knowingly, and wilfully commit those sins, that inwardly their own Consciences, enlightened by the word, condemns them for. In these two ranks all wicked men may be placed: For as for Heathens, who have a meer negative ignorance or unbelief in God and his word, because they never had Prophets sent among them, (some Divines) say they are not damned for the not knowing, or not believing of those things which are manifested meerly by revelation, but because they detained the naturall light of Conscience in unrighteousnes. We speak not then of such, but of those who are under the sun-beams of the word, & yet are frozen in their sins, (a Devils miracle) or under the sweet droppings of the Gospel, yet are a barren wilderness. Now some of these persevere in their sins, from a sinfull damnable ignorance. They know not the necessity of conversion: they understand not what all these sermons tend to: they are altogether unacquainted with such a work of Gods Spirit. This ignorance doth not excuse. For the servant that doth not know his masters will, *shall yet be beaten with many stripes*, Luke 12.47. because it is either first, an affected ignorance, they desire to be in darkness, & not to see the light, that so they may the more quietly, and securely lye down in their sins; they will not understand, that so they may not do good: there is this horrible impiety upon mens hearts, that they are afraid of divine light: they shut the eyes, lest they should behold that which is Truth, or good: even as a man draweth the curtain that no light may hinder him to take his rest; as the thief hateth the light, because it discovers his wickedness. Take heed then thou art not in the number of such prophane wretches; thou carest not for hearing, preaching, for reading the Scripture, acquainting thy self & family with the principles of religion: This will breed scruples in thy Conscience; this will make thee see thy prophanness, thy injustice, to be crying sins, & therefore thou stoppest thy ear with the deaf Adder, that no inchanting may draw thee out of the hole. This is affected ignorance of

Secondly

ſecondly, It is groſs ignorance, and that is which cometh by negligence, and prophane careleſneſs: And this is the cauſe that moſt in our Congregations are ſo ignorant about Religion, about Converſion, and theſe main points of godlineſs. A prophane negligence, they have no hearts, no minde, no affections to ſuch things; there is nothing belongs to their trade, to their husbandry, but they can skill in it, onely in divine things they are as brutiſh as beaſts. Think not that this ignorance will excuſe you; ſay not, I am not book-learned, ſuch things are too high for me: What, wouldſt thou be thought to be a Chriſtian, and yet the neceſſary Principle of religion too high for thee? Thou art to lay aſide all thy endeavour after all other things in this life, till thou haſt attained to this: If thou doſt not eat of this tree of knowledge, thou canſt never eat of the tree of life. Oh then that at laſt God would make us Miniſters ſons of thunder, to awaken and terrify you out of this groſs ignorance.

The ſecond ſort of ſinners living in their impieties are theſe in the Text, who have knowledge and inſtruction, yet are ſo deſperately wicked as they will perſiſt in it however: And ſuch are all wicked men who live in groſs ſins, that are not onely condemnded by the Word, but by a mans own heart. There is no Sweerer, Adulterer, Drunkard, but he ſaith as theſe in the Text, *No, but we will do after the luſts of our owne hearts.* Now though the other are inexcuſable, becauſe their ignorance is wilful, ſo theſe are much more to be reproved. Chriſt prayed, *Father, forgive them, becauſe they know not what they do*, Luke 23. 34. But here it is rather, *Father, let thy wrath fall on them, for they know what they do.* *Gregory* and *Auſtin* ſpeaking of theſe places, *They go quick into hell, and the earth ſwallowed them up quick*, apply it thus (if by way of alluſion it may be received:) ſuch who ſin wilfully, who know their ſin, who feel their ſin, whoſe conſciences are quick to condemn them: *Oh* (ſay they) *theſe go quick to hell* and hell ſwalloweth theſe alive as it were. Now it may eaſily be demonſtrated, that many ſinners are in this latter rank with theſe in the Text, They ſay, *No, we will do as we have done*, take the pleaſures of ſin we uſe to do, whatſoever is ſaid to the contrary. Thus men follow one another deſperately into deſtruction: Even as *Saul*, he firſt fell deſperately on his ſword to kill himſelf, and afterwards his armour-bearer as violently deſtroyed himſelf. It is an heavy judgement of all judgements, thus willingly and wittingly not to kill his body, but his ſoul, which is the greateſt ſin of ſelf-murther. 2. Prophane.

In the next place conſider (as was hinted before) that two wayes we may diſcover this obſtinate diſpoſition; either expreſly in words, by a publick owning this impudent rebellion, or in our actions and ends onely: Of the former ſort the Scripture giveth ſome inſtances, ſuch as thoſe that ſay, *The Lord ſeeth not, and bid the knowledge of the Lord depart from them*, Job 21. 14. And again, ſuch as Pſal. 12. ſay, *Who is the Lord? Our tongues are our own, we will not be controlled.* Of the latter ſort are thoſe, who though they utter not this miſchief with their mouths, yet by their works they deny him. Therefore think not to ſay within your ſelves, We are not ſuch impudent ſinners, we do not belch ſuch blaſphemy with our mouths; for if thou goeſt on wilfully in thy wicked way, againſt all thoſe admonitions, and exhortations that are diſpenſed to thee, God will judge thee in the number of ſuch high offenders. Cauſes of obſtinacy in ſin. 1. Atheiſm.

Therefore in the third place obſerve, What are thoſe cauſes that tumble down men headlong this hill of deſtruction, that they ſeemed to be carried into hell as violently as the ſwine poſſeſſed by the Devil were into the bottom of the ſea: for men came not to be thus wicked at the firſt temptation. And one cauſe is *Atheiſm & unbelief*: Where this is, preſently a floodgate is ſet open for all impiety & wickedneſs, as faith is the firſt foundation ſtone in the building of all godlineſs: A man muſt believe that God is & that he is a rewarder of all thoſe that ſeek him: ſo Atheiſm & unbelief is the firſt ſin that makes way for all other impieties. He believeth there is no God, and that God is not a ſevere Judge of thoſe that do wickedly.

edly, Hence are thoſe expreſſions of the moſt flagitious men; *Is there knowledge in the moſt high? And God is not in all their thoughts*: So that when the fear of God and his judgements is ſtricken out of mens Conſciences by unbelief, you may call that man Legion, for many thouſand of Luſts will quickly poſſeſs him. Oh then if thou wouldſt be kept from this pit of confuſion, daily quicken up in thee faith in God, and all his attributes, as the Scripture reveaſeth him, and fear of him in all thy wayes; for if theſe will keep a man from ſwallowing Gnats, much more Camels.

2. Long cuſtom in ſinning.

Secondly, *Another cauſe is long cuſtome in ſinning.* This makes a mans Conſcience like Leviathans ſcales, as *Job* ſpeaks of; this doth not onely make a man dead in ſin, but burieth him in the grave, and rolls a great ſtone over him: this makes a man like the fat beaſt prepared for the ſlaughter, and yet fils us for the preſent with all joy and content: Theſe often ſay, *There is no hope*, We have lived ſo long in the pleaſures of our ſin, and they are ſo habituated in us, that we cannot do otherwiſe. Hence experience tells us, that many men ſin, and that grievouſly; yet they do not ſo much as think they are ſinners, becauſe cuſtome hath taken away all feeling from them.

3. Proſperity and abnndance of eaſe.

Thirdly, *Proſperity and abundance of eaſe and plenty in the committing of their ſins, doth alſo make men lift up themſelves preſumptuouſly againſt God*: Thus God by *Jeremiah*, *I ſpake unto thee in thy proſperity, but thou wouldſt not hear*: And *Solomon* obſerveth it, becauſe judgement was not preſently executed, *Therefore the heart of man was ſet in him to do wickedly*, Eccleſ. 8. 11. And *David* alſo takes notice of this, when being greatly troubled at the proſperity of the wicked, and relating all things are according to their hearts deſires, he addeth, *Therefore violence compaſſeth them about as a chain*, Pſal 73. 6. What was it that puffed up *Nebuchadnezzar*, ſo that he made himſelf as God, and *Tyre* and *Sidon*, that they ſet their hearts as God, but outward greatneſs? Therefore ſucceſs and proſperity in wickedneſs, makes men exceeding bold, even againſt God himſelf.

4. Hardneſs of heart.

Fourthly, *Hardneſs of heart*: This doth violently carry on men to wickedneſs, for as long as that ſtone is, there can no mollifying, or ſoftening impreſſion be received. Thus the Apoſtle argueth, Rom. 2. *Deſpiſeſt thou the goodneſs of God, and after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart treaſureſt up wrath?* hardneſs, and then impenitency. Oh what is the reaſon that men do not give over, but ſtill adde more wickedneſs? Is it not becauſe of this hardneſs? It is a vain thing for the Artificer to think to bring his cold Iron into any form or faſhion before it be melted, and heated in the fire.

5. Deſpair.

Fifthly *Deſpair*, That ſometimes makes a man heap iniquity upon iniquity; he thinketh he can be no worſe than he is, and therefore he will eat and drink, for to morrow he ſhall dy, he ſhall be damned: Thus as you heard ſome explained this, *There is no hope*, that is, we have committed ſuch foul abominations, and have ſinned ſo preſumptuouſly, that there is no hope, God will not receive us if we ſhould come. This was *Cain's* condition, deſpair made him cry out, *his ſins were greater than he could bear*, and therefore he never humbleth himſelf before God, but goeth on in his reſolved wickedneſs.

6. The Devils dominion over thee.

Laſtly, *The Devils great power and dominion he hath over ſuch men, makes them boggle at no impiety*. Theſe are the Devils inſtruments, prepared for every high degree of wickedneſs: As God hath his ſervants, & precious veſſels fitted for all his greateſt imployment; ſo theſe are by the Devil prepared for the worſt kind of drudgery: Thus the Devil entering into *Judas* heart, taking greater hold of him than ever, then he can guide him to that perfidious act of wickedneſs to betray Chriſt into his enemies hands yea, & can ſo horribly diſſemble as to give him a kiſs, pretending much reverence at that very time of treachery. Thus you ſee what are thoſe mill-ſtones that are about ſuch mens necks to preſs them down into the ſea. Here muſt be one Objection anſwered, & that is, *How can men ſin willingly and knowingly?* for it not a received rule among Philoſophers, & own-

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ed by Divines, that *Omnis peccans est ignorans*, *All sins come from ignorance*? And is not this another Text, *Deceived they are, That go astray, because it is evil. Nemo tendens malum operatur*? and the reason is, because no faculty can be carried out beyond his object: as the understanding cannot give assent to any thing that is false, it is impossible but it should believe that which is true, or appearing so; so it cannot be but that the will should will good, or what it judgeth good. How then can they sin, when they know it to be sin?

The Answer is two-fold; Those mentioned rules are true, but thus men come to sin wilfully and knowingly. 1. Although they have the knowledge of sins in the general, and do in the universal believe these things to be sin, yet in the particular they do not consider it at that moment of sinning, so that if we take ignorance for imprudence and inconsideration, that men do not weigh circumstances or actions in the balance, then all sins come from ignorance. Or 2. Men come to sinne wilfully, because as their Consciences tell them such actions are sins; so their sense or corrupt affections, present at the same time the pleasure and the profit of sin, and by this means, they take the bait, not attending to the hook; and thus the evill of sin doth not so much deter them, as the seeming good of sin doth allure them.

Use of Exhortation to all that hear this Truth. Take heed that there be not many among you of this wilful obstinate rebellion against God. How can God or his Prophets judge it otherwise, when he hath not only framed evil, but actually executed his severe wrath upon you by sore judgements, yet many return not from their evil ways. If you are not guilty herein, Why then after so many Exhortations and admonitions doth thou yet embrace thy sins? What is this but like that in the Text, to say, *No, we will walk after the imaginations of our own hearts*. To be sure thou wilt confess that there is this negligence. It still after this Sermon thou hast peace to thy wickedness, for it will come to this, either (Lord) I am convinced, I will stand out no longer, I will give up my self to thee; or else, For all that is said, I am resolved to go on in my impieties. Oh do not think to plead ignorance, think not to say, *Lord forgive me, for I knew not what I do*: Yes, thou dost know what thou dost, and thy own Conscience with the word of God doth constantly convince thee for it. Now consider the aggravation of sinning thus wilfully. It is an argument of one that is hopeless, and incurable; for if thou notest do the day of judgement, and carest not for the threatnings of God, What remaineth to cure thee? Hath not God used all means to reclaim thee, and yet thou art in thy sins?

2. Consider, God will one day overmatch that stately spirit of thine, he will turn thy laughter into terror, thy jollity into horror. *Who hath hardened himself against the Lord, and prospered?* Job. 9. 4. Think not that this impudent boldness and prophane securitie will always animate thee, no, God hath his time when he will make thee tremble and quake before him.

SERM. LXXIX.

Of turning not onely from ſin, but to God; And how many wayes men may do the former, and not the latter; Alſo, what it is to turn to God.

JOEL 2. 12, 13.

Therefore alſo now ſaith the Lord, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with faſting, and with weeping and mourning: And rent your hearts, and not your garments, &c.

THe former part of the Chapter is very elegant & copious in deſcribing a day of darkneſs, of thick darkneſs; that is, a day of Gods judgements, and his fierce anger. The Prophet is very rhetorical and Metaphorical in ſetting this judgement before their eyes. Some underſtand theſe Verſes conjoyned together of the Army of the *Aſſyrians*, or ſome other potent Enemy, that God would raiſe againſt the *Iſraelites*. But *Piſcator* from *Verſe* 25. doth probably gather, that this whole diſtruction in ſeveral Verſes, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. is not to be applied to any Army of men and horſes, but to that numerous company of Vermine, Locuſts, Caterpillars and Canker-worms, that God ſent among them to devour their fruit and corn; which the Prophet calls *verſe* 25. *Gods great Army*; and indeed the Prophets phraſe ſeemeth to conclude this, for ſaith he of this Army, *verſe* 4. *The appearance of them, is as the appearance of horſes, and like fierce horſes of chariots upon the mountains ſhall they leap.* Thus God many times uſeth the vileſt and moſt loathſome creatures, to punish the proudeſt and moſt lofty men; for as they ſay of Gods providence and wiſdome in making of the creatures, he is *Maximus in minimis*, the greateſt in the leaſt; he is moſt dreadful and terrible, in the moſt contemptible inſtruments. It troubled *Abimelech* to be killed by a woman; and what a debaſement was it to *Pharaoh* and *Herod* to be overmatched by Frogs and Lice? Oh how greatly is God to be feared, who hath thouſands of inviſible Armies, that he can raiſe to deſtroy thoſe that oppoſe him. After the ſolemn and magnificent deſcription of this dreadful judgement, the Prophet adviſeth the *Iſraelites*, what is the duty God requireth of them, their caſe is not yet deſperate. Caterpillars and Locuſts are loathſom to them; let their ſins be ſo, which are indeed the true Canker-worms that deſtroy their mercies: This judgement would make the earth and heavens to tremble, *verſe* 10. let it work ſo upon their hearts. As God would puniſh them with the vileſt of creatures, ſo let them be more vile in their own eyes, than monſters and beaſts. If they would have God turn away his judgements, let them turn from their ſins.

This Text I have choſen, becauſe it containeth the *term to which* of our converſion. We have already handled the term from which, and that is *Sin*: Now the term to which is to be conſidered, and that is, *God*, ſo that in the words you have the preface to the duty, and the duty: The preface containeth the authority

thority and divine command inforcing to it, *Thus now saith the Lord*; it's the great God of heaven that requireth this, who by his word made heaven and earth, to whom the winds and seas obey; how much rather should man? Oh apply this to your hearts; Who is it but God that bids me turn from sin? it's not the Minister so much, it's not the Messenger or Ambassador so much that I refuse, as God himself; is not his wisedom and his Soveraignty enough to command present obedience. 2. The duty; and there is 1. The duty it self, *Turn ye*, which is dispatched. 2. The term to which of this motion, *Even unto God*. 3. The maner, *With your whole heart*. 4. The effects, *With fasting and mourning*. 5. The form or nature of it, *Rent your hearts and not your garments*. 6. The motive to incourage, *For God is gracious and merciful, &c.*

We are in order to fix upon the term to which, and that is God, *Turn ye even to God*. *Even to me*, implieth, that a man may turn and turn, and yet not turn even to him; he falls short of this center, he commeth not to his journeys end: From whence Observe,

That it is not enough to turn from our sins, but we must turn even to God. *Obs.* 1.

It's not enough to go out of *Egypt*, but we must enter into *Canaan*; its not enough to hate evil, but we must cleave to that which is good. Turne to me, even to me; let nothing else be the center, the end of your motion. This point is of great consequence; for hereby I shall discover the counterfeit conversions of many, *And so set the true and counterfeit together*, and not as in other Texts, handle the counterfeits separately by themselves. That it is not enough to turn from sin, unless we turn even to God, appeareth by that complaint, *Hos.* 7.16. *They return, but not to the most high, they are like a deceitful bow*. How do they return, but not to the most high because they were diligent in fasting, humiliation, and the outward exercises of repentance, but still they were hypocrites in heart; and therefore proverbially compared to the broken bow, that seemeth, as it were, to send forth his arrow directly upon the mark, but the string breaking, it either falls on the ground, or flyeth back on the face of the Archer; so they seemed by all their external duties, to aim at God, and at him, but all fell upon themselves; they looked no further than to their own advantages. For opening of this, consider, how many wayes men may turn from sin, and yet not to God. 2. What it is to turn even to God. And

1. How many wayes men may turn from sin, and yet not to God.

First; *Men turn from sin, but not to God, when they commit them no more, because the temptations and occasions are taken away*: So that if they would, yet they cannot have an opportunity to satisfie or accomplish their lusts: There is nothing more ordinary than this; men conclude they are converted, because they do not sin as they have done; whereas the true cause is the temptations and opportunities are removed; so that there is not the work of Gods grace changing thy heart, but the work of his providence removing the objects thereof. Snakes and adders they lie in their holes and are alive as well in winter as in summer, yet because in winter they want the warm reviving beams of the Sun, therefore they appear not out of their holes: Thus sin, it may be, is as lively and powerful in thee as ever, but there are not the kindly and warm temptations to draw it forth: So then, this is no turning to God, because thy heart is still the same. The Lyon is a Lyon, though his claws be pared off, and he tied up in a dungeon. That King who stretched out his hand to lay hold on the Prophet, and his arm withered, was never the more innocent, because he did not actually commit his designed mischief; and certainly if the hearts of godly men have deceived them, that they have thought it not possible for them to commit such sins, as they have been warned about; as we see in *Peter* about his Apostacy, no wonder if wicked men do so greatly delude their own souls. It may be then thou canst not be unclean, as thou hast been, thy body is an

old painful decrepit body; thou canst not be such a Prodigal as thou hast been, for thou hast not wherewith to do it: Alas! thou art not converted from sin, thou art onely deprived of the instruments of sin; therefore stand thou by, for here is no glad tidings for thee.

Secondly, *They turn from sin, but not to God, that forsake their gross wicked ways, but then either go no further than meer civility, or else divert to some superstitious way of worship*: This is much to be regarded, for men swallow down poyson, while they think it is honey: And

First, Those that turn to civility onely, dy in the Wilderness, and never come to *Canaan*; yet this is a great conversion and change in the worlds account: If they see a Prodigal turned a good husband; if a dissolute debauched man, a sober temperate man, they cry out, Behold a true convert! But this is to turn half way onely to God: They leave the sin and set upon the contrary duty, but from false and infirm principles: They turn not to God, to close with him, to receive him as their Lord and King, onely they have some inferiour reasons, which make them thus change their lives: Fear of poverty and hardship makes them better husbands; so the indangering of their bodily health by gross intemperance, makes them more sober: Now in all this a man, though he turneth from his sin, yet because his motions are onely humane, such as wise Heathens have propounded to themselves, therefore they turn not unto God: These that from prophane men, turn to be meer civil men onely, and not godly, are, as it was with *Jonah*, who had got a goard to defend him from the heat of the Sun, and he thought now he had a sure defence, but a worm ariseth presently to devour it: So thou who art turned more civil and ingenious than once thou were, beginnest to bless thy self, and admire thy condition, not considering that for thy black coals and dirt thou didst wallow in, thou hast not found gold, but copper. We may indeed, as our Saviour did, look upon such who have this change, and love them, and yet say, *Thou art not far from the Kingdom of Heaven*. The Prophets and the Apostles press a far other conversion, than the most exact Moralists among the Heathens; when therefore thou beginnest to turn and change, be sure thou goest to the proper end of such a motion; stay not in any thing but God; do not take up thy lodging any where, till thy soul rest on him.

But the second miscarriage in turning from sin, may be into some superstitious and seemingly zealous worship of God; and this is more dangerous poyson than the former. It hath been the case of divers, when afflicted in conscience for sin, and feeling the load and burthen of it, presently to fall upon some austere superstitious exercise of Religion, which God never commanded, and by this means they think to make God amends, and to give satisfaction; but this is not so much conversion as subversion. Suppose the Pharisees had gained several Publicans & gross sinners to become their Proselytes, to leave their former foul sins, and to be very diligent & strict in outward superstitions; yet our Saviour saith, *That such were made the children of wrath*; they were not turned to God, but in some respects more from him: Take heed therefore of turning from a Publican to become a Pharisee; this is destruction still: And yet this kind of conversion is for the most part onely acknowledged in Popery; for they speak much of their converts and conversion, But what is that which they so eminently commend? *viz.* When men living in the world, and guilty of gross sins, begin to feel the horrour and burthen of them, and thereupon enter into some Monastery, joyn themselves to some Religious order, as they call it, and this is conversion: Now this is very easie, and suitable to flesh and blood. As we see the Jews very forward for any outward Sacrifices, though they were ten thousand Rams, and thousand Rivers of Oyl, when yet they could not turn from one sin; and thus it is here: To bow to Altars, to go on Pilgrimage, to keep a strict Lent, these are far more easie to flesh and blood, than to mortifie sin, *Habes quod in te occidas*, said *Austin*. Though we have not Rams or Sheep to kill

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for Sacrifice, yet we have ſeveral luſts to mortifie, and this is a greater pain; So then, beware of this deluſion of Satan; for if he cannot keep men in prophane ſecurity about their ſins, but their conſciences will tremble and cry out; then he leads them into dark ſuperſtitious wayes, and ſo they damn themſelves in a narrow way, that leads to hell; for there is a broad way to hell, and there is alſo a narrow ſtraight way, which the troubled conſcience of a man finds out wanting the guide of the Scripture: And the Devil makes ſuch take up their croſs and follow him.

3. Thirdly, *Then we turn not to God from ſin, when we onely change the practice of ſin, groſs ſoul bodily ſins, to more ſpiritual ſoul-filthineſs:* As when we with indignation caſt away our prophaneneſs and ſcandalous wayes, but this filleth us with pride and ſelf-confidence, and a carnal truſt in our Righteouſneſs: Oh this is not turning to God, but further from him than ever; *I come not to call the Righteous, but ſinners to repentance*, ſaith Chriſt, Mat. 9. 13. ſuch as are already conceited with a ſelf-Righteouſneſs, becauſe with the Phariſee, we can ſay, They are no Thieves, no Adulterers, nor like other men, theſe are in a direct oppoſition to converſion. This was the great ſin of the Jews, they went about to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs, *Rom.* 10. 1, 2. to ſet up their own Dagon, but alas, that could not ſtand before God. Take heed then, that when thou haſt caſt out ſome black Devils, there come not white ones in the room; The Devil transforming himſelf into an Angel of light: Oh it is a great matter, when theſe unclean ſpirits are caſt out of the ſoul, what comes in the room thereof. Alas! the Parable tells us, that a mans heart may be garniſhed and furniſhed to prepare for thoſe Devils that are ſeven times worſe, *Luke* 11. 25. And as this holds for ſelf Righteouſneſs and pride, ſo for vain diſputations, and affecting new opinions in Religion; for if thou haſt given over all thy prophaneneſs, and on a ſudden all thy ſtrength runs out in diſputations about Religion: Thou doeſt not minde mortification of ſin, and cloſe communion with God, but thou art of this opinion, and that, and runneſt roving up and down in Religion, this is an argument thou art, it may be unſettled from ſin, but yet not ſettled upon God; Thou art too much a ſeeker, for it may be thou haſt not yet found God. Do not thou think Converſion is an exchange of one ſin from another; no, it is a well adviced renouncing of all, and taking God in the room of them.

4. Fourthly *Though we leave ſin, yet we do not turn to God, when afflictions and calamities are the onely motives to make us keep off:* So that we are beaten from our ſins, as the dog from ſheep, our hearts are not turned to hate thoſe luſts we once loved: This was that which made the Prophet ſay: *They returned not to the moſt high*, becauſe though they were conſtant in prayer, and humiliation, and faſting; yet it was meerly to divert judgement, and out of love to temporal mercies: And thus alſo *Zachary* the Prophet expoſtulateth with the *Iſraelites*, *In thoſe months did ye faſt to me, even to me? was it not for your ſelves?* Zach. 7. 5, If therefore theſe temporal calamities be the great wheel to ſet all going, you return not yet to God.

5. Laſtly, *Let a man turn never ſo far from the committing of any groſs ſin, yet if ſtill he do not turn from himſelf, his ſelf-aims, ſelf-ends, ſelf-principles, ſelf-intereſts, he is not yet turned to God*; For converſion is the unhinging of the ſoul, hanging it upon another hinge, or ſetting it upon another bottom then it had before: Therefore the whole requiſite to a Diſciple of Chriſt, is compriſed in this, *To Deny himſelf*; If a man deny his luſts, his ſins, all his outward wickedneſs, yet if ſtill he hath not denied himſelf, he hath not killed the Serpent in his head, and therefore he will revive again; for therefore were ſins committed, becauſe they were ſelf-pleaſure, ſelf-eaſe, or ſelf-profit: This was the blood that ran in every vein, therefore till a man be no longer himſelf, till he be converted and turned from himſelf, what a change ſoever may be in his life, yet he is not

turned to God. Thus you see, that several ways men may turn from their sins, and yet not close with God; they are removed from their former life, as the dove was sent out of the Ark, but they have not found any place to rest their souls upon. Oh how much doth this concern you, who have made some motion from sin! you will not, you cannot, you dare not live as you have done: Oh! but upon what terms is all this? Thou mayest turn from sin, & yet go round and round about, till thou hast fallen into the same sins or worse again: As some wandring traveller, that hath lost his way, goeth directly to that place at night, from whence he came in the morning: Oh take heed of being a broken Bow, to have all thy seeming turnings to God prove frustrated.

In the next place, let us consider, What it is to turn to God, even to him: And

1. What it is to turn to God,

First, it is, *Because he is displeased, and offended by sin:* This is the very quintessence and differential mark of conversion. *David* bewailed this consideration in his sin; and the Prodigal, when he became a convert, this wounded his heart, *Father, I have sinned against heaven, and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called a son*; All is but forced and counterfeit in conversion, till this be the great motive to set all on work: This will hold for all sin, and at all times, whether in prosperity or adversity, life and death.

2. Secondly, *To turn even unto God, is to be unquiet and restless in soul, till we enjoy his favour, and the light of his countenance*: So that if all judgements for sin be removed, if all outward comforts and abundance overflow, yet all is nothing, till God be reconciled: Thus it was with *David*, *Restore joy* (saith he) *and heal the broken bones*, Psal. 51. This is a sure Touch-stone of Grace, when honours, riches, and all outward accommodations are nothing, unless God speak peace: As *Haman* said, when he spake of all the honour and greatness he had, yet all availed him nothing, as long as *Mordecai* lived: Oh say thou much rather, All health, friends, children, comfort me nothing, till God cause his face to shine upon me! Oh desire to bathe thy soul in this meditation! this will manifest the uprightness and sincerity of thy conversion: *O Lord, in thy light is life, comfort, happiness, and all things else.*

3. Thirdly, *To turn to him, even unto him, is when the soul being weary of sinful delights, and earthly pleasures, doth wholly repose it self, and rest on God as its true and proper center*: It was the speech of a true Convert, *Lord, whom have I in heaven but thee, and whom in the earth but thee?* It was the speech of the converted Church, *I will leave all my lovers, and go to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now*: Thus in true conversion, the soul forsaketh all, and cleaveth to him onely, Jer. 3. 14. *Return, O Israel, for I am married to you*: No conversion, as long as God is not the onely center of thy soul; if thou hast other objects, besides him, if other lovers besides him, thou art not turned even to him.

4. Lastly, To turn to God, is obediential to resign up our selves unto him as a Lord, and our Soveraign, whose commands we will faithfully obey, whose Laws we will presently submit unto: Thus *Paul* when converted, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* And the Church crieth, when converted, *Come, let us return unto the Lord*; as if he should say, *Behold, here I am, do what thou pleasest*: So that to turn to him, is to be like wax before the fire, melted into what form God would have it.

Use. Use of Examination, Hast thou forsaken thy sins? Art thou no more the Beast, the Devil thou wast once? Oh consider, and again consider, upon what terms thou and sin did part: How hast thou closed with God? Is he thy center, thy fulness? Doest not thou take a Picture for the true person? Doest not thou lodge in some thing on this side God? Oh what sad shipwrack is that which is nere the very haven! To turn so far, and yet at last to be turned into hell! To get so far out of Egypt, and yet to have *Pharaoh* recover thee again! Fear imperfect and insincere conversion, as much as prophaneness.

SERM.

SERM. LXXX.

That our turning to God must be with the whole Heart; Wherein Hearty Conversion consists, with the effects of it.

JOEL 2. 12.

Turn ye, even to me, with all your heart.

THe object, or *term to which* of our Conversion hath been dispatched, we come to the manner how we must turn to God; and that is, *With all thy heart.* God doth not say onely, as in another place, *give me thy heart, but all thy heart*, Prov. 23. 26. The Scripture doth for the most part make the heart the seat of the rational soul, as if all understanding, reason, and affections were placed there, and herein it doth contradict the opinion of most eminent Philosophers, who make the brain or the head, the seat of the rational soul; now some learned men think that therefore the Scripture makes the actions of the soul to flow from the heart, because God doth not make any account of meer speculative, or brain-knowledge, but as it is accompanied with the strong affections, and motions of the heart, which put a man upon practice. *Aristotle* observeth that loose dissolute practices, do not corrupt the habits of meer speculative sciences, as the Mathematiques, *&c.* but they do quickly destroy practical habits, as prudence & the abilitie to guide and govern our actions. Now the end of the Scripture being wholly to make us good, and to reform our lives, which cannot be done without the vigorous and strong affections of the heart, doth therefore attribute all to this, in so much that a good heart, or a bad heart, are made the good and bad treasury of a man. So then howsoever in some places of Scripture, *Mat.* 22. heart is opposed to minde, and to soul, and strength, yet when it is put alone, as here, then it stands for all these, and in this sense we are to understand it, *Turn to God with all thy minde, thy soul, thy might, with all thy heart.*

Obs. *That we are to turn from our sins, even to God, with all our hearts.* This [Whole heart] is but two words, but hath very great matter and consequence in it: for a man to mourn for sin, to seek to God externally onely, or with his whole heart, differ as much as a picture and a live man, as real burning fire and painted: To leave sin unwillingly, as *Phaltiel* did his wife; to turn to God with a deceitfull heart, is very abhominable. If a false balance be so abominable unto him, How much more must false & deceitful, or heartless conversions? But this sacrifice doth not so much need and exact division, or cutting of it, as to be burnt, or offered up in the flames of our affection. *Obs.*

Let us therefore consider, First what it is to turn to God with the whole heart, and then the consequents of such a total conversion. VVhat it is to turn to God with the whole heart, 1.

And first, *To turn to God with the whole heart, is when we do not reserve any part thereof for any sin*, when we offer up our selves an whole burnt offering, and not like those Sacrifices where God had but part, & others they had part, such a conversion as *Herod* was, who did many things gladly, but not all things; such a Convert was *Judas*. Did it not seem a glorious thing in *Judas* to forsake all and follow Christ?

Chriſt? but yet ſtill he kept part of his heart for a lodging to receive ſome Luſts. And ſuch half-hearted Converſions are frequent in the world: Experience teacheth us of many, who turn from divers ſins they once lived in; but there is one or two endeared ſins, and thoſe they would joyn with God. Thus they attempt a contradiction, to make light and darkneſſe have communion, to cauſe an agreement betwixt Chriſt and Belial. As the Idolatry of ſome is recorded, who feared God, and yet worſhipped the Idol-gods of the Heathens: They would have the Ark and Dagon alſo; ſo theſe would turn to God, and to ſome beloved ſin alſo, as if a man at the ſame time could turn one eye towards heaven, and the other downwards. Oh fear leaſt it be ſaid to thee, as it was to *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *why haſt thou detained part of the price? Thou haſt not lyed to men, but to God*, Acts 5. 3. and ſo thou dealeſt deceitfully with God, who will not be mocked, as if thou hadſt parted with all thy ſins, deſtroyed all thy enemies, and yet hideſt ſome, as *Rahab* did the ſpies, that they might not be diſcovered. Know then that he who turneth to God, with all his heart, doth not wittingly or willingly ſpare any one *Agag*, he doth not keep any one *Iſaak* alive whom God would have ſacrificed. Oh what a ſad conviction is this of the inſufficient, & imperfect converſion of thouſands: If it be with thy whole heart, How comes ſin and the world to have ſo great a ſhare of it? Remember the firſt Commandement, *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods before me*. God is a jealous God, not onely when his worſhip is given to other nuncupative Gods, but when thy heart and affections are given up to any Object beſides him.

2. Secondly, *To turn to God with thy whole heart is with our utmoſt might and endeavour, and higheſt perfection we are able to cloſe with him.* It is much diſputed in what ſenſe the whole heart is required in that commandment, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord with all thy heart, with all thy ſoul, and with all thy might.* The Papiſts give too low an Expoſition, making it to be no more than ſincerely or truly. Thus they bring down the Commandment to our power, and not make that to riſe up to the commandment, but by the concomitant phraſe, *With all thy might*, it is plainly meant the utmoſt perfection of a man, and therefore can never be perfectly fulfilled in this life; yet a perfection the godly have, though it daily need more perfection, and in this ſenſe we turn to God with the whole heart, when we cleave cloſer and cloſer to him; and draw nearer and nearer: So that this oppoſeth all faint, wearyſom, and imperfect turnings to God. God complained of the Iſraelites, *That they were weary of him*, and ſuch is the diſtaſte of man to what is good, that he quickly turneth out of the way, or ſits down before he comes to an end. *Thus they did not turn to God, that began in the ſpirit, and ended in the fleſh*, Gal. 3. 2. and that with *Lots* wife look back, wiſhing for their old luſts again. It was no wonder that the Prodigal ſhould with all his heart go from his ſwine, and his huſks, to the dainty food in his fathers houſe, but if after that he ſhould have gone from the fatted Calf, and been weary of his Fathers muſick to his old huſks again, this had been intolerable Apoſtacy. Do thou ſay then when turned to God, as the Church did, *I held him and would not let him go*, Cant. 3. 4. Do not go forwards and backwards as the children of Iſrael did in the wilderneſſe: Oh if thy whole heart were in this work, thou wouldſt be more earneſt, vicolent, and purſuing the enjoyment of God.

3. Thirdly, *To turn to God with the whole heart, is to do it ſincerely and uprightly.* Oh this is God hath complained of in the Iſraelites, that in their ſeeming converſions, their hearts were not upright, and unfeigned in them: they did but diſſemble with their tongues, & as it is ſaid of faith, may we not alſo ſay of uprightneſs, *When the Son of man ſhall come, ſhall he finde uprightneſs on the earth?* He may find the Chriſtian faith, he may find praying and hearing, but ſhall he find ſincerity? Thus the whole heart is very often uſed in the ſcripture for a ſincere & upright heart, as on the contrary a falſe hypocritical heart is excellently called an heart & an heart. Oh this is too ordinary to pray with an heart & an heart, to confeſſe ſin with an

heart

heart, and an heart: An heart seemingly for God, and yet an heart for sin also: an heart apparently for Christ, and yet closely for the world also. This is commonly made the difference between the good kings, and those that had a glorious shew of goodness, but wanted the power of it. The one is said to seek to God, or cleave to God with the whole heart; the other had an heart & an heart. As therefore the time was once when thou wert afraid of prophaneness and gross impieties: so now take as much heed of hypocrisie, and falshood of spirit.

Fourthly, *To turn to God with the whole heart, is to have the heart all one in this work, not to be overcharged with distractions and divisions of thoughts about other things.* Thus *David* prayeth, *Unite my heart to fear thy name*, Ps. 86. 11. and dividing cares and thoughts, as also distractions about many things are frequently forbidden. Oh this is admirable, and comfortable, when the whole soul is inclined but one way, and that to God. As the Scripture speaks of a city, or family, its excellent where they are all of one mind: so it is well when a man within himself is all the same way; nothing dividing, distracting, or disturbing in his motions to God: to run well, and to have nothing hinder. Thus some expound that promise, *I will give them one heart*, Jer. 32. 32. that is an heart not divided, not distracted, but wholly bent upon one object. As a Kingdom divided against it self cannot stand, so neither an heart in this sense divided; some thoughts for God, an some against him, some affections pressing towards him, and some pulling back from him, so that if thy heart be wholly turned to God; Oh what a sweet harmony will there be in that motion. No unequal walking, no harsh jarring: but this being the predominant object will carry all along with it. Indeed it follows afterwards, *Rent your hearts*, but that is a renting off from sin, not a renting it between God and other things. Do thou then grow acquainted with thy own heart more, see what it is that doth hinder thee from the one necessary thing: Is this turning with thy whole heart to God, when it is divided into many objects? Oh let thy heart be rather as the Temple was, into which they might bring no unclean thing, neither might men of no business walk there up and down. 4.

Fifthly, *He turneth to God with his whole heart, who doth not entertain any thing* Supra, contra, æqur, *or* cum Deo, *Above, or contrary, or equall* or *with God:* So that if all these particulars are necessary, we must conclude that conversion is a rare work. For first to turn with our whole heart, is to prefer nothing above God. This Christ makes a fundamental requisite in every convert. A man must hate Father or Mother, and his own life for Christs sake. Oh the wonderful change then that this converting grace makes upon a man: now his right eye, or his right hand is not dear unto him in respect of God, & it is not good reason that he who is the most high, should have the most high affections, the most high desires? is it not reason to bid all things come lower, that God may have the highest room in our hearts. Oh but how many proclaim that there is a great gulf between them and conversion, for are not their base and filthy lusts preferred before God? is not the devil obeyed in his lusts, rather than God in his Commandments? so that such instead of turning to God, with their whole heart, they are turned to their sins, and to the world with all their hearts: see then what that is which thy heart doth seek in the first place. The true Convert gives the best and choicest of his thoughts and Affections to God: He now comes to Christ every day, and poureth out as it were a box of precious ointment, the most excellent and quintessentiall vigour of his soul. 5.

2. As an hearty Conversion makes a man prefer nothing above God, so neither any thing against him, he will much less love that which is hated and loathed by God. Oh then if thou art turned unto God, how comes it about that his enemies and adversaries do so often lodge in thy bosome? How is it that the prince of darkness finds the Gates of thy soul open, when the prince of Glory should come in? No man can serve two contrary masters: it was a plain argu-

ment that *Dalilah* was not heartie for *Sampſon*, becauſe all her projects were to advantage the Philiſtims, that were deadly enemies to *Sampſon*: and ſo when all thy deſires and purpoſes are to promote the wayes of ſin, to further the Kingdome of Satan, thou mayeſt quickly conclude thou art far from converſion. As *Joab* adjured *David*, *Thou loveſt thy enemies better than thy friends*: ſo mayeſt thou expoſtulate with thy own ſoul, That it entertaineth her own damnable enemies, rather than her friends, who would bring the greateſt good to her.

3. Hearty converſion goeth further ſtill, and loveth nothing equally with him; for where the heart is, there all the heart cannot be any where elſe; God will have all or none. It was the falſe mother that was willing to have the child divided; the divel will take half, becauſe in that he hath all.

Laſtly, Still higher the true Convert goeth, for he entertaineth nothing with God: *Minus te amat, qui tecum aliquid amat.* So that God being the Center, and the ultimate repoſe of the ſoul, he entertaineth nothing with him in that relation. There are ſome things that do ſo challenge a primacy, that they admit nothing with them, as we ſay in our controverſies with the Church of *Rome*: It is a contradiction to ſay, a primary head, and a ſecondary head; ſo a primary husband, and a ſecondary husband; and thus it is here: *God* is the head, the ſpouſe of every faithfull ſoul, and ſo he will have no copartner with him. And although we are allowed to love lawful comforts here below, yet becauſe all are in ſubordination to him, & becauſe of him, therefore ſtill *God* is onely beloved. As we ſay, Such an houſe is ſuch a mans, becauſe though there be many ſervants many attendants, yet becauſe they are but ſervants, & one maſter onely, therefore it is his houſe onely: ſo it is here; The heart of a Converted man is onely Gods, and for him, becauſe though other things be received, yet as ſervants onely, and with reference meerly to *God*. Thus we are ſaid to turn to him with all our hearts. Oh then if all theſe things go to an heart Converſion, in how narrow a compaſſe will this work be found? Who that heareth theſe things may not cry out, *And who then can be ſaved?* Who may not begin to make a ſtricter ſearch into his heart?

In the next place, Conſider the effect of this hearty Converſion unto *God*, And

The effects of hearty converſion to God.

1. Firſt, *It is inſeparable for the future*, He that hath turned from his ſins to God with all his heart, will never go back again, as Hypocrites, and Apoſtates do; ſuch backſliding argueth that they never were rooted, or built up upon this rock: ſee how confidently that eminent Convert *Paul* triumphs; *Who can ſeparate us from the love of God in Chriſt?* Rom. 8. And there he challengeth all things that can be named; ſo true is that, *He which drinketh of this bee-venly water, ſhall never thirſt more*, John 6. 35 He becomes even like God: He prayeth, heareth, believeth, and loveth God; and in theſe things he changeth not. Oh this inconſtancy and unſetledneſſe, is a plain enemy to hearty Converſion.

2. Secondly. *Hearty converſion to God is inſatiable*: it hath never enough of God, ſtill it would have more in him, as we ſee in *David*; how full of longing and panting expreſſions after *God*! It will never repent him that he did turn to God: He will never ſay, It was better with me when I enjoyed my pleaſures, and my luſts, than ſince I took God for my portion. And now here is one thing more to *Solomons* four things that never ſay *There is enough*, and that is a Godly heart enjoying *God*.

3. Thirdly, *This turning with the whole heart is invincible, nothing can conquer it*: this fire will dry up all waters: A man that hath an half heart or a weak and lazy heart, will quickly be beaten back. A Lion in the way, or tall *Giants* will ſoon diſcourage ſome men from *Canaan*: but where the whole heart is fixed, there it will break through ſtone walls: Chriſt became our Saviour with his whole heart; & becauſe this Law was written in his heart, hear how readily he ſpeaks,

Be-

Behold, I come to do thy will, O God. Psalm 40 8. This made him conflict with death, and all against through his Fathers displeasure. No wonder then if thy whole heart be in Conversion, if thou delayest, and inquest out many excuses.

Lastly *This turning with the whole heart, is accompanied with much joy, delight and pleasant sweetnesse: When it is done with all the heart, it is with great deal of joy.* Thus God saith, *He would rejoyce over his people, and do them good with his whole heart.* Jer. 32.42 An admirable expression to shew what joy and delight God would take in doing good to them: so that to leave sin with some trouble, with many murmurings and repinings, argueth all thy heart is not in this work.

Use of Exhortation, to take up this Duty. God meeteth with many hypocrites, and in nothing more than in their turning to him: men would learn to do something, they would gladly be thought converts, but (alas) these things are not done with their whole hearts. And know this, to turn with all the heart to God, is a work of great difficulty and rarity. As Christ said in another case, *Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine? There are but returned but one.* So of those many that pray and weep for sin, and say they will become new Converts, may we not say, There is but such a man, and such a woman, that turn with all their hearts? Now be moved to this cordial hearty conversion.

1. Because the work of the heart is more accounted of by God, than all thy outward worships, though never so diligently and zealously performed: *Rent your hearts and not your garments*: God cared not for rent clothes, when mens hearts were too sound in sin: and so, *a broken and contrite heart, thou wilt not despise*; this is preferred before whole burnt offerings.

2. Thou hast turned to sin with all thy heart, thou hast drudged in the world with all thy heart. Now which is the most large & ample object to fill thy heart: God or sin? God or the creature? *Fecisti Domine cor nostrum, & inquietum est donec ad te veniat.* Oh be for ever ashamed that thou shouldst have thy whole heart for sin and the Devil, and not for God.

3. To turn imperfectly and faintly, will be the greater confusion to a man; for thou hadst almost laid hold on God; thou wert very near closing with him; thou wert almost entering into the haven, and then some suddain blasts of sin or other drive thee back again. Oh thou that beginnest to run in this race, What hinders thee that thou dost not get the prize?

Lastly, Thou wilt one day lament and mourn with all thy heart, that thou hast neglected the day of conversion; but then it will be too late. Would not the damned in hell with all their heart be delivered from eternal flames, and put into a day of grace again? Do they not with all their heart, and all their soul roar out for their undone estate to all eternity? Oh that at last these Truths might prevail with you: Oh that it might be no more published in *Gath* or *Ashkelon*, That our preaching is not converting.

SERM. LXXXI.

Of Tears and Sorrow for Sin; And that they muſt accompany Converſion.

JOEL 2. 12.

Turn even unto me, with all your Heart, and with Faſting, and with Weeping, and with Mourning.

The third part obſervable in the diviſion of this Text, is the effect, or if ye will, the concomitant property of a cordial Converſion to God: for we being not immaterialll and ſpirituall ſubſtances, as Angels are, but compounded of a ſoul and body: therefore many affections are required of us as ſo compounded, which ſpiritual ſubſtances are not capable of; ſuch are theſe in the Text, *Faſting, Weeping* and *Mourning*. So that tears and bitter weeping for ſin, are a good ſign to evidence an hearty Converſion to God. As for *Faſting* required alſo in the Text, that is not commanded primarily and intentionally for it ſelfs ſake, but as its inſtrumentall and ſubſervient to prayer and mourning for ſin; for as precious ſeeds ſown in Bogs and Quagmires, can never come to any maturity, ſo neither will any duty of humiliation thrive, where the body is not by faſting or debaſement prepared for it. What ever elſe needs explication in the words, ſhall be diſcuſſed in the Doctrine.

Obſ. *That true and hearty Converſion to God from ſin is to be accompanied with ſorrow and tears for ſin.* It's not a ſlight, formall craving of forgiveneſſe from God, but the ſoul is ſo wounded and pierced, and in ſuch agonies, that many tears flow from it. The Scripture commands this ſorrow, promiſeth ſuch a melting heart to thoſe that are converted; and we have many examples of thoſe who were hard rocks, but when converted, much water of godly mourning came from them. For a command, (becauſe ſome have thought this afflicted, mournfull ſpirit, to be an old Teſtament-ſpirit, and not beſeeming the ſpirit of Adoption in the Goſpel:) See it in the new Teſtament commanded, *James* 4. 9. *Be afflicted, and mourn and weep, let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heavineſs.* This is required of Chriſtians in the new Teſtament. And as the Spirit of God did once move upon the waters, ſo he will ſtill upon ſpiritual humiliation. This exhortation is directed to thoſe that were fallen into grievous ſins, and there is no other way for peace, but through this ſalt ſea of tears. Every word is emphaticall ταλαιπωρησατε, be miſerable and wretched; that is, be inwardly touched with a deep ſenſe of your ſins, which make you miſerable. Oh, he that is turning to God from his ſins muſt cry out of himſelf; O miſerable and wretched man that I am, what ſhall I do? where is any eaſe? who will poure oyle in my wounds? The other word κλαυσατε, Mourn, is alluſive to the cuſtome of mourning in the old Teſtament, when they went in Sackcloath & Aſhes. Thy ſoul ought to be full of penſiveneſſe and bitterneſſe, as *Tamars* was, after ſhe had

Obſ.

had been deflowred, and thrust out of doors; she tearing her garments, puts Sackcloth on her head, wrings her hands, goes wailing; And I, whither shall I go? So sin and the Devil have ravished and constuprated thy soul, which should have been left pure to God. Oh cry out, and make bitter lamentations, for thou art undone for ever, unlesse the grace of God interpose. Let your joy be turned to heavinesse, *κατήφειαν*, that is, such an heavinesse and grief as may be seen in a mans very looks; That all may say, what ailest thou? What troubleth thee? Thus as they abounded in carnal pleasures, and sinfull delights; so now all must be turned contrary, and as this is comanded, so our Saviour makes those blessed that practise it: *Blessed are they that mourn*, Matth. 5. 4. viz. for their own sin, and the sin of others; for they shall be comforted: yea he denounceth a wo to those that laugh and are merry, that never rend their hearts, or wound their souls for the sins they have committed. Oh then blesse God and count it an happy time, when God shall turn thy barren heart which was like a wilderness, into running streams for sin. This is so necessary, that its a grace particularly promised under the Gospel, *Zach.* 12. *They shall mourn, as one mourneth for his only begotten Son.* See there is the spirit of prayer and mourning promised under the Gospel, and that for sins against Christ, as cordially, affectionately, and a grieved manner, as a mother cryeth for her onely Son. You have examples also for this in the new Testament. Did not *Mary Magdalen* make her head a fountain of tears, that could weep such showrs as she did? Which made *Chrysologus* say, *Terra rigat Cœlum.* Could she have cryed more heartily for the losse of her onely child, than she did for her sins? And thus *Peter*, after his relapse, upon his recovery, is it not said, *he went out and wept bitterly*, Matt. 26. 75. So that you see it abundantly proved, that our turning to God, ought to be with mourning and weeping: but yet the point so generally delivered is subject to misconstructions; and therefore take notice of these particulars.

First, *That these waters of tears may arise from a four-fold Spring of Fountain*: As

I.

Tears may arise from a four-fold spring.

First, *There are Naturall tears*; Such which come naturally from the complexion, or peculiar disposition of the body at that time. Philosophers say, That only man of all creatures doth properly weep, and they dispute much about the efficient cause and nature of tears. *Gregory Nissen*, one of the Antients, that had much learning in natural Philosophy, makes the cause of tears, to be the vapours that do upon the apprehension of any evill, quickly arise by consent from the commotion and stirring of the bowels, which ascending to the brain, by the coldnesse thereof are presently heated and congealed into water; as clouds are by the coldnesse of the middle Region: Yet latter Philosophers reject this; but my purpose is to speak of weeping and tears, not as a Philosopher, but as a Divine. This is certain, there are natural tears, which arise from a tender complexion, whereby children and women are more ready to weep than men and some men more than others: yea *Aristotle* observeth, some Drunkards are very prone to weep while they abound with liquor; we call them, *Magdalen* Drunkards, that while they are full of beer, and like beasts, will then cry and weep, and complain of their sins: but these tears being nothing but the excrementitious humour of vapours within, they are not at all to be regarded. Some godly men have complained, that they cannot weep, nor shed tears for their sins. They can for other things, Temporal evils, that afflict sense, but not for sin. To this I shall answer anon.

I. Naturall.

Secondly, *There are worldly tears, and carnall weeping*; and that is when we weep for the loss of any temporal mercy, or the evill of any misery come upon us: such tears are daily to be seen among us, who live in the world, that is nothing but a Valley of tears. This Christ forbade, when he said, *Weep not for me, but for your selves*, Luke 23. 28. And this might be every day published aloud, Weep not for the losse of such mercies, Weep not because of such miseries, but

because of sin and the losse of God. This when immoderate, is an heavy sin, *that it worketh death*, as the Apostle saith, *and is repentance that must be repented of*. 2 Cor. 7.10.

3 Hypocriticall. Thirdly, *There is hypocriticall weeping.* The tears of Crocodiles, when men fast and publickly mourn, yet all this is because of temporal respects, not because that God is displeased. We have too much of this weeping also: God complaineth of such sorrow among the *Israelites*, and he compareth it to the howling of beasts. All weeping and crying about sin, if not for sin, is but dissimulation with God.

4. Godly weeping. Lastly, There is a godly weeping, which is wrought in us by the Spirit of God, and that is because we have sinned, and grievously offended God, which fils our hearts with Gall and Wormwood: This latter is like the rain of the cloud that comes from heaven, sweet and refreshing; the other is like the salt water of the sea, or the muddy filth of boggy places.

Secondly, Godly tears they also arise from a twofold cause. There are tears of hatred and indignation, or great displeasure against our selves, because we have so foolishly & wretchedly dishonoured God, and ventured our eternal undoing for a moments pleasure. There are also tears of love, and joy, which the heart poures out with much melting, partly because they have grieved so good a Father, & partly through joy to see so much grace vouchsafed unto them. The former kinde of tears, *viz.* of hatred and grief *Manasses* abounded with, and *Peters* eyes gushed out such. The latter did flow from *Mary Magdalen*, for our Saviour attributeth all that sorrow to her much love, because much was forgiven her, *Luke* 7.47. and the true Convert is to expresse tears of both these kinds, of grief and love, of hatred and joy, *Verus pœnitens de peccatis dolet, & de dolore gaudet. The true repenting Convert grieveth for his sins, and joyeth in his grief.* Even naturally there is much ease in weeping, *Expletur lachrymis, egeritur que dolor.* And hence *Tully* complained, that though all his tears were spent, yet greif did stick at his heart. How much more will godly tears afford spiritual joy? Let thy heart therefore be like the Stillatory, which having the hot love of God daily under it, will plentifully vent forth the warm tears of godly sorrow for sin.

II. A Popish advancement of tears. Secondly, *There may be a superstitious and popish advancement of tears, and a Christian Scripture-acknowledgement of them.* This must be also remembred, a Popish commendation of tears is, when any Merit, Causality or Worth is attributed to them. Thus in Popery they make them have a spiritual effect, they attribute the washing away of sin to them, they are judged satisfactory: But how arrogant is this Doctrine, to make our tears and Christs blood equal? If the blood of Christ only doth purge us from our Iniquity, then cannot our tears, which themselves need washing, as he said, *Lavâ Domine Lachrymas meas, O Lord wash my tears, they are so foul.* Could we therefore weep an Ocean of tears, yea blood, yet this could not blot out one debt of ours to God. We do not then require mourning and weeping, as Friers and Popish Writers do. And yet on the other side we abhor those *Antinomian* doctrines, that make all sorrow and weeping for sin to be legal, and unbeseeming the spirit of the Gospel. No, the Scripture careth a mean between these two extreams.

III. There is a twofold Sorrow. Intellectuall and Spirituall, And Sensitive. Lastly, *This must not be forgotten*: There is a twofold sorrow, or mourning, the one is intellectual, and spiritual, which is an act of the soul, whereby it detesteth and abhorreth sin above all evil, & vehemently dislikes it, chusing any temporal evil, rather than this evil of sin. And there is a sensitive sorrow, which is accompanied with bodily tears, and expressed in a sensible manner. Even as there is a twofold prayer, a mental prayer of the soul, whereby we immediately make our requests known unto God; and a vocal bodily prayer, by the mouth also. Thus there is a two-fold sorrow, one rational, affecting the soul of a man, the other sensible, discovering it self in the eys & face. Now the former kind of mourning, which is an act of the understanding and will, full of displicency and vehement detesta-

detestation of sin; this is absolutely to be pressed: No man can think he is converted that hath not this. But then for sensible and bodily tears, practical Divines give these directions: First that in the pangs of our conversion, and while the soul is in its labour, then many times such tears abound; whereas afterwards in the progress of sanctification, they are not poured out so easily. Be not then presently discouraged, as if thy heart were a rock, and an hard millstone, because thou findest no affection, no melting, no tears: Say not, thy heaven is made Brass or Iron; for it may be the time hath been, that thy two eyes have been as the Churches in the *Canticles* are said, to be like the Fish-pools of *Hesbon*. Remember then the bottles of tears thou then didst fill. Its not probable that *Mary Magdalen* could alwayes weep so plentifully as she did at her first conversion to Christ and reconciliation with him.

Secondly, Divines give another good Rule, which is to regard thy purpose, and well-advised forsaking of sin, so as never to return to it, more than any tears whatsoever; for hypocrites have shed tears, and they many times arise from the bodily constitution: Some can weep when they list; as there were women hired to mourn: And experience tells us, of many that will weep and cry for their sins, and yet for all that will commit them again. Dost thou therefore find that thy soul loaths sin, and that thou darest not, or canst not entertain any sin in thy life? Never then question thy condition, because thou canst not shed tears; for these are accidental and separable, but the other is essential to grace; and this discovers the hypocrisie of many, that because they can sometimes weep and cry, when they speak of their sins, they therefore conclude all is well, though they go on in the practice of sin. No, it is inward hating, and outward forsaking of them upon spiritual grounds, will more testifie thy conversion, than rivers of water flowing from thy eyes.

Thirdly, If thou hast mourning and sighing, because thou canst not be so passionately affected with thy sins, as with temporal evils: This may also slay thy heart, thou canst not go out and weep bitterly, thou canst not water thy bed with tears as *David* did. Oh, but dost thou groan and sigh after more degrees of godly sorrow? This may satisfie thee: For they that hunger & thirst are blessed; and if the Spirit of God work in thee groans unutterable, this is greater sorrow than weeping, groans of heart, are more than tears in the eye. When one *Praenestinus* an Heathen saw his friend put to death, he wept abundantly: but afterwards when his Sons were brought to execution he did not weep. The reason was asked, & this was returned, *Leves curae loquuntur, ingentes stupent; Light grief may be vented, but infinite grief stupifieth*; and so many times the godly heart is in such an amazement and astonishment that stupifieth it.

Lastly, Then onely is want of tears for sin, matter of trouble, when its because of want of hatred to sin, want of meditation, or want of love to God. As for example, Thou hast lost thy husband, friend, such an estate, and thy daily thoughts of this aggravating every circumstance, makes thee weep many showrs. Now if thou didst seriously set thy self to meditate about sin & all the aggravations of it, thy heart would melt as abundantly also; but thy negligence, thy worldly cares, thy hard heart, thy carelesness that makes thee so senseless. Know in this case, the want of tears is thy fault, and thou dost not meditate and pierce thy heart with sharp considerations that water may gush out.

Now let us see, why conversion is to be with mourning and weeping: And First, *Because the evil of sin is far greater both in the loss it brings us, and the positive damage it plungeth us into, than any outward evil whatsoever.* What a shame then is it to see people weep over their dead friends? Oh none have such a loss as they have, & not to weep over their dead souls, for there is no such loss as that by sin: Shall that superstitious man make such a waiting for his Idols that were taken away, & shall not thou mourn bitterly, because thou losest God & heaven by sin, the bitter evil of sin, that makes all other afflictions bitter; there had

Why mourning and weeping must accompany conversion. 1.

been

been no other evill in the world to provoke tears, had not ſin been: This brought not onely Thornes and Thiſtles on the ground, but on every thing elſe; why then ſhall we not have mourning for that which is the fountain and root of all other ſad things?

2. Secondly, Therefore we are to turn from ſin to God with mourning; *Becauſe there is a condecency, and congruity of Juſtice in it.* Its the greateſt reaſon and juſtice in the world, that as thou haſt by delight and pleaſures in ſin offended and provoked God; ſo thou ſhouldſt by grief and bitterneſs for ſin manifeſt thy love to him: Shall there be a time when ſin was ſweet, and ſhall there not be a time when it ſhall alſo be bitter? Oh conſider this all you who have found the ſhort and momentaneous honey of ſin, but not the ſting of it; that have found it ſweet in the mouth, but not like *Ezekiel*'s Roll, bitter in the belly.

3. Thirdly, It is neceſſary there ſhould be bitter mourning in our Converſion; *Becauſe of the manner or method God takes in bringing men from ſin*; which for the moſt part is accompanied with ſuch ſtrong convictions of ſin, ſuch tremblings, and agonies of ſoul, that as the woman by Gods appointment is to bring forth in pangs and travel; ſo doth the heart of a man labour, till Chriſt be formed in it. Gods method is generally to convince of ſin, the hainouſneſs of it, all the bloody circumſtances that aggravate it, and that in a powerful, particular way; ſo that he ſeeth and feeleth himſelf to be this ſinner: Then God diſcovereth the exactneſs of the Law, the ſpiritual extent of it, the innumerable curſes that it threatens to every diſobedient perſon; and laſtly, it diſcovers an impotency, and an utter inability in a mans ſelf, and in all the world to help him, ſo that he is deſpairing wholly of himſelf, and receiving a ſentence of condemnation upon his ſoul, onely the grace of God comes in before the ſoul be over-whelmed: That ſtretcheth out the hand, as Chriſt did to *Peter*, before he ſink in the waters. Now tell us, Can all theſe exerciſes, fears, conflicts, and commotions of heart be without mourning and weeping? It is true in ſome Converts theſe pangs and conflicts are greater than in others; yet it being Gods ordinary way to bring about Converſion by conviction out of the Law, here muſt be needs great diviſions and troubles of heart.

4. Fourthly, There will be mourning and weeping in our converſion to God, *Becauſe of the ſympathy and natural conjunction of ſoul and body together*; ſo that what the ſoul is exceſſively affected with, there is an over-flowing and redundancy of this upon the body. Thus *David* is ſo often in ſenſible paſſionate expreſſions of tears and deſires after God, becauſe his ſoul and heart did ſo affectionately burn after God; Inſomuch that not onely his heart, but his very fleſh (he ſaith) longeth after God, *Pſal* 84. 2.

Uſe. *Uſe* 1. Severely to reprove that ſtonineſs and hardneſs of heart upon many ſinners: When did they ever turn to God with bitter lamentations and mourning, and weeping? When was their laughter & joy turned into heavineſs? You have indeed ſometimes ſeen them wring their hands, cry aloud they were undone, becauſe their eſtates are loſt, their friends are dead, great pains and aches of body have tormented them; but not a ſigh, not a tear for their ſin. Oh know that in hell there will be weeping & wailing, & gnaſhing of teeth; then thy ſins will be apprehended in a more horrid & ghaſtly manner than now they are. A tear in the eye for ſin is more commendable than a jewel in the ear. And if thou canſt not weep, yet ſigh & mourn like the Dove. O ſmite upon the thighs, knock upon the breaſt, ſay, Even Rocks (Lord) when thou haſt ſmote them have given us water; but thou haſt ſmitten by thy Word, by thy Judgements upon my heart, and yet no mourning at all. The tears of the hearers are the commendations of a Sermon. Did you hear aright, you would pour your hearts out like water, as the Scripture-expreſſion is. Neither do thou think it a childiſh weak thing to weep for ſin: For *David*, who had more knowledge than all his Teachers, yet how plentiful in thoſe ſhowers! Neither do thou think it an argument of an ig-

noble

noble ſpirit; for beſides that *Homer* makes his Heroical ſpirits ἀδακρυες, eaſie to weep, Who more war-like and potent than *David*? Yet how many penitential and mournful Pſalms doth he make for ſin.

SERM. LXXXII.

The Nature and Neceſsity of Godly Sorrow and Weeping for Sin, as accompanying Converſion.

JOEL 2. 13.

And rent your hearts, and not your garments.

WE are arrived to the fourth obſervable paſſage in the Prophets Exhortation, and that is the form or nature wherein this turning to God doth conſiſt. The very being and ſubſtance of converſion to God is expreſſed in this phraſe, *Rent your hearts, and not your garments.* To *Rent the heart*, is a Metaphor from bodies or garments, as in the Doctrine is to be ſhewed: Onely two things may be taken notice of in this phraſe. *To rent the garments*, was a cuſtome among the Jews, whereby they did declare their exceſſive and impatient ſorrow or deteſtation: Thus the high Prieſt rent his cloathes, when he charged Chriſt with Blaſphemy; and *Ahab* rent his cloathes, when there was fear of ſome great judgements coming upon them: Thus *Paul* and *Silas* rent their garments with indignation, when the people of *Lyſtra* would have ſacrificed to them as gods *Acts* 14. 14. Thus you ſee it was a cuſtome among the Jews, in apprehenſion of great grief, either for ſins or judgements, to rent their garments; as they uſed alſo to cover their heads with aſhes, and to go in ſackcloath, which outward forms of mourning, are not to be drawn into form and practice among us, becauſe all Nations have their ſeveral wayes of publique mourning. The next thing obſervable is, the expreſſion by way of negation, *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*; It is uſual with the Hebrews to expreſs a comparative by a negative. *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*; that is, rather than your garments; ſo, *I would have mercy and not ſacrifice*, i. e. rather than ſacrifice. God by this teaching us, that all external duties of Worſhip and Religion are nothing at all, without the gracious and godly frame of the heart.

That Converſion unto God, is accompanied with a tearing or rending of the heart. *Obſerv.*

It is with as much grief and agony, as if the very heart were torn aſunder. Of rending the heart.
He tells us, that turning to God doth conſiſt in outward acts of humiliation and ſorrow; If this were ſo, hypocrites would be very diligent in it; no, there muſt be a cutting or dividing the heart aſunder, from all thoſe former ſins, that were ſo conſtantly committed. This point is worthy the Miniſters earneſt zeal, for people generally are not in earneſt about this work; they will hear much, yea, it may be, ſay much about it; but to have the heart thus wrought upon, is very rare:

Other equivalent expreſſions in the Scripture.

To open it therefore, conſider, Firſt, *That the Scripture hath other equivalent expreſſions to this in the Text*: That which is here called, *A rent heart*, in other places is called, *A broken heart*, yea, *A contrite heart*, Pſal. 51. 17. *A wounded ſpirit*, *A tender melting heart*, *A heart of fleſh, a ſoft heart*, Ezek. 36. All which have their peculiar efficacy, to demonſtrate this gracious work of God.

A broken heart, is taken from a broken veſſel, or broken bones: Now this doth imply, what pain, what grief, yea, and what miſery a man undergoeth, while he is in turning unto God. *David* expreſſeth his broken heart, by broken bones: Oh think not then, that thou, who haſt lived with an heart full of eaſe, mirth, and carnal jollity, that ever thou haſt attained to this duty: No, this is that thou art afraid of; as *Luther* ſaid, his ſoul hated the word *Repent*, becauſe he apprehended it a word of bitterneſs, gall and wormwood, and at that time knew nothing of Chriſt, and the Goſpel that might ſweeten this bitterneſs: Thus the hearts of many wicked men, do even hate and abhor the very name and thoughts of a broken and rent heart for ſin: They would not be put out of thoſe pleaſures and jolly ſecurity in ſin, upon any terms.

Again, as the veſſel, when broken, hath preſently all that was in it diſcovered and laid open: Thus it is with an heart in converſion to God, the breaking of it, makes all that wickedneſs and ungodlineſs appear, which formerly was hid and covered Then he wallowed in ſuch foul and noiſome ways, and never took any notice of it: then he always bleſſed and flattered himſelf, ſtill ſaying, I hope in God, I truſt in God, I have a good heart, &c. O but when once the ſpirit of God breaks that hollow and hypocritical heart of thine, then O what depths of iniquity appear! What ſwarms of luſts ſhew themſelves! Then thou art a monſter, and abominable in thy own eyes; then thou canſt no longer endure thy ſelf, thou wilt be no longer a ſtranger, and unknown to thy ſelf. The Heathens commended that ſentence, as fallen down from heaven, *Noſce teipſum*, Know thy ſelf: But (alas) they had only candle light, or moon light, not the light of the Sun, the Scripture, to diſcover themſelves, and to judge of themſelves by it.

The other phraſe is *A Contrite heart*, and that is more than broken; for this is to be bruiſed or pounced into ſmall duſt: So that this doth excellently denote, what a rent heart is; *viz.* An heart that is beaten into ſmall pieces, that doth not retain the outward former ſhape that once it had; it is wholly changed and altered. Take an earthen veſſel, and let it be pounced into duſt, and there remaineth nothing of its old beauty or figure: So it is here, when the heart is thus contrite, Oh it hath nothing of its old ſecurity, of its old mirth and jollity, it hath nothing of its old falſe peace and ſelf-flattering, but becomes changed into another hue.

The phraſe likewiſe of *A wounded ſpirit*, doth fully ſet forth this *Rent heart*. The body wounded, is ſubject to much grief and pain, but a ſpirit wounded to much more; therefore ſaith the Wiſe man, *A wounded ſpirit who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. If thy heart be ever wounded for ſin, it will be the heavieſt burthen in the world to bear: Oh then thou wilt think poverty, outward torments, bodily pain, nothing to a wounded ſoul: Oh but when ſhall we, like the good Samaritan, meet with ſuch perſons that lie wounded for their ſins, that we may pour oyl into their wounds! When ſhall the two edged Sword of the Word give ſuch heart-wounds!

As for a *Soft, tender melting heart*: Theſe come much to the ſame ſenſe; for before our converſion every mans heart is of ſtone, and adamantine, like cold iron, will receive no impreſſion; Doth not experience teach it? Why is it that after ſo many mercies, ſo many judgements, ſo many afflictions, ſo many Sermons, men are as prone to ſin as ever, but from the hardneſs of their heart?

What is implied in the phraſe, *Rent hearts*.

Secondly, *Let us conſider what this phraſe implieth*, *Rent your hearts*; and then the Negative, *Not your garments*, And

Firſt, *It ſuppoſeth grief and trouble in the heart*: The parts of a mans fleſh can-

cannot be rent or torn asunder, but it must be with great sorrow: And thus it is with the heart of a true convert, he findes much spiritual trouble and grief upon his soul; his soul is rent and torn into many sad dividing thoughts, between hope and fear, between faith and despair, between joy and grief; as you may see in *David's Psalms*, such contrary affections working on him, that his heart seemeth to be like the sea, when contrary winds blow upon it: Oh then! this argueth, that many men have never been in these spiritual deeps, and to feel the wondrous works of God upon them; they have never said to their sins, as *Paul* to his weeping friends, *Why do ye break my heart?* They have never said, O how is my heart torn in pieces! There have been bodily punishments for hainous crimes, when the Malefactors have been torn in pieces, limb by limb, by wilde horses; this must needs be exquisite torment, yet this hath been born; *But a wounded spirit who can bear?* These tearings and divisions of heart, when sin in all the guilt and aggravations of it, is laid upon the conscience, who could endure, did not God support in these agonies?

Secondly, *It implieth, violence offered to the heart*: Even as a garment rent, or our flesh rent, it is even by a violent motion; and so it is here, in conversion there is an holy and mighty violence offered unto our unregenerate part: To take that off from the sinful objects, it hath been fixed upon, is like keeping the greedy Dog off from the sweet blood he hath begun to suck: Thus the Scripture expresseth the work of godliness, by such words as implieth great violence and pain offered to the carnal part in a man: Hence it is dalled *Crucifying the flesh*, Gal. 5 24. Rom. 8. 13. Gal 3. 5. There was great violence and lingering misery the party crucified was put unto; and so we are called to mortifie the sinfull lusts of the soul; so that although there were no external tribulations in the way to heaven, though there were no persecutions, no troubles, yet that which is done upon thy heart, upon thy sinful lusts, will make the way to heaven a straight and narrow way. There is a soul-Martyrdome, as well as a body-Martyrdom; and which is more terrible for flesh and blood to undergo, is hard to tell. No wonder then if you see men stick so at conversion; O it is an hell, it is a torment to them; Why? The reason is plain, conversion is a real Purgatory; they go through fire and water to be made clean; they give themselves to be sacrificed by Grace: Grace will not spare any one dear sin or lust they have been accustomed unto. It is also no wonder if Gods children finde it so difficult, so contrary to nature to do any thing graciously; for how can it be but painful to hang crucified upon the Cross, as it were? For thus, as Christ died for sin, so they dy to sin. 2.

Thirdly, *In renting, there is a separation and disunion of the heart from that to which it was once united*: And herein lieth the very formal nature of rending, to make a violent division of one part from another, so that the nere union is perfectly dissolved; especially this is seen in contiguous bodies: And thus it is also in a spiritual consideration; herein lieth the very proper and real notion of a godly rending of heart, when it is wholly divided from those sins it did once cleave unto. This is true, that love doth make the party loving, and the object loved all one. Hence it is, that the believer joyned to Christ, is said *to be made one spirit*, because he cleaves as glue to the Lord: Thus those that constantly follow sins, they are made one with sin and the Devil; when therefore they are truly converted, then comes this glorious separation and disunion; they are no longer one, but twain, now sin and they have no more union or communion, as it were: And how blessed is it to separate those, whom not God, but the Devil hath joyned together. 3

Fourthly, *This implieth impatiency of spirit, as not being able to bear, see, or hear sin*: It supposeth an extraordinary and raised apprehension of some dreadful evil before us: Thus the High-Priest did, when he thought Christ spake blasphemy; and thus the true Convert, he hath raised and aggravating 4.

thoughes about the evil of sin: he looks upon it with a more dreadfull and sad eye than men of the world do: Doth the flesh, doth the world or Satan tempt to sin? Oh what horror takes hold upon him, what trembling amazement is upon him! he hath no patience, the zeal of God doth so burn in his heart: Oh this is a sure evidence that few do truly turn to God, for where is that trembling, that impatience in thee against sin? how readily and willingly dost thou imbrace this Serpent, this Toad in thy bosom!

5. Fifthly, *As impatiency, so indignation also, and high disdain is included in this phrase*: Thus *Paul* and *Silas* when the men of *Lystra* would have Sacrificed to them as gods, rent their garments with indignation, looking upon it as an unsufferable thing; and the like indignation against themselves have all unfeigned Converts; for every sin hath gross idolatry in it, for thereby a man attributes his supreme affections, desires and thoughts also to sin, which do belong to God: The Body-Idolater, he worships a stock or a stone, and boweth down to that: Thou settest up lust or sin, and bowest down thy soul to that: Oh then, what cause hath the soul to cry out as Christ did, *Get thee behind me Satan!* In every sin, Satan doth tempt thee to fall down and worship him.

6. Lastly, *This doth suppose that a true Convert is thus affected, as well for other mens sins as his own*: For seeing this renting of the heart, implieth a deep apprehension of the dishonour that is done to God by every sin; then wheresoever it seeth sin committed, whether by our selves or others, it cannot but break out in this heavenly impatiency and indignation; yea, the neerer they are to him who do sin, if his children, if his servants, if his family, they are in the greater zeal: Oh then, if you ask for a sign of a mans conversion, see how he is affected to other mens sins as well as his own: *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brother*, Luke 22. 23. Conversion doth not lay upon a mans own self, but reacheth it self to others: *Then will I teach transgressors thy wayes, and sinners shall be converted to thee*, said *David*, Psal. 50. 1. so that if ever thou turnest to God with thy whole heart, with this mourning and rending of soul, thou couldst never bear sin in others: What? Can a true Convert endure those that are prophane and ungodly in his company, in his family? No, light can agree with darkness as well: Come then and behold your selves in this glass; by this see what judgement thou mayest pass upon thy self: Thou art so farre from casting out the wicked from thee, the ungodly out of thy family; thou art so farre from zeal to Gods glory, to bid all evil works depart: that thou onely choosest such, and makest them the object of delight; and thou canst not endure, but art mind through malice against those that walk purely, and more strictly than thou doth. Could *David* say, *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because men keep not thy Law*, Psal. 119. 136. and shalt thou sit in the seat of the scorner, and walk in the wayes of ungodly men! Oh let this truth make thy ears to tingle, yea, thy heart to tremble! How canst thou say, without gross hypocrisie, that thy heart is rent for sin, and yet lovest to see it committed by others, thy family being like an hell, rather than heaven, wherein all kind of impiety is committed!

VVhat is implied in the Negative, *And not your garments.*

The next particular is to consider, what is implied in the Negative or Comparative, *And not your garments*: And that is,

1. First, *That no outward sign of sorrow or grief of heart, is regarded by God, if the heart it self be not exercised thereto*: God allowed of sackcloth and ashes, of smiting on the breast, of rending garments; but this was as dung before him, he abhorred it if the hearts of men were not wounded for sin: And no wonder if God did refuse these outward signs, if without the heart, when his own Solemn and Religious duties, Prayer, Sacrifice, and the like, his soul did loath, while their hearts were unwashed, and unclean. Hence are those frequent complaints and expostulations God hath with the people of *Israel*, why they were

were so diligent in external duties of Religion, and so little careful about cleansing and washing the heart: O that people could once be so subject, to receive this truth. We still cry, *The Temple of the Lord, Circumcision*, as the Jews did; *Our Baptisme, our Prayers*, but O where is the man that looks to any godly work upon his heart.

Secondly, *Therefore is the heart thus prized above all things, because that is the fountain of all spiritual life.* There is the good or evil treasure, that is the true fountain; even as the heart in the body doth give life to all other parts of the whole man, *My son, give me thy heart*, saith God, and, *With all keepings, keep thy heart, Prov.* 4. This is the seat of all good, or of all evil: This is the soules Magazine, or spiritual Store house. 2.

Now it is very good to observe the reasons why God doth thus prefer a rent and converted heart before all outward acts of Religion, for men do not consider these things: They would think themselves hearts, and unworthy of the name of Christians, if they should not pray, hear, and come to Church, but then for this curious and necessary workmanship upon the heart, they never minde it at all. Think therefore All is but a tinkling Cymbal, that God hath turned thy heart thus in duties: For Why God prefers a rent and converted heart, before all outward acts of Religion.

First, *God never commanded simply and meerly any outward duty of Religion for its self sake*, But especially he required gracious qualifications in the exercise of them: He never commanded prayer, meerly for prayers sake; nor the keeping of the Sabaths, meerly for external observations sake; and in this sense some expound that, *Sacrifice and burnt Offerings thou wouldst not have*: If therefore these duties be not required, meerly and simply for themselves, why doth not then attend to that which is the principal? Oh say I, it is not this duty, so much as a converted heart in this duty; It is not any coming to the Assemblies, it is not my hearing Sermons this day, so much as a changed turned heart that God looks at: This is the *Benjamin* God commands you to bring, else not to see his face. Hence when the hearts of men do not spiritualize this duty, the Scripture calls it no more than a Carnal Religion, or a Religion of the flesh, *Philip.* and *Heb.* 9. The legal Rites, because they did not reach to the purifying of the conscience, are called *Carnal Ordinances*: See how perspicably the Scripture speaks of these things, when performed without Spiritual reference to Christ. 1.

Secondly, It is *Rent your hearts, and not garments, because all outward duties of Religion, are but the vessels or pipes which receive such liquour, good or bad, as are put into them*: A man may be acting his sin, or his goodness, while he is performing of them, as the Pharisees were: Although a constant ordinary neglect of Religious duties, be a sure sign of a prophane heart; yet the constant, daily performing of them, is not a sure sign of a gracious godly heart, for they are such as are put into them: Even as the good Angels, and the Devils also have sometimes appeared in humane bodies: And thus godliness or sin may work in outward Religious duties; so that those external performances and expressions, are not to be made arguments of gracious men. These leaves will grow upon corrupt trees, as well as good trees. 2.

Thirdly, *No wonder if God prefer a rent heart, before outward signs of humiliation, because these have been, and still are consistent with the most abominable wickedness*: They wrought miracles, and cryed, Lord, Lord, who yet were found to be workers of iniquity. The Jews had their New-Moons, and their Oblations, and their daily Fastings, and at the same time also had Idolatries, Adulteries, and all manner of outward filthiness. So that it is a great matter to know wherein true godliness doth consist, what is the life and soul of praying, hearing, and all Religious duties: One word spoken from a converted rent heart, is more acceptable, than many thousands expressed in a meer customary and formal way. 3.

Uſe 1. *Uſe* 2. Is converſion a breaking, wounding, tearing and rending of the heart? then you may quickly judge how remote they are from this bleſſed eſtate, that make it their buſineſſe to keep their hearts jolly, ſecure, merry and full of eaſe. Oh they muſt hear nothing, that muſt be like a two-edged ſword at their hearts; you muſt never tell them of hell, and the day of judgement, or the narrow ſtrict way to heaven. Oh bring not theſe ſad and troubleſome things to their ears. Oh thou fooliſh wretch, that doſt wilfully ſet thy ſoul for deſtruction. Oh think that the word of God never works as it ſhould do, till it hath grieved thee, diſeaſed thee, till it hath made all worldly delights bitter to thee. Doſt thou think to eat and drink, and ſin, and to have the good things of this life, and yet no threatning enter into thy heart? Oh were thou not bewitched, and hardned by ſin, this preſent diſcourſe would fall like fire into thy Bowels; and if there were nothing to rend and tear thy heart, the very civil and religious rents that are amongſt us, might move thee. What woundings and rendings have there been of the body by the ſword? What religious tearings in opinions and affections? Doth not the Lord then teach us by theſe rents and diſtractions what we ſhould doe in our hearts? And if after all this thou findeſt thy heart like Leviathans skin impenetrable, and ſayeſt, How may my heart be rent, and thus graciouſly affected? I ſay, depend upon the powerful preaching of the Word: That is appointed by God, not only to ſet Father againſt Son, and Son againſt Father, but a man againſt himſelf, his heart againſt his heart, his affections againſt one another.

SERM. LXXXIII.

Of the Miniſtry of the Word as the Means of Converſion, with the other Ends thereof, &c.

JEREM. 23. 22.

But if they had ſtood in my Counſell, and had cauſed my people to hear my words, then they ſhould have turned them from their evill wayes, and from the evill of their doings.

THis Chapter hath two main principal parts; the firſt is Promiſſory, the ſecond Comminatory.

The Promiſſory is of a three-fold benefit. 1. Reduction from Captivity. 2. Godly and holy Governours, both Civil and Eccleſiaſtical. 3. The Miſſion of Chriſt, who is deſcribed in his glorious Office, he ſhall be called, *The Lord our Righteouſneſſe.*

The Comminatory beginneth *verſe* 9. againſt the falſe & wicked Prophets as the fountain of all the wickedneſs in *Jeruſalem*. The ſins they are accuſed of are a prophaning of the holy things of God, Adulteries, & ſwearings; as alſo hypocriſies, which not only they themſelves were guilty of, but infected others alſo. The wicked lives of Miniſters make a great deal of Atheiſm among people: They

They are like poiſoned Fountains or Springs, which do preſently conveigh poiſon to all that drink of them. Now as their ſin is decyphered, ſo their judgment is threatned *ver.* 15. grief and heavy trouble of mind; for ſaith God, *I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of Gall.* They fed the people with Gall in their deceiving Sermons, and God feeds them with Wormwood. Now my Text doth by way of contrary aggravate the ſad and damnable effects of a corrupt and ſinfull Miniſtry; for whereas *verſe* 14. he had ſhewed that they did ſtrengthen the hands of wicked doers, ſo that none did return from his evill wayes. On the contrary, in my Text he declareth the good and ſoul-ſaving eff. & of it, in caſe of a godly and conſcientious diſcharge of their Function. So that in the words you have good qualifications ſuppoſed, and ſecondly the godly and bleſſed ſucceſſe that will flow from hence.

The good qualifications ſuppoſed are two.

Firſt, *If they had ſtood in my Counſell.* To underſtand the full ſenſe of this, conſider 1 *Kings* 22. 19. and *Job* 1. 6. Where God is deſcribed as a judge ſitting upon his Throne, and all the Hoſt of heaven ſtanding by him on his right hand, and on his left; ſo that the meaning is, If thoſe Prophets had not delivered the imagination of their own hearts, but had attended for my commands, had received all from me, as the Angels do then, &c. And further note, that To ſtand before one, is an Hebraiſm, deſcribing the ready poſture of ſervants, to receive any command. Thus *Gehezi* is ſaid to ſtand before his Maſter; and we are forbidden to offend any of thoſe little ones, becauſe their Angels behold alwayes the face of God, *Mat.* 18. 20.

The ſecond qualification flowеth from the former, *And cauſe the people to hear my words.* The falſe Prophets preached their own words of peace to them, whom God curſed; but they muſt be like the Trumpet, that ſends forth no other voice than was breathed into them. Embaſſadors muſt keep themſelves ſtrictly to the words of their Commiſſion; and Executors to the Will of Teſtators: for if it be but a mans Teſtament, no man may add to it, how much more to a Divine?

The next thing ſuppoſed, is the good ſucceſſe, *They ſhall be fiſhers of men* indeed; though while they followed their own ways, they laboured all night and day, and took nothing; yet then Chriſt will command them to throw in the Net, and they ſhall catch abundantly. When they thus water and plant, God will give great increaſe.

Doctr. *That the Miniſtry of God faithfully diſcharged, according to Gods own Counſell is a ſure way to turn men from their ſins.* Doct.

To explain this, conſider

Firſt, *That God hath firmly and immoveably ſet Miniſters and Paſtors, or their Office in the Church, for glorious and ſupernatural effects.* That although God was pleaſed to make the world, the old Creature, by his own word immediately, uſing no Angels, or other things as inſtruments (nay they could not be uſed inſtrumentally to that infinite work of Creation) yet he is pleaſed to appoint ſpirituall Officers in the Church, *To be co-workers*, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *with him*, 2 Cor. 6. 1. Not that they co-operate with God in the infuſing of grace in the ſoul, (no, that is Gods ſole work) but they prepare and diſpoſe the ſubject in a morall way, by convincing and inſtructing the Conſciences of their hearers. That God hath thus firmly appointed ſuch ſpirituall Offices is plain, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *God hath ſet ſome* in his Church, ſet as he hath ſet the Sun and Stars in the firmament: and there he reckons up extraordinary and ordinary Offices; and theſe are called gifts given to men, and the fruits of his Aſcenſion, *Epheſ.* 4. 11. where they are again enumerated. So that by theſe places, you ſee a Miniſtry is a Divine Office, a plant of Gods own planting: and that it is not a temporary, but a perpetual Office, appeareth by their end, which is perpetual, *Eph.* 4. 13. till we all come to a full ſtature in Chriſt. And the Apoſtle, in his Epiſtles to *Ti-*

motby

worthy, laying down the Characters and Qualities of ſuch who are to be Miniſters, he chargeth thoſe Commandments to be kept impartially till the coming of Chriſt. 2 *Tim.* 5.21.

2. Secondly, *As God hath appointed this Office, ſo it is the expreſſion of his wonderfull goodneſs and love to mankind therein.* Hence God doth ſo often tell the *Jewes* of this his great love to them, that he ſent them his Prophets riſing early and warning of them: and in *Epheſ.* 4. they are called the gifts, which Chriſt gave after his Aſcenſion; and indeed they are greater than any temporal mercies, if men could ſpiritually judge. The giving of us the heavens and the earth, with all the abundance thereof, is not like to the giving of faithful Miniſters to a people. Therefore God to comfort the people of *Iſrael* when they were in great extremities, he tells them, *He will give them ſuch Paſtors as ſhall rule after his own heart,* Jer. 3.15. *And their eyes ſhall ſee their Teachers, though he feed them with the bread of affliction,* Iſa 30.20. Hence are thoſe triumphing expreſſions to them by the godly; *How pleaſant are the feet of thoſe who bring the glad tidings of the Goſpel?* Rom. 10. 15. And how can it be but thought an exceeding great mercy, when God, who needeth us not, ſhall yet ſend his Embaſſadors daily to us, to intreat us to be reconciled unto him? As if a glorious Emperor ſhould ſend Meſſengers to win the affections of a poor deſpiſed Beggar to be eſpouſed to him.

3. Thirdly, *The end of this Office is ſupernaturall, for divine and ſpiritual effects.* And herein it differeth from all earthly imployments, who have onely outward happineſs and proſperity for their end. Hence it is that they are called Angels, their imployment being ſacred and heavenly, like that of the Angels. Now this ſupernatural end is reduceable to a fourfold effect.

The end of the Miniſtry is ſupernatural, and four-fold.

I. First, *They are appointed for the Converſion, and ſpirituall change of the hearts and lives of thoſe to whom they are ſent.* What a wonder was that of *Peter*, who Converted three thouſand at one time from their former ignorance and wickedneſſe! Let not the Heathens any more boaſt of their *Orpheus* and his Harp, which would make wild Beaſts tame, and follow him; Here *Peter* doth farr more by the ſpiritual keys of his Miniſtry: And thus *James* ſaith, Jam. 1. *We are begotten by his Word, and it is the Word of Regeneration.* Hence they are called Fathers, ſpiritually begetting children unto them in the Lord. And if that be true, as it is, which *Auſtin* ſaith, *The Converſion of the ſoul is a greater wonder than any miracle*; then where the Miniſtry hath this Divine effect, it is more admirable than to cure blind eyes, or deaf ears, or raiſe dead men from the grave. Oh then this is a ſtrong and mighty experiment of Gods work in the Miniſtry, when it doth reach thus into the inward hearts and conſciences of men.

II. Secondly, *Another main end is to confirm and ſtrengthen thoſe that are converted*; To make them grow more and more, as *Epheſ.* 4. till we come to a full ſtature in Chriſt. It is pride and arrogancy to think thy ſelf ſo knowing, or ſo godly, as not to need a Miniſtry; for ſuppoſe thou doeſt hear no more than what thou knoweſt, yet how dull are thy affections? How apt to apoſtatize, and backſlide! and therefore the Righteous man he needs *Ezekiel*'s Watchman as well as the Wicked, that he may not turn from his Righteouſneſs, *Ezek.* 3. And this is a noble fruit of the Miniſtry, to build up, when a foundation is already laid, to be adding cubits to thy ſtature, to be always blowing upon thee with this ſpiritual wind, that thy graces may be flouriſhing and ſweetly fragrant always.

III. Thirdly, *Another effect is to revive and comfort thoſe that are caſt down* with the ſenſe and burden of their ſins. Hence they are ſaid to preach glad tidings, and this is called the tongue of the learned, to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to thoſe that need comfort. Theſe are the good *Samaritans*, that bring precious oyl, theſe apply the balm of *Gilead*: And Oh that we had more ſubjects to improve this glorious effect of the Miniſtry upon! A wounded conſcience for ſin, is an unknown thing to men of the world: To feel the Agonies of ſin through Gods diſpleaſure becauſe of our iniquities, is a Riddle to natural men, but where ſuch are, how welcome are the glad tidings of a Chriſt unto them?

Laſtly,

Laſtly, *To direct in matters of doubt*, and to adviſe in caſes of Conſcience. Hence they are compared to light, and to guides, that lead the blind, and direct in unknown and dangerous ways. And certainly this is no mean task: Who is ſufficient for this very imployment, To determine in perplexed caſes of Conſcience, what is to be done, and not to ſin? Thus *Paul* determines many caſes of Conſcience in his Epiſtles, about eating, and not eating, about preſence in Idololatrical Temples, about marriage and ſingle life, 2 *Cor.* 7. and the meeting of a Synod at *Jeruſalem* *Acts* 15. was in one part to adviſe in matters of Conſcience. Theſe are the four noble and ſupernatural ends, for which God hath appointed this Office; ſo that we are to attend upon the Miniſtry and expect theſe divine effects in no other ordinary way; for Chriſts promiſe is to be expected onely where his inſtitution is. IIII.

Fourthly, The wiſedom of God is herein obſervable, *That having appointed the Miniſtry for ſuch ſupernatural effects, he is pleaſed to uſe ſuch outward contemptible means. We carry*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *this treaſure in earthen Veſſels*, 2 Cor. 4. 7. The Veſſel is contemptible and unworthy, yet the treaſure therein is glorious: That God ſhould work ſuch admirable effects in a way ſo unlikely to fleſh and blood; this was to confound the world; for when he appointed the twelve Apoſtles, who did more to change mens hearts, than ever all the Emperours could do to propagate their Empires by the Sword; how mean and deſpicable were they? Thus God hath ſtill appointed, that not the humane eloquence and external pomp of the world, ſhould be inſtrumental to this ſavoury and ſpiritual operation; But the plain and ſimple Explication and Application of Gods word; which made *Paul* truly ſay, *That God hath choſen the fooliſh and weak things of the world to confound the wiſe and ſtrong*, 1 Cor. 1. Hence *Rom.* 1. *Paul* again calls it *The fooliſhneſs of Preaching*; that is, in the eyes of carnal and humane wiſedom. The *Jews* they require a ſign, and the *Greeks* wiſedom, that is, eloquence and acute demonſtrations: But this fooliſhneſs of Preaching, is the power of God to ſalvation. Oh then take heed, that vain carnal pride and contempt do not hinder thee from this ſpiritual good: as *Auſtin* was offended at the ſimple and plain ſtile of the Scripture, he found no ſuch ſwelling, tuned eloquence, as in humane Authors, which made him ſay, *Dignabar eſſe parvulus*. Oh know, that unleſs a man become like a little child, he can never with faith and trembling receive this Word aright. I wonder not then, if the great wiſe men of the world do ſo undervalue this plain way of Gods word preached; they cannot become like little children. 4.

Fifthly, Conſider, *That although the Office and Miniſtry of the Church be thus ordained and owned by Chriſt; yet ſo univerſal and general may the ignorance and corruption be of thoſe that are in this Office, that the clean contrary to Gods end is brought about.* Inſtead of inſtruction, men are more nouriſhed in ignorance; in ſtead of converſion, men more ſtrengthened in their wickedneſs; as the falſe Prophets ſpake peace, and promiſed good to thoſe whom God abhorred. Oh this is the moſt fatal judgement that can befall a people, to have blind, ignorant, dumb and ſcandalous Miniſters; and although people generally may love to have ſuch, becauſe ſome eyes cannot abide the light; yet its the heavieſt expreſſion of Gods wrath upon a people. This *Chapter* complains that from ſuch falſe Prophets all evil came to *Jeruſalem*. Even as if the Sun and Moon ſhould be turned into darkneſs and blood; ſo is it, when thoſe that ſhould be guides, eyes, watchmen, are of a contrary: Onely by the way, when theſe are called here falſe Prophets, obſerve, that they may be called falſe in two reſpects, either in regard of their Office, or in regard of their matter; of their Office, and ſuch are falſe Prophets, or falſe Miniſters, as have no true Call, either mediate or immediate from God: So that although a man ſhould preach that which is true & good matters not, if he have not lawfully entred into this Office, he is a falſe Prophet. Conſider that remarkable place, *If there ariſe a falſe Prophet who foretells a thing, & the thing* 5.

to paſs, I the Lord do it to try you, Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3. Obſerve, that a falſe Prophet may tell thoſe things that are true; and God doth thus wiſely and juſtly permit theſe things, to try people whether they be ſoundly rooted or not.

But Secondly, a falſe Prophet or Miniſter is he, who though he have a true Call, yet preacheth falſe and corrupt matter to pleaſe ſinners: Thus theſe here are condemned for both: They run, and I ſent them not, they were forward, and yet had no Call. Thus they preached peace to obſtinate ſinners, and encouraged them in their wickedneſs. Marvel not at it, if the Sons of *Levi* ſometimes need to be purified, *Mal.* 3. And the Devils main deſign is either to overthrow the Miniſtry or corrupt it.

Laſtly therefore, if ſo be that Miniſters would find the ſpiritual effect of their Miniſtry; and that Gods promiſe and power might go along with their Office, they are here directed to ſtand in Gods Counſels, that is, wholly to be enquiring of him, and directed by him: For to convert ſouls, being it ſelf ſupernatural, the means alſo muſt be ſupernatural, and that can be known onely by divine Revelation. What counſel therefore is it, which God giveth them, in the exerciſe whereof this comfortable effect may be produced? And,

What Miniſters muſt do that their Miniſtry may be effectual.

1. First, *That which is to be done before all other things, is to reform their own lives*; That the world may ſay, they believe that to be true which they preach to others. Thus they are to be an example of all purity, chaſtity, meekneſs, faith, temperance, heavenly-mindedneſs. Not but that wicked men will cavil and find ſpots in the Sun. You ſee Chriſt and the Apoſtles were much traduced, and they walked through good report and bad; but let them approve their works to the Lord, and then they ſhall have comfort. Thus the Apoſtle to *Timothy*; *Attend to thy ſelf, and to thy Doctrine*, 1 Tim. 4. 13. *ſo ſhalt thou ſave others*: To himſelf firſt, and then his Doctrine; the life of a man preacheth; *Aaron's* Bells hung at his feet. What an uncomely thing is it to ſee a foul deforme Painter to draw a curious lovely image? No leſs is it to hear a prophane Miniſter preſſing his people to purity; a diſſolute Miniſter to urge his people to ſtrictneſs: And therefore God threatned in *Malachy*, *To make the Prieſts contemptible, and a Dung, becauſe they had not kept his Word*, Mal. 2. 3. This is wofull. But when the Miniſtry, for their faithfulneſs and oppoſition to the wickedneſs of the world, are then as the Apoſtles were, *made the off-ſcouring of the world*, this is glorious.

2. Secondly, *To take counſel from God, is when they preach true Scripture*, ſound Doctrine, which is after godlineſs; for ſo the Goſpel deſcribes it, *which is after godlineſs*: To pleaſe your ears, or delight the fancy, is not an acceptable work to God; no more than if a Prieſt in the old Law inſtead of offering a Lamb or Bullock, ſhall Sacrifice a Butter-fly, or a Peacock, becauſe of the radiant colour. No, you are to feel it as a two-edged Sword, as an hammer; and the neglect of this ſolid Scripture-preaching, have made many Miniſters through carnal affectations vent themſelves into vapors & meer froth; & the people have been fed with wind, inſtead of ſolid food. *What hath the Chaff to do with the Wheat?* ſaith the Prophet in this *Chap.* As it was ſaid, He had made great progreſs in Rhetorick, to whoſe palate *Tully's* phraſe was pleaſing, which is not ſo ſwelling & affected as ſome other: So he is a good judicious hearer, & like to get good by preaching, to whom the Scripture matter appears ſound, admirable full of Majeſty & worth.

3. Thirdly, *As he is thus to preach ſound Doctrine, ſo there are ſeveral qualifications which are like whetting, to make the two-edged Sword enter the more powerfully.* Such are our zeal and tender compaſſion to mens ſouls, to cry out with *Rebecca*, *Give me Children, or elſe I dye.* Our Saviour Chriſt, when he ſaw multitudes of people, though they enjoyed the teaching of the Scribes and Phariſees, which had ſome good uſe in it, elſe our Saviour would not have directed the people to hear them; yet it is ſaid, *His Bowels were moved with compaſſion towards them, when he ſaw them*, as Sheep without a Shepherd: Zeal makes the ſpiritual meat hot, and ſo the fitter for digeſtion.

2. Bold-

2. Boldness to reprove sin; *Rebuke with all authority. Jeremy* must not fear the faces of men, lest God confound him before them. That which some in a crafty insnaring manner spake to Christ, *Master, we know thou speakest the truth, and art no accepter of persons*, should be applied to every Officer in the Church. Charge them that be rich in this world; *That they be not high minded*; *We have not received the spirit of fear*, but of power. Thus *John* to *Herod*, *Paul* to *Felix*, *Chrysostom* to *Eudoxius*.

3. With labour and diligence, *Preach in season, and out of season*: All their names and titles imply diligence ἐπίσκοπος, A Bishop or Over-seer, a Watchman, a Shepherd. What labour did *Jacob* undergo in that Office? The Titles they have are not so much of honour as solicitude; those that labour in the word and Doctrine.

4. Consideration of their great account which is to be given, not onely for their own sins, but of all others committed to them. The Sacrifice that the Priest was to offer, was greater than that the Kings was, yea, as great as the whole Congregation for all their sins: to shew that their sins as Ministers were of an horrible aggravation; which made *Chrysostome* wonder, if any in that Office could be saved; and indeed with God this is possible, and not with man.

Lastly, all these must be coupled with earnest prayer to God for a blessing upon his word; for it is he that teacheth to profit, he opens eys, he changeth hearts, he raiseth up the dead. We may lay the staff as *Gehezi* did, but God giveth life. Christ preached in the day time, and prayed in the night: While thou rageſt, fretteſt and art full of heart-burnings against them; little dost thou think what earnest prayers he put up to God, that his word may be blessed to thy soul.

Use of *Examination*: Whether the word preached hath obtained this saving effect upon your souls, although the Ministers of God have stood in his Counsel. Have they been able to say, we have not ceased to give them daily warning? O Lord, thou knowest our pains, our prayers, our desires; and yet they are trees that bring forth no fruit. Well, God will say to such, *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant, Thou hast delivered thy soul, their blood will be required at their own hands.* It is the great question, Why Conversion is not so frequent, and ordinary now, as in the Primitive times, yea, as at the first reformation out of Popery? To that we may speak the next day: only know, Gods anger is gone out against men, that he makes them have miscarrying wombs and dry breasts. How few Ministers can say, as *Isaiah*, *Behold I and the Children which thou hast given me.* We would fain, as *Jacobs* sons were commanded to bring *Benjamin* with them into his Fathers presence: so gladly when we shall appear before God, would we also bring all our hearers with us, saying, Not one of them committed to my charge is lost: but we have too many sons of perdition. *Use.*

SERM. LXXXIV.

Why Gods power unto Conversion doth not always go along with his Word, though dispensed by a faithfull Ministry; and whether corrupt or prophane Ministers may be a means of Conversion.

JER. 23. 22.

If they had stood in my Counsel, &c. then they should have turned them from their evill way.

A Faithfull Ministry (as you have heard) following the counsell of the Lord, is the sure and ordinary way for conversion of men from their evil wayes. This Doctrine hath been explained: Let us now Answer some material questions which will further clear this point.

VVhether a godly Ministry may not be without any great success.

And First, *It may be demanded, whether that Ministry which doth indeed stand in Gods counsel, may not for all that be without this spiritual successe?* May not they for all that see no good and comfortable issue of their labours? May not they complain they have laboured in vain? Shall we argue such a Ministry to be corrupt, and unfaithful, because they are not blessed with spiritual children, like Olive plants about them?

I Answer, That it doth too often fall out, that even those who stand in Gods counsel, that follow this star, do yet plow and sow upon the rocks, and see no seed grow up. Therefore this Text or Doctrine is not such a general, but that it hath its exceptions; and if we will seek for instances, how plentiful are they to confirm this? Shall we think that this *Jeremiah*, who is so zealous against the false prophets, that he did not take a true and faithful course in his Ministry, yea his whole prophesie doth manifest that. Yet how sad are his complaints that he had no successe in his Ministry, *Jer.* 6. 29. *The bellows are burnt, the lead is consumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain, the wicked are not plucked away*; where *Jeremiah* is compared to a Refiner, or Founder, his mouth is the bellows: The prophesie he had from God, was the breath, or blast, the corrupt and impure mettle was the wicked *Jews*. Now all this blowing, and pains in refining, was in vain, for the drosse would not melt away. Thus also the Prophet *Isay* he stood in Gods counsel, yet he crieth out, *Who hath believed our report?* Isa. 53. 1 And again, *All the day long have I stretched out my hands in vain. Ezekiel* also, a Prophet so frequently in communion with God by spiritual visions, & therefore so often called the Son of man, that these revelations may not puff him up: Yet God tels him, he goeth to a people that will not hear: but whether they will hear, or forbear, they must have a Prophet sent to them, *Ezek.* 3. Yea, what need we go further for witnesse to confirm this, when Christ himself, in whom were all the treasures of wisedome and holinesse, and no man ever preached like him; yet the number of his converts were few, in respect of the multitude he preached unto, which made him so bewaile the Nation of the *Jews*, as a tree that enjoyed much

meely culture and dressing, but still continued unfruitfull, and so was to be cut down and cast into the fire.

But what are the reasons, Why Gods power should not always go along with his instructions? What hinders, if when all things requisite on the Ministers part are concurrent? Yet God withdraweth himself. Now there may be reasons first on Gods part two wayes. VVhy Gods power doth alwayes go along with his word. Reasons on Gods part. 1.

First, From the freedome and arbitrarinesse in his works: He doth in heaven and earth whatsoever he pleaseth. *The spirit bloweth where it listeth*, John 3. Though therefore God hath tied & bound us to wait on the Ministry, we must frequent the Ordinances, yet he hath not bound himself to work at every time, to every Auditory. God keeps this soverainty to himself: one Ministry shall be more successfull than another, and at one time more than another, and to some people more than others: Yea, many times God makes the weakest, and most unlikely Ministry to be more fruitfull than a learned able one: even as *Leah*, that was more deformed, had more Children than *Rachel*, who was more comely and beautifull. So that as it is solely in Gods will, to whom he will to send a faithfull Ministry, he gives to some that makes no use of it, yea, that hate it and are weary of it; and again denyeth it to others that long for it, or that would with the Tyrians and Sidonians manifest greater affections to it. Thus also when he hath bestowed this Ministry upon a people, it is successful no otherwise than he will appoint: And herein we are to advance Gods dispensations, which are wise and just, though the reasons be not always visible to us. Even as although God gave the Apostles power to work Miracles, yet they could not do these when and where they pleased, for then *Paul* would have recovered *Epaphroditus*; but they did them onely when he vouchsafed them power. So that it is not of us that plant or water, *but of God that giveth increase*, 1 Cor. 3.

A second reason on Gods part is his justice: For when a people have by their former obstinacy, and unfaithfulnesse under the meanes of Grace, provoked him to anger, he doth inflict that just judgement of a blinde mind, and an hard heart, never to understand or be converted: and this is very wofull but very ordinary: Thus *John* 12. This is the reason why the Jews, notwithstanding the daily preaching they had heard with their ears, and the miracles they had seen with their eyes, yet it is said, *They could not believe, because of that spirituall judgement which was upon their souls.* And thus it was also with *Esaias*, Cap. 6. He is sent, not to turn them from their evil wayes, but accidentally through their corruption, to make them more obdurate. Oh then, if we see where much faithful preaching is, yet little Conversion, let us fear and tremble at the wrath of God upon such a people. If God hath given them up to their own lusts? If he hath smitten them with blindnesse of mind, and wilful rebellion against his Word, then they are under the judgement of all judgements? And is not this anger of God visibly gone out against all our Congregations? Was it not a plain demonstration that God had forsaken *Saul*, when he would neither answer him by Prophet, or *Urim* and *Thummim*, or any other way? So it is thy case, neither prayer for thee, or preaching to thee is made powerful to convince thy conscience, to change thy heart? Oh men in the state of Gall and Wormwood, though they think not, though they believe not so of themselves. Thou shouldst after every Sermon say, *Oh Lord, why is it that yet this Word hath not yet turned me from my sins? Oh what is the matter that it hath not such power upon me? Oh, what shall I do? Have pity upon me, O God, and soften my heart. Have pity upon me, O ye Ministers, and pray for me, that God would give me a soft heart.*

Another reason why the Minister, though faithful, may not yet rejoyce to see the good fruit of his labours, is from the Ministry it self, and that two wayes also. Reasons from the Ministry. 1.

First, The Ministry doth not work like a natural cause to the conversion of men, as fire burneth, and the stone falleth down, but as a meer Instructed, and Moral cause, as they call it, that is by the Counsell and power of God accompanying it

If it did work as a naturall Cauſe, from an inbred power, in it ſelf, then it would work alwayes alike; then it would never be fruſtrated of its operation without a miracle: as that the fire did not burn the three Worthies, it was a miracle. If the Word of God preached ſhould turn men from ſin this way, it would be a miracle that every Sermon did not convert every ſinner: but it works onely as an inſtituted cauſe. And thus as the pool of *Bethesda* did not at any time vouchſafe healing, but when the Angel deſcended into it: ſo neither do our Sermons upon every perſon, and at any time work upon thoſe that hear; but as Gods power ſhall come in; and therefore as was ſaid at the Sacrament, ſhould be alſo at preaching, *Surſum Corda*, lift up your hearts to him that is a Teacher in heaven: as he Baptiſeth not with water, but with fire; ſo he teacheth by fire alſo. And this ſhould direct people by earneſt prayer to look up to him: ſay, *Lord, if thou goeſt not along with me in hearing; if thou ſpeakeſt not to my dead heart to live, to my hard heart to become ſoft, it cannot be. Lord, if thou hadſt been here,* ſaith ſhe, *my Brother had not dyed.* And ſo may we ſay, Lord, if thou hadſt gone along with this Sermon, with this truth, it had not periſhed without profit.

Secondly, *The Miniſtry, though faithfully diſcharged, yet is in a ſubſervient way to Gods election.* Now many are called that are not choſen: the Miniſtry is ſent where election hath not to do ſometimes: But then to ſuch it is like an excellent Medicine that is onely proffered, and not received to work any good: where therefore the Word of God doth convert and make theſe admirable changes, it is but the execution of Gods Election from Eternity. Thus it is ſaid, *As many believed, as were ordained to eternall life.* Acts 13.48. And *Paul* was to preach at one place, becauſe God had many people there; for that *Election is ſure to obtain*, Rom. 1.21. Wonder not then that the Miniſtry doth not Convert all, no more than that God doth not Elect all For on whom God hath fixed this purpoſe of Love, there he will take away the Heart of ſtone, make plain the higheſt mountain, and change a moſt ravening Wolf into a Lamb.

Reaſons on the Miniſters part.

Thridly, *Therefore a Godly Miniſtry following Gods Counſel, may yet bring forth none, or very little fruit, becauſe of conſiderations on the Miniſters part alſo:* For as in the Old Teſtament, though encreaſe of Children were promiſed as a bleſſing, yet many good women were much afflicted with barrenneſſe, as *Sara*, *Rachel*, *Hannah*, and others: So it may be here in the diſpenſations of Gods word. Thoſe that have received five, or ten, may be diligent in employing of it, and yet have no more encreaſe than he that hid his Talent in a Napkin, though with leſſe guilt: For ſucceſſe is Gods work, not the Miniſters duty. And this may be.

1. Firſt *To humble Godly and faithful Miniſters.* Had they a multitude of Converts? Did they ſee God ſo viſibly go along with them? this might ſtir up pride and vanity in them, as multitude of revelations was in danger to puff up *Paul*. The Diſciples when they returned from their ſpiritual progreſs to Chriſt, were carnally rejoycing that the Devils were ſubject to them; and they could work miracles in his Name, our Saviour to humble them ſaith, *Rejoyce not in this, but that your names are written in heaven*, Luke 10.20. God therefore may ſay not in anger, as he to *Shalum*, but in mercy, Write this man childleſs.

2. Secondly, God may give no more ſucceſſe, *to draw out their Grace, and their love to him the more:* For this is a great teſtimony of it, when we can rejoyce that Gods work goeth on, though he will not uſe us as inſtruments. We ſee *Johns* Diſciples had ſome envious thoughts to Chriſt, and his, and therefore told *John That all went after him whom he Baptized*; now ſee how graciouſly *John* anſwers them, *I told you I was not the Meſſias, but I muſt decreaſe, and he muſt encreaſe*, John 3.30. The Phariſees envy againſt Chriſt, becauſe the multitude ran after him, did work the clean contrary to that in *John*, even to the killing of him. It was much that affection in *Sarah*, to be willing *Abraham* ſhould have children, though it was not by her: There is this corruption in us, that we onely would be the inſtruments

ſtruments God ſhould uſe. As he ſaid in vain-glory, *This is the Babylon I have built*; ſo we, This is the Jeruſalem I have built.

Thirdly, *Hereby God would teach even faithful Miniſters, that he needs no mans parts, no mans gifts or abilities.* Chriſt took three of his Diſciples up into the tranſfiguration; this was a great favour, for it was the glimpſe of glory. Now he did this to them, and not to other of the Diſciples: Chriſt hath ſome ſpecial favours which he will diſpenſe as he pleaſeth; for as the fountain needeth not the ſtream, not the Sun its beam, but they are wholly from them; thus God needeth not the graces, the gifts, the enlargements of inſtruments; but many times (as the Apoſtle in another caſe) puts the greateſt glory upon the moſt uncomely parts. 3

Laſtly, *A Miniſtry following Gods Counſel, may yet finde no ſucceſſe, becauſe of the froward, and indiſpoſed temper of the people.* Thus Chriſt weeps over Jeruſalem, *How often would I have gathered thee, and thou wouldſt not?* Thus the word alſo did not profit the Iſraelites, becauſe it was not mingled with Faith: and if our Goſpel be hid (ſaith the Apoſtle) *It is to thoſe that periſh, whoſe eyes the God of this world hath blinded.* 2 Cor. 4. 3. O words worthy of all obſervation. If it be hid, that is, if men do not underſtand it, do not feel the power of it, it is becauſe thou art one to periſh, one to be damned: It is becauſe the Devil hath ſhut thine eyes. Oh then lay the fault where it is: Thou art apt to blame the Miniſtry, to cavil at him, or to blame his preaching. But ſee what the Apoſtle ſaith, If our Goſpel, if our preaching be hid to you, it is becauſe you are to periſh: For as the husbandman, though he ſhould be never ſo laborious in ploughing, ſowing and fitting the ground; though he ſhould be never ſo careful to provide precious and choyce ſeed, yet if the nature of the ground be ſo barren, as it will bear no ſeed, or cauſe it to degenerate into Cockle, all the labour is in vain: Or as the Gardener, though he water and dreſſe never ſo carefully, yet if the tree be dead at the root, it is all to no purpoſe: So though the Miniſters of God are very earneſt in praying, preaching, informing, rebuking, yet where the Tree is dead at the root, What hope is there! A reaſon from the people.

The ſecond grand quære may be, Whether a corrupt Miniſtry that neglects the counſel of God, may not yet be a means of Converſion? Whether an ungodly Miniſtry may not be uſed by God to convert others? This was a queſtion diſcuſſed of old, between the Orthodox, and the Donatiſts; for the Donatiſts thought, that if any Miniſter fell into groſs ſins, neither the preaching of the word, nor his adminiſtration of Sacraments could do any good to others; for how, ſaid they can death be means to beget life? How can darkneſs produce light? How can a Member of the Devil make a Member of Chriſt? Whether a corrupt Miniſtry may be the means of converſion.

To anſwer this caſe, Firſt, *We muſt diſtinguiſh of the corruption of a Miniſter*: For either it is Doctrinal, in reſpect of that matter which he preacheth; or elſe practical in regard of his life & Converſation: if the Corruption be Doctrinal, then it is either totall or partial: Total, when he doth wholly forſake the Truth, and preach nothing but damnable Hereſies, and the vain lies and imaginations of his heart: and he that is thus corrupted univerſally, can never convert others: The reaſon is, becauſe the word and Truth of God is that immortal ſeed, by which we are begotten: *Sanctifie them by thy truth, thy word is truth*, Joh. 17. So that Divine truths are the only inſtrument of life ſpiritual, as good food and not poiſon is of natural; but if it be only partiall, not in fundamentalls but ſuperſtitious additions, that miniſtry in ſome reſpects may be profitable: and hereupon our Saviour bid them hear the Scribes and Phariſees, *While they ſate in Moſes chair*, i. e. as long as they preach the Doctrine of *Moſes*, but then thoſe that live under ſuch a corrupt Miniſtry, had need be very judicious to diſtinguiſh between good and bad. Therefore our Saviour, who allowed the people to hear the Scribes and Phariſees, did alſo at the ſame time bid them take heed, and beware of their Doctrine. *Anſw.* 1.

But

VVhether a prophane miniſter may convert any.

But in the next place, ſuppoſe they be Orthodox, and ſound in their judgments, *yet ungodly and prophane in their lives, Can we think God will honour ſuch? Can ſalt, if it hath loſt his ſavour, ſeaſon others?* Can light, not put under a Buſhell, but under a noyſome dunghill, Can that enlighten others? Yet ſuch unſavourie ſalt, ſuch obſcure light is every prophane Miniſter. To Anſwer this, Conſider,

Anſw. First, That if that *Holy and good diſcipline which Chriſt hath appointed in his Church were obſerved, no ſuch ungodly Miniſters were to be endured in publick office.* Hence *Paul* commands *Timothy*, That he ordaine no man a Miniſter that is of an ungodly and prophane life; and certainly if Chriſt would have every particular perſon, that is an obſtinate wicked perſon, caſt out of the Church, how much rather an ungodly officer in the Church?

Secondly, Yet ſuppoſe that a corrupt miniſter is continued for want of good Diſcipline, it cannot be denied but an ungodly life *is a great occaſion to pull down as much as the word builds up.* Examples do work more than precepts. The lives of Spiritual Shepheards are like thoſe rods *Jacob* laid in the way for the ſheep to look on, that they might bring ſuch coloured lambs; and therefore if ever they are inſtruments to convert others, it is a ſtrange, a rare and wonderfull thing. Hence in *Daniel*, thoſe that convert others to righteouſneſe, are ſaid *to ſhine like the ſtars in the firmament*, Dan. 12. 3. which wicked men cannot do.

Thirdly *But for all this we cannot ſay abſolutely and univerſally, That no ungodly Miniſter is uſed at any time an inſtrument to convert others, no more than their ungodlineſs may hinder the good effect of the Sacraments they adminiſter*, for theſe two reaſons. First of Example in Scripture, That makes no diſtinction between *Judas* and the other Diſciples in the ſucceſſe of the Miniſtry; *They all twelve were ſent out*, they all did miracles, they all caſted out Devils, they all returned to Chriſt and gave him an account of their ſucceſſe. To them all Chriſt ſaid, *He had ordained that they ſhould go out*, viz in their preaching, *and bear much fruit*, viz in their Miniſtry, *John* 15. 16. And our Saviour expreſly ſaith of ſome, *That they ſhould propheſie in his name, yet he would bid them depart, becauſe workers of iniquity*, and *Phil.* 3. *There were falſe Apoſtles who preached Chriſt out of envy*, ſuppoſing to adde more affliction and perſecution to *Paul* which muſt needs be an high degree of wickedneſs and malice, yet *Paul* ſaid, *He rejoyced that Chriſt was preached howſoever*, which could not be if their preaching did no good: Although indeed to theſe examples of *Judas*, and the falſe Apoſtles, it may be anſwered, That they were not at that time groſs and ſcandalous ſinners for ought can appear, but unregenerate and ſpiritually wicked, not corporally.

2. They may be uſed by God for converſion, becauſe the Miniſtry is *gratis gratis data*, not *gratia gratum faciens*; It is appointed for the publick good of others, not for the Miniſters good ſo much; and therefore God may work that end of the publick good, though the inſtrument be ſinful: As ſaith *Auſtin*, *The ſeed that is ſown by a ſoul diſeaſed hand, may bring forth fruit as well as that which is ſown by a clean hand.*

Uſe of Admonition, take heed that the Word of God have no effect upon thee becauſe of thy ſins. Oh how terrible will it be when it ſhall appear, God hath done for thy converſion what a gracious God might do; The Miniſter hath done what a faithful Miniſter ſhould do, but thou haſt not done what a good hearer ſhould do: Whas is that? 1. Thou art not ſwift to hear, thou art careleſs, negligent, thou doſt not diligently wait on the gates of wiſdom, as ſick men do at the Phyſitians doors. 2. Thou doſt not lay aſide all ſuperfluity of naughtineſs, as the ſame Text requireth; and ſo the word is like rain falling on dirty ground that makes it more dirty. 3. Thou doſt not retain it and hide it in thy heart as *David*, thou doſt not cover it with warmth; as the fowl doth her eggs; thou art but almoſt perſwaded to leave thy ſins.

SECT.

SECT. X.

Of the Nature of Grace, under the Expressions of *Taking away the Stony Heart, Giving a Heart of Flesh, and Writing Gods Law in the heart*, with the counterfeit thereof.

SERM. LXXXV.

Displayeth Gods Soveraignty and Dominion over the hearts of men.

EZEK. 36. 26. the latter part.

I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

AT *Verse* 21. in this Chapter, God begins to open the treasures of his mercies. We may say, This latter part of the Chapter is like the Land of *Canaan*, a Land of promise, flowing with spiritual milk and hony, for here is the promise of reduction from their miserable Captivity, *Vers.* 24. But because outward mercies are nothing without spiritual, therefore there is, 1. The promise of the pardon of their sins: It was not enough to be delivered from the power and rage of their Enemies, unless also they were saved from the guilt of their sins; this is promised *verse* 25. But if men have pardon of sin, and not saved from the power of it, they will every moment make themselves obnoxious to their former misery; therefore *verse* 26. there is a promise of Conversion and Sanctification, with the consequent effects of it, in the 27. *vers.* So that this Text, if opened, is like a Box of precious Ointment; or like the Tree in the *Revelations*, not onely the fruit, but the very leafe, every particular word hath its efficacy. And for the better method, consider, 1. The Author and Efficient cause of the mercy promised, *I will take away, I will give:* See here Gods Soveraignty, and immediate power over mens hearts. No King or Emperour in

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the world is able to say so, I will give men other hearts. 2. The mercy promised, and that is 1. By removing the obstruction or contrary, *I will take away the stony heart.* 2. By the position of the good vouchsafed, and that is set down, as for the root, in the habit or fountain, *A heart of flesh.* 2. As the fruit, stream or actuall operations, *I will cause them to walk in my statutes, &c.* 3. There is observable 1. The manner of Gods vouchsafing this, it is by way of promise, I will do thus and thus; an absolute promise, not suspended upon mans merits or pre-requisites. 2. The manner of the working of this, is irresistably, insuperably, omnipotently: So that the heart of a man is a subject meerly patient to receive it; not a free Agent to co-operate with this mighty grace. In all these particulars, we shall finde what *Samson* did in the Lyons carcass, many honey-combs of spirituall honey: And let us begin with the first, The sole efficient cause, who hath the dominion over mens hearts: *I will take away the heart of stone*; he that by his omnipotent word could say, *Let there be light, and there was light*; doth also here say, *Let the stony heart become soft, let the hard heart become tender*, and it presently yeelds, it doth not withstand God: as if God had said, I know your hearts are too hard for you, you cannot master them, you cannot change them, but I can do it: Whence observe,

Obs. *That God hath an immediate dominion and power over mens hearts.*

This is the sole prerogative of God, he can raise what terrour and horrour he pleaseth there, and all the world cannot assuage it: He also can give peace and comfort, and all the Devils in hell cannot take it away: If they were so affected, as to cry out, *What manner of person is this, whom the winds and seas obey?* how much rather may we cry out, What is that God, how great and wonderful, who works in the hearts of men what he pleaseth? Thus *Psalm.* 33. 15. an excellent *Psalm* against Atheism, wherein the Psalmist giveth several arguments to prove the providence of God, that things are not carried in this world, as mens lusts and counsels would have it, but as God orders it, either in mercy or justice: This, I say, the Psalmist would have men believe; for when we see things done in the world, contrary to that we judge righteousness, and yet no judgements immediately following, we are ready to be tempted about our faith. As *Pompey*, when he was overcome by *Cæsar*, fled to *Athens*, and there disputed there was no providence, because he thought he was deserted in a just cause: But this is to be ignorant of God, and not to be able to plough with his heifer, to understand the Scripture, by which all those Divine Riddles may be opened. Now among other arguments, he brings one that confirms my Doctrine, *He fashioneth their hearts alike*: The Argument is this; He that makes the heart, knoweth every thing in the heart, and can make it think, will and love, as he pleaseth. As the Artificer that makes a clock, he knoweth all things about the clock, and makes it strike when and where he pleaseth: And the words are Emphatical, *He fashioneth*, the same word is used of Gods fashioning mans body out of the dust at first: So that God can as easily form and fashion the souls of men, as he can their bodies; he can as easily strike them with fear, as the body with diseases. Again, *He fashioneth them alike*; in the Hebrew יחדו *Simul*; that is, as some expound, all mens hearts, there is not one mans excepted; or else as others totally and wholly, there is nothing can arise in the heart, not the least thought, or the least motion, but it comes by Gods providence. Hence *Prov.* 21. 1. the Kings heart is said to be in the hand of the Lord: A Kings heart, the greatest of men, and whose counsels and purposes seem to be most hidden, and most potent to be effected; And *its in the hand of the Lord*: A notable expression, to shew how easily he can govern and turn as he pleaseth; and then he useth an excellent similitude, *He turneth it as the Rivers of waters*: That as a stream of water running down the torrent, can easily by the husbandman be stopt and turned down another course, either to refresh his ground, or annoy it: Thus the Lord turneth the hearts of those that rule in the world, either for mercy or judgment,

judgement, as he pleaseth. Now the better to clear this truth, we will amplifie this Soveraign Dominion of God over mens hearts, in three particulars: 1. *As in the way of his general Providence.* 2. *In the way of his Justice.* 3. *In the way of his Grace*: And in all these three particulars God is admirable. 1. As Gods dominion over mens hearts is seen.

In the way of his providence, his power over hearts is manifested.

First, *In a suddain changing and raising up of their hearts by his mighty work for such imployments, that they were no wayes able for before*: That which all the men in the world could not give; That which all the Angels in heaven could not, that God doth immediately. Thus *Saul*, when he was appointed to be King over *Israel*, he was of the meanest Tribe, the meanest Family in the Tribe, an ordinary man; and yet it is said, *God gave him another heart*; and when he had that, with what courage and boldness did he take the Government upon him: That other spirit, was not a spirit of Grace and Godliness, as the *Arminians* would have it, but of Government, and Political Abilities; in token whereof, *Samuel* at the Sacrifice, gave him a shoulder of it; to shew the Government upon his shoulders, and how he must bear the people: And as this was wonderfull for God to make such a change in him, so on the people also to receive him for their King: *All those followed him, whose hearts God had touched*, saith the Text, 1 *Sam.* 10. 26. God did but touch their hearts, as the Musician doth the strings of his Instrument, and they sound what he would have them: Such a spirit of Government, those seventy Elders had, that were to assist *Moses*; God took of *Moses* his spirit, and bestowed on them: Thus the Judges that God raised up in *Israel*, when they were in so many extremities, especially *Joshua*, whom some say, was the Heathens *Hercules*: These all felt the mighty work of God upon their hearts. 1. In the way of his Providence

Secondly, Gods power over mens hearts in a general way, is seen, *In the abating and asswaging those fierce affections, and angry resolutions that men have one against another*: God in a moment can command those waves and winds to be still. We have two famous examples for this; the former, in *Esau* and *Jacob*, what resolved malitious intentions were in *Esau*, after the mourning for his Father was over to kill *Jacob*? And now there was a full opportunity put into his hand; *Jacob* had no power to withstand him, and of a suddain *Esau*'s affections are wholly changed to him, *Gen.* 33. 20. How cometh this black cloud to blow away so immediately? Was it not because God wrought, and moved upon his heart. The latter instance, is of *Laban* and *Jacob*, he goeth out also in a great fury against *Jacob*; but what saith God to him? *See thou doest not speak any word to Jacob*, Gen. 31, 24. and this presently softned his heart: We might adde to this, the melting of *Saul*'s heart towards *David* sometimes, when otherwayes he was full of poyson and venom: Thus also *Joseph* found favour in the eyes of *Pharaoh*: And a notable instance there is, 2 *Chron.* 18. 31. where the Army of the *Syrians* surprizing *Jehoshophat*, and thinking to destroy him, he cried out, and God helped him; But how? The Text saith, *God moved them to depart from him*. So that we see, all our applications should be to God. Men have not their hearts in their own power; men cannot think hurt to thee, yea, they cannot but think and purpose good to thee, wherefore God moves the hearts of men thereto: Thus he saith to these waves, Hitherto thou shalt go, and no further; he binds up these clouds in the air. 2.

Thirdly, *Gods Providential working on mens hearts, is seen in the inclination and determination of them* (when they are indifferent in themselves) to such ways, as whereby he will bring honour and glory to himself: In nothing under the heavens is Gods Soveraignty so much seen, as here: For the hearts of men, are those great instruments, By which he produceth so many notable effects in the world: *Nebuchadnezzar* is remarkable herein; The Prophet describeth him as standing at two wayes, *Ezek.* 21. 21, 22. either to fight against *Israel*, or another Nation: Now it was all one to him, which way he went, yet 3.

God ſo ordered, that he ſhould go againſt them. Thus as God is ſaid to ponder and weigh mens hearts in one ſenſe; ſo in this ſenſe alſo, he layeth mens hearts in a ballance, and they eaſily incline this way or that way, and God he puts in ſomething that inclineth their hearts rather this way than that way. Hence the great Monarchs of the world, the *Babylonian* and *Perſian*, they are compared to Hatchets, to Hammers, to Bees, over which God hath a command. The whole world is his hoſt, and God is the Emperour or Commander; and he bids this go, and he goeth, that come and he cometh; as the Centurion did his men under him: What a wonderfull work was that upon *Cyrus* his heart, and his Succeſſors; to let the Jews build their Temple unto God again; yea, what a ſtrange paſſage was that of good to *Mordechai*, when the King could not ſleep, that he ſhould call for a Book to read, rather than for ſports or pleaſures; and that of all Books, the Hiſtory or Chronicles of memorable things done in the Kingdome; and in that Hiſtory, he ſhould pitch on the good ſervice *Mordechai* had done, and was not rewarded. It is remarkable alſo, that when God intended to puniſh *Abimilech* and the *Sechemites*, Judges 9. it is ſaid, *God ſent an evill ſpirit between them*, and that was their ruine at laſt: Oh then, how much is this God to be feared, to be obeyed, who doth in heaven and earth what he wills! It is not as Great men, as Mighty men, as Wiſe men will, but the counſel of the Lord that ſhall ſtand.

4. Of Dreams. Laſtly, God in the Old Teſtament had a notable way of bringing about the hearts of men for his great and mighty works by *Dreams*.

There are three kinds of Dreams, Natural, Diabolical, by way of deluſion: or Supernatural, immediately raiſed in men by God. In ſuch a way God formerly did inform men ſometimes: Thus *Jacob*, laying his head on a ſtone had a Dream; and *Joſeph* a Dream about his ſuperiority over his Brethren, *Gen.* 48. 12. yea, *Pilate*'s wife had a Dream; which ſhe told *Pilate*, that he ſhould have nothing to do with that juſt man, to ſhed his innocent blood, *Mat.* 27. 19. But that is diſputed, whether the Devil did not put that Dream into her, becauſe he would not have Chriſt Crucified, knowing that by Chriſts death his Kingdome would be diſſolved; But how doth that agree with Satans entering into *Judas* his heart, tempting him to betray his Maſter. There were two great Kings, and Heathens, ſuch as had no knowledge of God, and yet God did viſit them by Dreams, of things to come: as *Pharaoh* by ſeven years of barrennneſſe, and ſeven of fruitfulneſſe; *Nebuchadnezzar* of the change of his Kingdome, and the mighty alienation of it in time: But theſe did not underſtand them, till *Joſeph*, and *Daniel*, revealed the myſtery to them.

II. In the way of his juſtice. Secondly, In the next place, *Gods power over the hearts of men, in a way of Juſtice, is alſo admirable*: And that in two reſpects:

Firſt, *In infatuating the counſels and thoughts of Wiſe men*: He ſtrikes the great ones of the world, when he is angry, with the ſpirit of madneſſe and giddineſſe, *Iſaiah* 24. 45. Thus *David* prayed, That God would turn *Achitophel*'s counſel into folly, onely God could do it: And the Princes of *Zoan* and *Egypt* that thought they were wiſe, and none like them, God ſtroke them with folly and giddineſſe: So true is that old obſervation, *Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat*, When God intends to deſtroy and ruine man, he firſt beginneth with their underſtanding, inflicting giddineſſe upon that: The eyes of a man firſt dye, they ſay, and ſo men periſh firſt in their counſels, thoughts and deſignes, afterwards in other things: Thus God is ſaid *To catch the crafty in their own wiſedom, and he knoweth that the thoughts of the wiſe are vain*, 1 Cor. 3.

2. Secondly, *Gods Juſtice upon mens hearts is, in the ſpiritual blinding and hardening of them*: Thus God is ſaid to harden *Pharaoh*'s heart; and *Ely*'s ſons would not

not hearken to good counsel, because it was of the Lord to destroy them: *Whom he will, he hardens*, saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 9. But this is a tender point, Divines are large about it; only know, that God doth not infuse hardness of heart, nor any evil disposition in men; for he cannot be the author of that of which he is the Avenger; but it is by withdrawing and denying his mollifying grace: And then as the withdrawing of fire from the water, makes it presently cold, and returne to its native temperament; so it is here, God forsaking the heart by denying his mollifying and softning operations, it cannot but grow stiff and obdurate against God.

III. In the way of his grace.

Thirdly, In the last place, *Let us view the glorious power of God, over the hearts of men in a gracious way*; and that is properly intended in the Text: *I will give an heart of flesh.* Now Gods work on the heart, when he changeth it, in these particulars:

1. First, *He conviuceth and enlightens the minde with such a glorious light, that the person converted stands amazed at it: That we should shew forth his praise who hath translated us out of darkness, into his marvellous light*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *And you that were darkness, are now made light*, Ephes. 4. This is the seeing eye that God vouchsafeth to some men: Now then, if to restore eyes to the blinde, was so wonderful a work, how wonderful is it to give a man new light? God gives a man new abilities to see; he doth not only bring the object, and the medium, but the ability also; and till this be done, its impossible men should ever love or desire what is good: Oh look up then to this! you are apt to be wise in your own eyes, you are apt to say, as the Pharisees did, We see: But pray earnestly to God for this spirit of illumination; thou wilt then finde as much difference in thy self, as one in a dark close dungeon, and another, that is come out into the open Sun-shine.

2. Secondly, *Gods work on the heart, is to raise up such affections as may make the yoke of Christ ease*: That may make thee with delight and joy, to imbrace what is good: for here is the great obstruction against conversion, men have carnal and earthly hearts, they delight in what is evil, they imbrace the dunghill, they love the mire, like swine, hence all heavenly and spiritual objects are grievous and burthensom to them: Now then God he can turn this clod of earth into a star in the sky; he can change this heavy lumpish temper, into a gracious spiritual disposition: And when he doth thus, then what was once tedious and grievous, now becomes pleasant and joyful.

3. Thirdly, *He doth make the heart tender and melting*: And this is the great mercy here promised: for naturally the heart is a stone in spiritual things, it hath no apprehension, no joy, no sense; lay all the wrath of God before it, and you cannot move it, you cannot make it mourn and grieve; but when God puts forth this power, then a dry wilderness is turned into a pool of water; then the mountains melt like wax before him; then rocks are turned into streams of water: O then admire, and pray for this mighty work of God! dost thou complain thy heart is like the neither Milstone? Oh it will not melt, it will not change, it will not yield to God! go to this heart-maker, and he will be an heart-breaker.

4. Fourthly, *That which is the most admirable operation upon the heart, is the bowing and bending of it, so as to make of it unwilling willing*: Thus this expression of the Text, *I will give an heart of flesh*, doth denote the efficacy and intimateness of his power; and so the Apostle saith, *God worketh in us to will*; and in this very point, upon this hinge hangs that great and special truth, which the Orthodox maintain against *Arminians* and Papists: They will grant an irresistable work of light upon the understanding, they will grant a potent work upon the affections, but this they will not yield, that God makes the will to will, that he so boweth and changeth the heart, that it readily imbraceth, what once it abhorred; yet in all that are converted, this power so efficacious, must

be needs put forth: for will not experience witneſs, that every mans will, before converting grace came, was as oppoſite to God, as averſe to all holineſs, as any natural mans in the world? did he not diſpute, argue, refuſe and ſhew all unwillingneſs, till God broke open the gate of the ſoul, he comes into the heart, while the doors of it are ſhut: Thus he is ſaid to open the heart of *Lydia*, *Acts* 16. and *Paul*, was he willing to receive Chriſt? did not he oppoſe, perſecute and violently purſue the Church of God; and while he was in theſe furious outrages, did not God in a moment bow his heart, that he cryeth out *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do*: But of this more in the manner of Gods converſion.

5 Laſtly, *The ſoveraignty of Gods power, is to be adored, that he can comfort the heart with heavenly joy, or wound it with ſad and heavy temptations and deſertions when he pleaſeth!* Our hearts are calm and tempeſtuous, even as he ſpeaks the word, *Job* 34. 29. who can give trouble, if he ſpeak quietneſs, whether to a perſon or to a nation. God ſtruck the heart of great *Nebuchadnezzar*, and made him like one beaſt; and he can ſtrike the heart of a wicked man, and make him roar like a damned in hell: Thus we ſee *David* ſometimes complaineth of the great terrors that he was even diſtracted with; and at another time, his heart overfloweth with joy: This ebbing and flowing is according to the preſence or abſence of Gods favour.

Uſe. This point is worthy of all practical improvement: And

1. Firſt, *It ſheweth what poor weak and empty ſhadows all the great, wiſe, powerful and mighty men of the world are*: They are not the maſters of their own hearts, they cannot tell what they ſhall think, what they ſhall purpoſe, much leſs, do, the next day. Well doth the Pſalmiſt ſay, *They are lighter than duſt or vanity*: What a folly then is it to put confidence in ſuch, to truſt in any arm of fleſh: You ſee a ſhadow is not able to move it ſelf, but is this way or that way, as the body ſtirreth; ſo is all earthly and humane power: God uſeth theſe Rods, theſe Axes, which way he pleaſeth: Oh then ſay, nothing is great but God, hope in nothing, truſt in nothing but in God. An hil, or an high mountain may be ſomething, if compared with the low valleys; but if with the heavens, its but a pins point: So earthly power and greatneſs, may be a terrible thing to thoſe that are weaker. Gyants are tall things to Graſhoppers, but compare them with God and they are nothing, yea leſs than nothing.

Uſe 2. *Uſe* 2. Is God thus powerfull over the heart, then let the godly be comforted, who finde their hearts too ſtrong for them; O their proud heart, their hard heart, their unbelieving heart, their earthly heart what ſhall they do? Its true, ſhouldſt thou pray the potentates of the world, yea the Angels of heaven to give thee a better heart, they could do nothing: O but God he is gracious, ready, willing and able

Uſe 3. Laſtly, Of terror to wicked men, how eaſily can he raiſe terrors and horrors in that jolly heart of thine: If *Judas* and *Cain* would have given all the world for a quiet heart, they could not have purchaſed it: Do not then preſume too long, do not ſtil venture to offend him, he can ſend thee home with a roaring, reſtleſs heart, he can make thee cry out, There is no help for me, O for a drop of eaſe!

Serm.

SERM. LXXXVI.

Of the Heart of stone, and what wickednesse that name implies.

EZEK. 36. 26.

I will take away the stony heart, &c.

THe second thing observed in this *Magna Charta*, or grand promise of conversion is, the good it self spoken of, which is described, 1. Negatively, or by removing the opposite. 2. Positively. Let us consider what is that grand obstruction which must be taken away, ere we can have an heart of flesh, and that is the heart of stone must be removed. The word *stone* when it is used Tropically in the Scripture, it is sometimes taken in a good sense, and sometimes in a bad sense: In a good sense, for that which is firm and enduring, thus Christ is called a *foundation stone*, Isa. 28. 16. and Believers *living stones*, 1 Pet. 2. 5. because of their solid and firm compacting and union with Christ. In which sense *Bonaventure* said the clean contrary to this promise, *Nolo Domine cor carneum, da lapideum*, O Lord, I will not have an heart of flesh, that is flexible, and easily drawn any way; but a stony heart, that is firm and enduring in good against all opposition whatsoever. But in this place the word stone is used in an ill sense, for a senseless, stupid and rebellious heart against Gods word. As the stone in the fire will sooner fly in the face of him that sits by, than melt. So the heart of every man by nature will sooner oppose, gainsay, and rage at those who reprove or instruct than melt, or yeild obedience. Whereas, Jer. 23. Gods word is said to be an hammer, beating the very rocks in pieces; here it will have no such operation, unlesse God make this promise effectual.

That every man naturally in respect of any divine or spiritual good, hath a very heart of stone. Obs.

The disease of the stone in the body is an exquisite and inexpressible torment, how much would men give to be eased of it. But this stone in the heart, whereby we are wholly senseless and stupid about heavenly things, moved neither with love or fear, or grief, is above all this torment, if men did rightly judge of it. It was the Poets fiction, that men were made of stones, *Inde genus durum sumus*: to be sure, there is this spirituall stone on the heart; whereby we are an hard, tough, rugged, and untractable people; insomuch that where soever God converts men by the Ministry, there he raiseth up children to *Abraham* out of stones, there he makes water to gush out of rocks, there he makes dry bones to gather together and live. To amplifie this, let us consider how much wickednesse this Epithete (*stony*) doth imply to be in every man naturally.

And first, *It denoteth senselesnesse and stupidity*; for so commonly we expresse that by a stone. We say of a senseless, irrational man, As good speak to a stone. Thus *Nabals* heart is said to be dead within him, and become like a stone, he was astonished & amazed through the danger coming upon him, he was made stupid, and apprehended nothing. The Scripture delights by way of contempt to call the Heathen Idols, wood and stones, because they had eyes and saw not, feet and walked

How much wickedness is implied in this Epithete, *Stony heart*.

1.

walked not: Juſt ſuch ſtocks and ſtones are all men by nature; they have ears and hear not, they have hearts and underſtand not. That whereas the Prophet cryed to that inſenſible Altar of ſtones, *O Altar, Altar*, 1 King. 13. 2. and ſeverely reproves it from abundance here the Miniſters of God may cry aloud, and no man is ſenſible of his ſin, or crieth out, *What have I done?* Oh then pray that God would remove that heavy ſtone which lyeth upon thy heart, that under all preaching and teaching makes thee ſtill ſo inſenſible, that Miniſtry or no Miniſtry, judgments or no judgments are all one to thee. Do not then be any longer like the ſtones in wall, who know nothing, underſtand nothing, though they are built in the the walls of the Church where much preaching is. Some derive Adam the people, from a ſtone, I know for other reaſons, but we may ſay, becauſe of the ſtony heart, and inſenſibleneſſe that is in them.

2. Secondly, *It implieth incapacity and indiſpoſedneſs unto any thing that is holy.* As they are not ſenſible, ſo much leſs prepared and fitted for any ſpiritual duty. The building of the material Temple was a type of believers. Now as the ſtone could not poliſh and fit it ſelf for the Temple, ſo neither have we any power in our ſelves to take away the leaſt enmity that is againſt God. Inſomuch that this text doth triumph over all thoſe corrupt doctrines that advance free-will and power in man to ſpiritual things. What, can a ſtone make it ſelf to live? Can *Ezekiels* dry bones produce life of themſelves? Could the bone taken out of *Adams* ſide, make it ſelf a living woman? Its true, man hath reaſon, underſtanding and a will, and ſo in that ſenſe he is not a ſtone; but he hath no reaſon to think what is good, no will to chooſe what is good, & ſo in that reſpect is like a ſtone. And hence it is, that we need not wonder, if men of great parts and wiſdome are yet ſo fooliſh and void of all love & delight in what is good, for a man may be very quick & apprehenſive in all matters of learning & humane perfections, and yet be a very ſtone about what is godly. *Nicodemus* had great underſtanding in the law of God, yet how unfit for that doctrine about Regeneration!

3. Thirdly, The ſtonineſs of the heart doth imply, not only indiſpoſition, *but a ſtrong contrariety and reſiſtency to what is holy.* Thus the Jews are called a people of a ſtiff neck, that is the ſame with a ſtony heart, *Acts 7. Ye have alway reſiſted the holy Ghoſt, as your fathers did*, you fall like an heavy ſtone with violence upon the word of God, and all divine exhortations. The ſtone is not onely indiſpoſed for poliſhing, but as much as lieth in it, doth reſiſt, & beat back again the hammer that falls upon it. Oh this active enmity and vigorous oppoſition which is in all men by nature, to that which is holy, is much to be lamented. The Apoſtle, *Rom. 8.* ſpeaks of this enmity of the fleſh, which doth ſo far prevaile, that it makes a man not only not ſubject, but it cannot be ſubject to the law of God, for theſe two are contrary, the ſpiritual law & the carnal heart, and ſo as light and darkneſs, fire and water cannot accord, ſo neither can theſe. Marvell not then if ye ſee men, whoſe thoughts, purpoſes, affections, and all endeavours are againſt godlineſs: Their hearts to conceive miſchief againſt it; their tongues to be always railing or deriding of it: For can the toad vent hony? can the ſerpent ſpit cordials? no more can theſe endure what is ſupernatural.

4. Fourthly, *This deſcribeth the hardneſſe of the heart, and impenitableneſs of it.* Its a ſtone, and though the word be a two edged ſword, yet is it any wonder, if a ſword cannot pierce through an hard ſtone. The Scripture, *Ephe. 4. 18.* ſpeaketh of a threefold hardneſs, natural, acquired, by voluntary ſins againſt conſcience, and judicial, inflicted as a juſt judgment by God upon thoſe who have rebelled againſt the light; now this which we ſpeak of is the natural hardneſs, that which is in every man and woman. Take the moſt civil and ingenuous man, who is ſo tractable in all things of morality, yet he hath an hard heart to that which is ſpiritual. The doctrine of repentance, mortification, & powerfull walking with God, is that which can finde no entrance in him. Oh therefore that this ſpiritual hardneſs were more apprehended; you can complain of hard times, of hard dealings

dealings in the world! Oh what hard dealing hath god from thee! His judgements have not broke thy heart, his mercies have not melted thy heart! Oh think if there were any ſoftneſs, if any drops in thee, if any meltings in thee, thou hadſt not to this day continued ſuch a rebellious wretch againſt God. *Illud eſt cor durum, quod non trepidat ad nomen cordis durit.* If thy ſoul doth not break and tremble, and melt at the very preaching about a ſtony heart: its becauſe thou art overwhelmed by it. This hard heart is elſewhere called an heart of adamant, which is as much as that, which cannot be turned: Oh this is thy caſe; nothing hath tamed thee, or humbled thee to this day.

Fifthly, *This word holds out the pertinacy and immovableneſs of the heart from the way of ſin.* A great heavy ſtone lieth many years in the ſame place; and thus it is with every man naturally, how ſelf-willed, how unmovable! you cannot ſtir him out of his former wales of impiety. Though he hear much, though he be intreated, reproved, and conſtantly warned over and over again, yet he is ſtill the ſame man he was. Thus as the godly are commended for their immoveable ſtate in godlineſs and in happineſs, they ſtand like *Zion*, which can never be moved; the ſame are they in a ſtate of wickedneſs and impiety. Oh then how doth experience daily witnes this pertinacy of mens hearts in adhering to wickedneſs. When they are ſo convinced, that they can ſay nothing for their ſins, they muſt needs confeſs its their duty to be other men: they cannot ſay one word for ſelf-juſtification, yet they will not move from their former courſe of impieties. What kind of hearts we have, was typically repreſented by *Moſes*, when the law was commanded to be written in ſtones, for albeit one main reaſon was to preſerve the laws perpetually; as Heathen lawgivers have commanded their laws to be ingraven on braſſe, or cypreſſe trees, that will not putrifie; Yet the Apoſtle alludes to an Allegory; when he tels the *Corinthians*, they were *his Epiſtle not written* (2 Cor. 3, 3.) *in tables of ſtone, but fleſhy tables of the heart.* So that to have hearts of ſtone, is to be pertinacious, wilfull; ſay what you can, bring the Scripture never ſo plainly, demonſtrate and convince the hainouſnes of ſin never ſo clearly, yet nothing ſhall make any alteration in them; they will be wicked, becauſe they will be. 5.

Sixthly, *An heart of ſtone is an heart altogether cold, and deſtitute of any warmth or heat of grace.* A ſtone is nothing but hardened earth, and as ſiccity and frigidity are the two properties of that element, ſo are they of a ſtone. Hence, it was a miracle to bring water out of the rock: *Citius è pumice aquam*, is a Proverb. Stones have theſe two qualities, as the earth out of which they are generated, Siccity or drineſs, there is no moiſture, there is waterineſſe in them, & thus it is in every mans heart, a dry barren ſpirit, there is no juyce, no ſap of any grace. Therefore the Greek word σκληρότης, hardneſs, and σκληροκαρδία, doth excellently expreſs this curſed temper, for that is properly the drineſs of any herb, when it is withered, its then good for nothing, all the juyce is out of it. And thus men by nature have not the leaſt dropping or melting of ſoul: And obſerve this, A man may have a very tender, juicy heart, as it were, about earthly things; let an husband, wife, or any earthly advantage be loſt, and rivers of water can guſh out of thine eyes: They may be of a pitifull and tender complexion, and yet as dry and barren as a very ſtone about the ſins they have committed, and the iniquities they are guilty of. Indeed *David* ſpeaks of a drought upon his ſoul, that it was like a parched wilderneſs, *Pſal.* 42. 1. but that was in a gracious ſenſe, becauſe of the earneſt pantings and longings he had for the injoyment of Gods favour. But this is in a very wicked and deſperate ſenſe, when men have not the leaſt meltings, or ſhawings of ſoul upon any divine adminiſtrations. The other property is frigidity, or coldneſs. As cold as a ſtone, we ſay; and thus every mans heart is deſtitute of all the fire and heat which doth uſually accompany the life of grace. Hence men are ſaid to be *dead in ſins*, Eph. 2. 4. death and coldneſs go together. The Spirit of God in its operations is compared to fire, becauſe of the efficacy & 6.

fervency of it; now men destitute of this spirit, are wholly liveless, and cold in any thing that is good.

7. Seventhly, *Seeing a stone is nothing but a product of the earth, it hath also the property of the earth, which is heaviness, or gravity, an inclination to descend, to fall downwards.* And this also is wonderfully seen in every mans disposition by nature: His affections are wholy set upon earthly things, though he hath a body streight up towards heaven, and so excelling other creatures, yet his soul is bowed down to the ground, so that in this sense, as well as others, we may say, he is a worm & no man. The bodily curse of the serpent, is spiritually fulfilled on him, To lick the dust of the earth, and to make that his food: this is the heavy portion of every man by nature, to swallow down iniquity like water, to center upon earthly objects, as naturally as the stone fals downward; Wonder not then, if you see men wholly plunged in earthly affairs, they mind not they regard not, they understand not heavenly things; for (alas) how can the earth ascend upward? how can a clod of clay move of it self towards the skies? here must be a change of our natural properties, before these things can be done.

The effects which demonstrate all men by nature to have a heart of stone.

Having thus described the properties of this stony heart, and how much the word may purport. Let us now consider some effects or signs, which do abundantly discover, that men by nature have such hearts of stones.

1. And first, *What can be a greater evidence, than the security, quiet, and ease, which men naturally have, though thus obnoxious to guilt, and the wrath of God.* Do but consider what the word of God saith of every man by nature, how it aggravates his sin and misery, makes him every moment ready to fall into eternal torments, that all within him & without him is hated of God all the day long: Consider all this and believe it. Now what a stone and stock is man, that for all this truth of God, thus informing, thus threatning, thus cursing, is no more troubled and affected about himself! Certainly were not men like *Niobe*, turned into very marble stones, they could never be thus stupid, yea, they would run up & down crying out, What shall we do to be changed? How may this stone, this mountain be removed and thrown into a sea of tears and sorrow? Do ye then doubt, whether men be thus by nature so stupid & senseless about divine things? What need ye go any further, see how they can eat, drink, rejoyce, and be secure, when yet so many wos are denounced against them: Oh then say, Lord give me a soft heart, give me a broken heart; yet Lord it is not broken, yet it is not broken Oh let any judgment fall upon me rather than this hard heart. Oh let any affliction ly upon me rather than this heart of stone.

2. Secondly, This stony senseless heart is manifested, in that *Though in the general they commend holiness and godliness, and so in the general detest and abhor vice, yet when it cometh to the particular, then they act and love that which they did in the general condemn.* As now, Come to any prophane man wallowing in any grosse sin, and ask, Is it not an excellent, admirable thing, a life to be desired, to live with the fear of God, to obey his law, to take heed of impiety, to walk religiously, soberly and righteously? Oh without doubt they will say: and yet the same men live in direct opposite ways to this piety. Now if men were not stones and stocks; they could not but see their contradiction, they could not but see, how vainly they oppose their own selves; for if wickedness be to be abhorred, then thy wickedness, those lusts thou livest in are to be loathed.

3. Thirdly, That men have this heart of stone, appeareth, *in that they consider not the extream contrariety that is in their wicked lives to that holy profession they take upon them.* Whosoever is baptised into the name of Christ, and owneth his law, doth thereby ingage himself to live as Christ his Lord hath commanded. The Apostle *James* at large sheweth the vanity and insufficiency of such a faith as doth not make a man give an universal obedience to what God commandeth: and the Apostle calls upon us, *Phil.* 1.27. that our conversation should be as that which becometh the Gospel of Christ, to be sheep and not swine. Now if men were not

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meer idols, having eyes and see not, hearts and perceive not, it were impossible they should joyn an unholy life to an holy faith, an impure, prophane life, to so sacred and pure a profession. Canst thou see or observe any thing, and doest thou not this? Why hath Christ called thee out of the world but to live in an unspotted manner?

Lastly, Herein we discover stony hearts, *That neither the unexpressible wrath of God revealed in the Scripture, nor the love of Christ, and the joyes of heaven promised, do work us out of our sins.* Oh what can be a greater argument of our stupidity, than either of these neglected? The wrath of God manifested in the Word, how unsupportable is it! Is not hell described by every thing that is terrible, fire and brimstone, chains of darkness, despairing horror; a death without death, crying for death, and it cannot be had? So that the damned in hell can neither kill themselves, nor others destroy them, and this torment to continue to all eternity, which is a perpetual woe, wherein there is no past or to come. That all this fury should be made known to a sinner, yet he to go on in his sins desperately venturing upon it, must you not cry out, Oh men, no men, but stones! And then on the contrary, To consider the love of God described in the Gospel, to see Christ, God and Man, made poor, miserable, ignominious, lying under spiritual agonies, grapling with the infinite anger of God, and at last dying that cursed death for our sakes, would not this make the very stones melt? And yet our hearts are not softened by this love. The Temple clave asunder, the very Sun was in a fainting eclipse, as Historians say; and thy heart is not rent, nor doth thy spirit faint within thee. Besides the joyes of heaven so full, pure and eternal, which are tendered to thee, if thou wilt forsake thy sin; might not they be like the hot Sun-beams that arise and melt the ice? But with man naturally all is in vain. Earthly comforts they are most loved and desired before the enjoyment of them, & when enjoyed, they do not satisfie, and so are less esteemed, but heavenly joyes they are less desired & loved before enjoyment; but when partaken of, the desire will encrease, and love shall then imbrace more than faith could believe, or hope desire. 4.

Use 1. Not to wonder if men after much preaching, yea, after many judgements and mercies, remain obdurate and immoveable in their wickedness. This Text tells you the cause of all. They have hearts of stone, yea, how many are worse than stones, for *gutta cavat lapidem*; continual dropping will make impression upon a very stone, and consume it at last. But the word of God hath often distilled like a soft rain upon thee, and behold thou art not at all softened, not one lust is yet washed away. And stones upon the change of weather will stand on a dew, as if they were sensible of the alteration, but how many changes and alterations doth God make by his just judgements on sinners, and thy heart is not affected? Oh then let this be thy dayly prayer, *Lord I find a load upon me, a mountain, an heavy stone upon me, I cannot pray for it, I cannot mourn for it: Lord whatsoever thou shalt deny me, deny not the removal of this.* *Use.*

SERM. LXXXVII.

Of Gods making a true Converts heart tender *and* flexible *for every duty. Also what* Heart of flesh *implies, with the effects and consequents of it.*

EZEK. 36. 26.

And I will give you an heart of flesh.

WE come in the third place to consider the mercy, as it is positively set down, *I will give an heart of flesh.* If flesh were taken here properly for a massie part, then it could be no gracious promise, for every mans heart by nature is of flesh; but flesh is taken improperly or metaphorically; for when it is used in the Scripture improperly, it is either taken in a good sense or a bad sense: In a bad sense it either denoteth fragility, misery and vanity. Thus *All flesh is grass*; and *thine horses are flesh, not spirit.* Or else sinfulness and corruption: Thus Joh. 3. *Whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh.* And *In my flesh dwelleth no good thing*, Rom. 7. It should greatly humble us, that the Scripture calls sin in us by such names, for it argueth sin to be innate, inbred in us, that we and sin are all one as it were: As if we were not so much sinners as sin it self; it cleaveth to us as the flesh to the bones. But secondly, this word [*flesh*] is used in a good sense, though not so frequently, signifying a tender, pliable and flexible heart to what is godly, and is by way of opposition to a stone. Thus 2 Cor. 3. The hearts of the *Corinthians* which so readily received *Paul's* doctrine, are called *fleshy tables*; and here it is used in this sense in the Text, *I will give an heart of flesh*: We may justly admire the mighty work of God in making waters to gush out of the Rock, in touching Mountains, so that they melt like wax; but above all, this mighty power of God, that makes hearts so stony and impenetrable, to be ready and capable for all duties.

Obs. *That God in Conversion doth make a mans heart tender and flexible for every duty he requireth.*

The example of all Converts witnesseth this; when *Matthew* is converted, he leaveth his custom-seat, though full of profit, and followeth Christ, which could not be without much self-denial and persecution. Is not here a stone made flesh? *Zacheus* the Publican, no sooner wrought upon by Grace, but he makes restitution and satisfaction, even above the exact command of the Law; but his heart made so tender, that he had rather be beyond, than come short of his duty. *Mary Magdalen* a notorious sinner, called *the sinner* by an emphasis, when wrought upon, this dry wilderness is made a fountain of water. The Jailer, a cruel hurtful man to the Apostles, when his heart is touched, in what amazements doth he fall, how tender and compassionate to the Apostles whom he had wronged; he that did cast them in prison, put chains & fetters upon them, in a moment is altered, and washeth their soars. And let *Paul* close all, what a stony heart had he! His heart was like the stones they stoned *Stephen* with, and although he stoned not *Stephen* with his own hands, yet he was consenting to it, and kept their garments, insomuth that *Austin* saith, *Omnium lapidantium manibus lapidavit*, he stoned

ſtoned him with the hands of all them that threw ſtones at him. He that compelled the diſciples to blaſpheme, and was mad againſt them, ſee how in a moment his ſtony heart is taken away, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* O tender heart, now he is willing to do and ſuffer any thing! Thus God whereſoever he vouchſafeth this converting grace, of an obdurate, averſe, ſtony heart, he makes tender and pliable.

To open this, let us conſider firſt, *What is implyed in this heart of fleſh*; for that comprehends ſeveral gracious qualities: And VVhat is implied in *Heart of fleſh.*

Firſt, *A tender melting heart* is principally intended. The heart of ſtone will neither yeeld to threatnings or be ſoftened by mercies; but the fleſhy heart, that is tender under both. Thus *Joſiah* is commended for his tender, melting heart, while the threatnings of the law were read, 2 *Chron.* 34. 27. and certainly thouſands of people diſcover this promiſe was never effectuall to them, for how obdurate and wilfull are they againſt the word of God! they rage and roar like bears and tigers with vexation, rather than tenderly be ſoftened about the matters of religion. Oh then conſider, how tender thy ſpirit is about Gods commands, doth it preſently ſhaw? is it immediatly ſoftened when Gods word comes to thee? this is a good ſign. I know the people of God do much complain their hearts are not ſo tender and ſoftened as they deſire: They complain they are very ſtocks and ſtones ſometimes; as the Church, *Why haſt thou hardened our hearts from thy fear*, Iſa 63. 17. But yet becauſe they feel this ſtoniness, and they can tenderly bewail this, therefore it's a plain argument the work of grace is in their ſouls, though it be imperfect, and ſo it is not to be expected that all ſtoniness ſhould be removed out of the heart in this life. *Contra vitia pugnamus, non ut penitus vincamus, ſed ne vincamur*, Seneca. 1.

Secondly, From this tender ſoftneſs of heart flowerh *A quick ſenſibleneſs, and a lively apprehenſion of any ſpiritual thing that concerneth it.* The tender skin doth preſently feel the leaſt offence, whereas that which is brawny and rugged is not ſo ſenſible. Thus it is in the true convert, he is very ſenſible, he is quick in underſtanding, as the Scripture expreſſeth it. And this ſenſibleneſſe is diſcerned in ſeveral particulars; as firſt, *he can diſcern between things that differ*, Heb. 6. *He hath ſenſes exerciſed, to diſcern between good and evil.* He is compared to an Eagle, his eyes will quickly diſcern afar off. He is the ſpiritual man that judgeth all things; ſo that the true convert is not eaſily ſeduced by errors and falſe doctrines, for he hath a tender ſenſible heart: He is not eaſily inticed by Satan to ſinful luſts, for he is preſently ſenſible. So ſecondly, his tenderneſs appears, in that the leaſt ſins, the very inclinations are an heavy burden unto him; Thus *Hezekiah* humbled himſelf for the pride of his heart, 2 *Chron.* 32. 26. *David* when he numbered the people, though the act it ſelf were lawfull, yet becauſe he did not keep Gods order, he did it out of vain-glory, and Gods anger broke out becauſe of it. See how tenderly he is affected, *Let thy anger be upon me and my fathers houſe, What have theſe poor ſheep done?* When he cut off the lap of *Sauls* garment, *his heart ſmote him. Paul* how ſadly and miſerably doth he cry out of the inward luſts of ſin within him! Thus the fleſhy heart is ſo tender, that it feels the very weight of a mote, as well as of a beam. 2

Thirdly, The ſenſibleneſſe of it is diſcovered, in that *When he repents of ſin, he is much affected becauſe of the unkindneſs that is in ſin againſt God. Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned*, Pſal. 51. Theſe *Iſraelites* ſhould loath and abhorre themſelves when God was pacified towards them, *Ezek.* 16. 63. This fleſhy heart is ſo ſenſible of the ill requitall that is in all ſin, for God his favour and love to them, that this affects them abundantly. 3.

Fourthly, This fleſhy heart implies *Tractableneſſe and docibleneſſe in the underſtanding, and flexibility in the will.* Tractableneſs in the underſtanding, that whereas a man naturally ſhuts his eyes againſt the light, he will not hear or 4.

underſtanding, but it was froward, cavilling and alwayes diſputing againſt the things of his everlaſting peace; now he hath obtained that religion which the Apoſtle calls εὐπειθὲς, *eaſily to be perſwaded.* This is one great corruption in man, that his underſtanding exalteth it ſelf againſt the word, and he hath many carnall cavils and prejudices againſt grace: now when God worketh on the heart, the underſtanding is captivated and brought into obedience, 2*Cor.* 10.5. The word of God deſtroyeth all thoſe ſtrong holds, and they are glad that this ſpiritual light ſhould enter into their hearts. Oh there is little hopes of a proud, froward, cavilling perſon, that loveth to be arguing & contradicting thoſe things that make for purity and godlineſs: When a man is taught of God, he is eaſily brought off to beleeve, to ſubmit, *A little childe can lead them,* as *Iſaiah* propheſieth, *Iſa.* 11.6. As tractableneſſe in the underſtanding, ſo flexibility in the will, is alſo implied in this heart of fleſh. The will of man, that is the hardeſt part of the ſtone in a man, that is contumacious, willfull, oppoſite; that is the King, the Lord, the governour, till that be maſtered, till that ſtoop, nothing in man will turn to God: but this converting grace makes willing of unwilling, makes it to chooſe and imbrace that which once it abhorred; as *Paul, What wilt thou have me to do?* Oh it's theſe wills of men, that are the great enemies to godlineſs. Hence God is ſaid to work in us *to will* as well as *to do,* Phil. 3. To will this is admirable; oh pray importunately that God would give thee to will good, that God would give thee to chooſe and embrace it. It's wonderfull to conſider how this hard iron, when melted by grace, will be put into any frame or faſhion.

5. Fifthly, This fleſhy heart implieth, *An obediential reſignation of our ſelves up into Gods hands.* That now we ſtand at nothing, we refuſe nothing, we object nothing, we do not pick and chuſe in our obedience, This (O Lord) I could do, but excuſe me in the other thing. No, a fleſhly heart is that which is all over yielding and ſubmitting: He doth not ſay, I will give them an heart partly of ſtone, & partly of fleſh; for although ſtonineſs be in the regenerate heart, yet becauſe it is not there by conſtant prevalency and univerſality, therefore it is ſtill an heart of fleſh, ſo that nothing will diſcover this work upon thy ſoul, ſooner than an obediential reſignation to all duties. He that breaks one is guilty of all, in this ſenſe, becauſe he breaks *vinculum obedientiæ,* the bond of obedience, which is the authority of the law-giver: For to be fleſhly ſuppoſeth a capacity and eaſineſs to receive any impreſſion: whereſoever it findes a command, there it crieth out, *Lo here am I, to do thy will, O God: thy law is written in my heart.* We ſhall not inlarge this particular more, becauſe the explication of a ſtony heart, doth by way of contrariety illuſtrate this fleſhy heart, Let us therefore take notice of the ſeveral effects and conſequents of a fleſhy heart, and they are remarkable.

The effects and conſequents of a fleſhy heart.

1. First, *This heart of fleſh is accompanied with an awfull fear and trembling under the word of God, and his glorious Majeſty.* They have deep thoughts of fear and reverence when they come before God. Thus *Joſiah,* whoſe heart was tender and melting, did alſo tremble at the threatning in the word of God. If *Abraham* was ſo deeply debaſed in his ſpiritual approach to God, becauſe he was but duſt and aſhes, how much rather becauſe of ſin! We may then quickly diſcover grace in the tenderneſs of it, if it be not prophane, careleſs, and formall in religious duties. If thy heart be a melting heart, thy prayers are melting prayers, thy hearing is melting hearing, thou wouldſt not be ſo ſenſeleſs, careleſs in theſe duties as moſt men are. Oh then cry out of thy ſelf, for the want of this gracious diſpoſition. Thou findeſt thy heart like braſſe and Iron, not like fleſh, when thou comeſt to him.

2. Secondly, *A gracious fleſhy heart doth readily bow and yield to God in all afflictions and chaſtiſements for ſin.* The ſtubborn oak, *that* will ſooner break than bow; but

but the tender withe, that will move every way, as it is desired: and thus it is here. Men of stony hearts, unbroken hearts, if any wayes afflicted or chastised for sin, how full of rage, discontent, fury, and all manner of vexation, fretting even at God himself and all his instruments! but the tender fleshy heart that presently accepts of the punishment of its sin, as God calls upon, *Levit.* 26.41. It saith with the Church, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.* It wholly studieth to clear and justifie God, but to condemn and accuse it self: O then let the people of God in the midst of all the waves and tempests that rise in their soul, remember to allay all by this, that they are fleshy and not stone. That as God made it an argument to take off his afflicting hand, because it was frail weak flesh; *Gen.* 6. *My spirit shall not alwayes strive with man, because he is flesh:* so he may also abate his anger, because thou art gracious and tender flesh. This is a precious symptom of grace, when thy soul afflicted, is like a box of precious ointment broken, or like sweet flowers pounced, many precious and fragrant graces discover themselves. As the fire doth discover the metals, whether good or bad; and tempests and winds, whether trees be well roote-d or no; so do calamities, whether men be gracious or no; and in nothing doth thy grace more manifest it self than justifying God, and abhorring thy self. Have any frettings, any repinings made a commotion in thy heart? quiet all, and remember, the work of grace is to make a man yeelding and readily submitting.

Thirdly, *The godly heart of flesh is so tender, that it doth not only avoid sin it self, but the occasions of it, the appearance of it.* Abstain from all *appearance of evil*, 1 *Thes.* 5.22. 3.
David would not drink the water of *Bethlehem*, because it had the appearance of mens blood, and thus the godly are to provide all things honest in the sight of all men. Christ that would not wash his hands before meal, though otherwise a civil custom, in it self lawfull, yet he refused, that he might not confirm the Jews in their superstitions conceit about it, did hereby instruct us, that we should not only keep from the fire of sin, but also from the very flame. The first sin that proved so fatall to all mankinde came by occasions and temptations; *Eve* saw the fruit that it was good and desirable. God had not commanded her to forbear looking on it, but this became a temptation to her, and by those windows of her eyes death came in. This made *Paul* keep down his body. This caused *Job* to make a covenant with his eyes; and *David* to set a watch before his mouth. Look then to this, wouldst thou know whether this gracious tender heart be in thee or no; art thou then afraid to come near the brink of sin, any thing that hath the appearance of it, thou runnest away from it, as *Moses* did from his rod, when turned into a serpent. This you should especially observe who venture into the occasions of wickedness, haunt the places where the prophane lusts of the flesh are daily committed: You do like the moth, that never leaveth buzzing and flying about the candle, till she hath burnt her self. The Hebrews that were to eat no unleavened bread in the Passeover for seven daies, were so careful, that they did diligently search the house, to see none was there, yea they would not so much as make mention of the word signifying bread, lest it should do hurt, and tempt any. And wilt not thou be afraid to come where the infection of the plague of any sin is? Dost thou fear the infection of the body, and not of the soul? come not then near this mountain, least thou beest destroyed.

Fourthly, *A godly heart of flesh is tender and apprehensive of all inward heart sins, and secret sins, as well as publick and notorious.* *Paul* had a soft heart of flesh, when he could finde those motes in his eyes, and complains of them as beams, *Rom.* 7. and indeed because the dishonour of God; and offending of him, is the great mountain and weight upon his soul, therefore whatsoever sin is done in secret, he is as sensible of it, as if it had been done in the eyes of the whole world. That is a known instance of the tender heart of *Joseph*, when in the temptation 4.

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of secresie in sinning, he cried out, *How can I do this, and sin against God!* Oh then this discovers the many degrees thousands are off from the tender work of grace: For its a shame to speak of what is done by many in secret. Secret uncleanness, secret injustice and fraud, secret thieving, secret drunkennesse, if it can be carried so that the world may not know it, that reproach may not brand them for it, they care not. Oh men of stony hearts! Did not God behold thee? Is not darkness and light, night and day all one to him? Never be incouraged to sin in hope of secresie, for God will bring out those deeds of darkness, without repentance, one time or other, to thy great confusion. I know no such differential mark from an hypocrite and a true godly man, as this. An hypocrite may have as great abilities & inlargments, may have as external a strict conversation as a godly man: but then in this he always fails, he doth not humble himself for, or mortifie inward motions and lusts of sins. He is not affected with heart-corruptions, because God looks into the heart, and beholds the heart. Oh then, that the word of God might powerfully work upon you in this respect. Its not an heart of flesh, as long as wicked, proud, earthly, unclean thoughts can lodge in thy soul, though they break not out into action.

Lastly, *A tender heart of flesh is greatly afflicted with the dishonour that is done to God by other mens sins as well as his own.* *David* must needs have a very soft heart, when rivers of water came from his eies, because men kept not Gods Law. Flesh is easily wounded, it is easily peirced, and thus is a godly mans heart, because God is not owned, is not magnified where he liveth. The Prophet *Isaiah* cried out, *Wo is me, because I dwell among men of unclean lips*, Isa. 6. 5. How then do other mens impieties work upon thee? are they like a sword in thy bowels? Doth the rearing and rending of Gods Name by blasphemous courses, even tear and rend thy heart? Doth the prophane naming of the wounds and bloud of Christ, even make wounds and bloud in thy heart? then thou maiest praise God, that he hath not left thee without zeal for his glory. Is thy soul grieved and tormented with seeing and beholding the wickednesse of men done in the world?

Use 1. Of consolation and comfort to those to whom God hath vouchsafed this tender and soft heart. Its such a mercy thou couldst not help thy self to, nor all the world could vouchsafe it to thee. Say, *Blesse the Lord, O my soul, and admire his grace who hath thus melted thee.* The time was when thou wast hardened and bold in sin, thou couldst swallow down great Camels, and it did not trouble thee: thou couldest commit such & such impieties, and thy heart would never smite thee for it. Oh but now, if there be any distemper, any rebellion, any unkindnesse in thy life to God, it dissolves thee, it moveth thy bowels: go on blessing God for this mercy. Do not think it a losse to thee, nor a reproach to thee: Not a losse, for happily thou mayest say, If I had not such a tender heart, if I were not so afraid to sin against God, I might get such earthly advantages: If I were as bold & as large in my principles as others, then I could thus inrich my self; but this tender heart of mine hinders me. Do not judge this a losse but a gain: the latter end of this will be a rich crop, though for the present thou hast but gleanings: God doth with thee as *Boaz* with *Ruth*; first he gave her but gleanings, and a little measure of Corn, but afterwards he gave her himself and all that he had. Thus God at last will give the injoyment of himself and eternal glory, when hardned sinners shall vomit up their advantages, which will be like gravel in the mouth. Nor do not thou judge it a reproach; the world judgeth it pusillanimity, a tender heart, a foolish, scrupulous heart. But as it is said of God, *He can do all things*, only he cannot sin, for that is an impotency, *Potentissime hoc non potest*, so it is here, thou darest lose thy comforts, thy advantages; thou darest be hated, persecuted, onely thou darest not sin, *Magnanimiter hic non audet*. At the day of death, at the day of judgment, what boldnes, what confidence will thou have, when the great bold men of the world shall tremble like leaves, and have fear round about them.

Use

SERM

SERM. LXXXVIII.

Holding forth Inducements to get this promised Heart of flesh; Also shewing the counterfeit of it.

EZEK. 36. 26. the latter part.

I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

THe Doctrine about *An heart of flesh*, hath already been explained, and some practic l use made of it: And the matter being so exceeding necessary; (for without this *Heart of flesh*, we preach in vain, you hear in vain, Gods mercies, and Gods chastisements are in vain;) I shall therefore adde another Use, by way of Exhortation, Not to have any rest or quiet in your souls, till God vouchsafe this mercy to you: God here promiseth it, as the main mercy, to qualifie and sanctifie all their temporal mercies; as if returning from Captivity, enjoying their own Countrey, their Liberties, Houses and Comforts again, were nothing, if this *Heart of flesh* w s not also bestowed upon them. And to speak to our condition; though God hath brought us together, that by the last wars were scattered one from another; though many of those fears and terrors that did then overwhelm, are in some measure abated; yet if God give not this *Heart of flesh*, a worm will quickly arise and consume this gourd: Be therefore as importunate with God, as the Widow was with the unjust Judge; for God loveth importunity, he loveth seeking, knocking, fervent praying; and if the unjust Judge was overcome by importunity, how much rather will the bowels of a gracious God move towards thee? How graciously did God reward that petition of *Solomons*, because he did not ask for riches, long life, the life of his enemies, but wisedom to discharge his trust: So will God say to thee, because thou hast not asked temporal mercies, nor earthly greatness, but a tender, soft heart, be it according to thy desire. As *David* therefore resolved, *He would give no sleep to his eyes, or slumber to his eye-lids, till he had setled the Ark*: So do thou resolve to have no rest in thy mind, or to let God alone, but importune him day and night, till he hath made that heart of stone flesh within thee: Oh! Why are you solicitous about earthly things! What you shall eat, what you shall drink, what you shall put on? And not in a godly manner enquiring, How I may pray, hear, live, dye, with this soft and tender heart? And if reason may be any motive to you, consider, how much may be spoke for this particular.

1. Inducements to seek for this heart of flesh.

First, *This heart of flesh will be a constant Antidote, and preservative against sin*: This bitter potion will kill all those worms of temptation, that may crawl in thy breast; the devil can never come and find the room of thy heart swept

and ready garniſhed for him; he is continually upon his Watch-Tower, that hath an heart of fleſh. *David*'s heart when it began to be ſtony and ſenſeleſs, ſee how willfully he falls from one ſin to another; whereas if his heart had been as tender as at other times, the very entrance and appearance of ſin would have aſtoniſhed him. As it is the nature of ſin to harden, and to make obſtinate, ſo of Grace to mollifie and ſoften: Now there is always in every condition, in every occurrence of providence, ſomething that would ſtiffen the heart againſt God, were not Grace a continual chawer of the heart by the heat thereof: If therefore thou wouldſt be preſerved from thoſe ſad falls, and wretched backſlidings, which others have been tumbled into, keep up this heart of fleſh: Oh, it could never be that thou wouldſt entertain ſuch monſtrous Doctrines, or do ſuch unjuſtifiable practices, if thy heart were of fleſh: No, it is of ſteel and iron, of a rock, or adamant, and that makes thee bold to commit ſuch ſins, which tender, godly perſons have their hearts ake at, and their ears tingle to hear.

2. Secondly, As this tender heart of fleſh preſerveth from ſin; *So from the conſequents, and the woefull effects of it*; which are woes, wounds of Conſcience, horror of heart, darkneſs and gloominеſs of ſoul, ſad tears, leſt God hath for ever forſaken them; the loſs of all their former ſweet peace and communion they had with God: Oh! God of a gracious Father, is now become a frowning enemy; their hearts are made like an hell, wherein legions of ſad unbelieving thoughts do conſtantly lodge: This is the portion of thoſe godly men, who by negligence, careleſneſs and hardneſs of heart, come to fall off from their former meaſure of holineſs: Oh but a tender heart of fleſh, as it prevents the cauſe of theſe, ſo the effects likewiſe; it will keep thee from this roaring Lyon: So that as ſoon as ever thou findeſt this ſoft heart abating in thee, do thou then fear ſome grievous ſtorm coming on thee, if God prevent not.

3. Thirdly, *Without a tender heart of fleſh, a man cannot perform any Religious duty in an acceptable manner to God*: Prayer without this heart of fleſh, is like a dry unſavoury herb; hearing of the Word, if it come not from an heart thus ſoftened, is but deſperate boldneſs againſt God, and ſo an immediate provocation of his anger. Hence a broken heart is preferred above all ſacrifices, *Pſal.* 51. above all outward worſhip; they are the body, this the ſoul; they muſt not be neglected, but this is the *Benjamin*, without whom, we muſt not ſee Gods face: Oh then, as thou dareſt not but pray, and hear, and come to Church, ſo alſo be as much afraid, leaſt thoſe duties be done without an heart of fleſh.

4. Fourthly, *A tender heart of fleſh is accompanied with patience under the foreſt afflictions, and thankfulneſs under the leaſt mercies*: What a ſudden tempeſt and whirlwind of afflictions fell upon *Job*, and *yet in all that he did not charge God fooliſhly*, Job 1. *ult.* but reproved his impatient wife with this ſaying, *Shall we receive good and not evil from the Lord?* And as for thankfulneſs under the leaſt mercies, ſee how the Church in the *Lamentations* can taſte a little honey in an ocean of gall; *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not conſumed*, Lam. 3, 22. and ſo the woman of *Canaan*, acknowledgeth her ſelf a dogg, and is glad of the crums that fall from the table, *Mat.* 15. 27. Now what a lovely and comely ſight is this; to ſee a Chriſtian patient under the greateſt trouble, and thankfull under the leaſt mercies! and there is nothing will bring the heart to this admirable temper, but the fulfilling of this promiſe.

5. Laſtly, *This tender heart of fleſh, is the onely fit ſoyl, wherein the word of God ſown, will grow up, and bring a plentiful crop*: For as they ſay of the ſoul, *Anima ſibi fabricat ſibi domicilium*, The ſoul faſhioneth and prepareth the body, for it ſelf to dwell in; as the Spider makes her own web, wherein ſhe reſides: Thus the word of God at firſt makes the heart of hard and ſtony, fleſhy and ſoft, which when done, then is the heart ever afterwards a fit room to receive this ſpiritual gueſt: So that the Word never thriveth or proſpers, in reſpect of the pro-

progress and increase of godliness, but where it meeteth with a tender heart. *Lydia*'s heart is said to be opened to attend to the words of *Paul*, *Acts* 16. 14. Thus naturally mens spirits are bolted, the word findes a gate of brasse upon it, till it be made tender, and after that its carefull to lose nothing: Oh then that we could say of our hearers, what *Paul* of the *Corinthians*, *The word is written in their fleshy tables of the heart*, 2 Cor. 2. Now for the better clearing of these things, it may be demanded:

Whether all tenderness and softnesse of heart, be this work of grace here promised? may not the soul be deceived about tenderness of heart?

Quest. Whether all tenderness be this work of Grace here promised.

Yes, very easily; for there is a twofold soft heart of flesh, which yet is not the heart in the Text.

Answ. No: For there is a natural tenderness.

There is a natural softness or aptness to relent, and to be pittifully affected; such as *Austin* speaks of in himself, when he read the History of *Dido*, Lord, (saith he) I could not but weep when I read that, and yet at the same time I could not weep for my sins. That tender heart of *Joseph*, whereby he dissolved into tears concerning his brethren, was not so much an act of grace, as of natural tenderness: And it should seem he was a tender father to all *Egypt*, as some expound that name they gave *Joseph*, when they blessed him, and called him *Abrech*, *Tender Father*.

And a Legal, neither of which are this heart here promised.

Again, *There is another tenderness or softnes, whereby men are so melted under the consideration of sin, as they refuse, like* Rachael, *to be comforted*: It seemeth *Mary Magdalene* was too tender, by that remedy our Saviour applyed, when he bid her *Be of good comfort, her sins were forgiven*, Luke 7. 48. To be sure the Incestuous person was too soft this way, insomuch that he was even swallowed up with sorrow, 2 *Cor.* 2 7. For as the string of the instrument, if it be too wet, can make no melodious sound; so neither can an heart overwhelmed with sorrow, set forth the praise of God with faith and thankfulness.

It will be therefore worth the while, to discover this *Counterfeit heart of flesh*, from a gracious one: And let us examine the first, which if put to the Touch stone, will be thus discovered:

The counterfeit of this Heart of flesh, *viz.*

I.

Natural tenderness discovered.

How it differs from gracious tenderness.

First, *Natural tenderness ariseth from the bodily constitution, or natural temperament of a man*; whereas this gracious softness is the work of God in a supernatural way: Thus in the Text, *I will give the heart of flesh*: God as the Author of grace makes this; so *Zach.* 12. *I will pour upon them the spirit of prayer, and they shall mourn for their sin*, Rom. 8. Those groans unutterable, which came from an heart of flesh, are wholly attributed to the spirit of God; so that the tender heart of the one, is like *Egypt*, that is not made fruitfull by rain from heaven; whereas the other comes onely from above: If then you go to the fountains from whence these streams flow, they are as far distant as heaven and earth; and if ye see them both melting and dissolving into tears, under the chastisements and judgments of God upon them: the one hath a spring from under the earth the other from heaven above: Do not therefore presently conclude grace is there, when you see a tender, soft, yielding disposition, for this may come from nature, as well as grace; it may be a natural complexion, not a principle of Sanctification within.

Secondly, *The instrument by which this softness and tenderness of heart is produced, is far different from the other*: For the natural softness is wrought by seeing the objects of pity and compassion; but this gracious softness is by hearing, and by the word preached: So that the instrument by which a man comes to be thus changed from his obstinacy, is wholly by the word of God; that received by faith, hath been the furnace or coals of fire to the iron, that doth make it flexible for every shape; whereas the former is onely by a natural sympathy between the eye and the heart: The eye affects the heart, *Lament.* 3. 51 and hereupon tenderness is wrought; its not a work of faith, which as it purifieth the heart, so it makes the heart tender. By *Faith* Noah

was moved with fear, Heb. 11. and by faith we finde the rockineſs of our heart ſubdued, and we readily yielding unto God.

3. Thirdly, The motive, *Which is the very ſame thing in Morals, that the ſpecifical form is in naturals; in this there is a great gulf between one and another:* For the only motive of this natural tenderneſs, is outward evil and miſery, not ſin, or the diſpleaſure of God: There are hundreds of people, that for the loſs of dear friends, or outward comforts, can weep till they are able to weep no more, but are as a rock and as hard as a ſtone, in reſpect of any conſideration about ſin; yet ſin is the greateſt evil, and that which depriveth the ſoul of the moſt excellent good: Thou art therefore very prone to ſigh, to be troubled, thy heart is like a fountain of water; But what is the reaſon? outward diſcontents, want of ſuch mercies as thou doeſt propound to thy ſelf: Alas, this is not an heart of fleſh, in the ſenſe of the Text; indeed it is too much an heart of fleſh in another ſenſe; for it is wholly carnal, and is carried out upon carnal conſiderations: If therefore thy tenderneſs and ſoftneſs of heart, be in the want of Gods favour, and the apprehenſion of his diſpleaſure, as *Davids* ſo often was; no doubt but thou haſt then felt the power of this promiſe to thee.

4. Fourthly, *A natural ſoftneſs and tenderneſs, is flexible to any evil, it will receive any impreſſion of ſin:* But this gracious ſoftneſs, though it be fleſh to what is good, it doth eaſily receive that; yet it is a ſtone and an adamant to what is evil; and this is a remarkable difference: you have many ſoft and flexible hearts, and that is their fault, for none ſo inſnared as they; they are like wax, that receive the ſtamp of any ſeal upon them; they are like the reed that is ſhaken up and down with every wind; now this is a great ſin: It was *Reubens* curſe, *To be unſtable like water:* To be for good in good company, and for evil in evil company; to be ſuch a Chamelion according to every company, is contrary to thoſe many commands, *To be ſteadfaſt and unmoveable in the work of the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. 58. *And to confeſs Chriſt and his truth, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation*, Luke 12. 8. *Their yea ſhould be yea, and their nay, nay*: Oh do not judge this the gracious heart of fleſh; for he that hath this grace, though he be like a Lamb, and all ſweetneſs of carriage be in him; yet he is alſo like a Lyon, in reſpect of courage and boldneſs for what is good: So then conſider, that as the work of grace is in one ſenſe making man tender; ſo in another ſenſe it doth eſtabliſh and ſettle upon a rock.

5. Laſtly, *This natural tenderneſs can, and often doth conſiſt, without any trouble and grief for the diſhonor of God, wrought by other mens ſins.* Now you have heard, that a gracious heart of fleſh was eaſily wounded and torn aſunder in pain, for the wickedneſs of others: You heard, *David* had rivers of water running down his eyes, becauſe men kept not the Law of God; but how many may ye ſee of tender ſoft ſpirits, that are very ſenſeleſs ſtones of the blaſphemies and impieties that others are guilty of! They have ſuch in their families, they have ſuch in their company, and in their delight; How can he be called a godly man to whom a wicked ungodly man is not a torment and a burthen: *Horror hath taken hold on me*, ſaith *David*, *becauſe of the wicked*, Pſal. 119. 53. Oh if thy heart were ſenſible of Gods glory, horror and trembling would ſurpriſe thee, to ſee or hear others commit iniquity, even as if thou didſt ſee them falling into the fire, or deep waters:

II. Inordinate tenderneſs in thoſe that for the main are godly.

Secondly, in the next place, let us conſider the other ſinful tenderneſs, and that is, *When the heart is indeed godly for the main, but there is a degeneration:* This tenderneſs doth go beyond its bounds: God indeed by his grace doth wound the heart, but then it bleeds too much, and ſo groweth the weaker thereby:

The ſinfulneſs of it. Now the ſinfulneſs of this ſoftneſs will appear thus:

1. Firſt, *When it hinders a man from thoſe other gracious duties that God doth require:* All grace is conſonant, and one grace is to be added to another, and they

they are to cooperate one with another, even those that seem to be at the greatest distance; thus joy and trembling, faith and fear, are to accompany one another: Now there are some graces, that it is very hard to have cooperate with this heart of flesh; and therefore we must take heed that our gold become not dross, that we do not take even sin for grace: This is worse than to take *John Baptist for Christ*, this is to take a false Christ for the true one: And this is done first, when they cast both their eyes upon their sins only, not at all eying Christ; as if the *Israelite* wounded by a Serpent, should always have cried out of his pain and rosting, but never look up to the exalted Serpent: This incestuous person was blamed for, he was ready to be swallowed up with sorrow: When thy soul is so dejected, that it refuseth the comfort of the Gospel, will suffer no oyl to be poured in its wounds, this is a sinfull softnesse; this is as wetted paper, the moisture of it hinders any writing upon it; and so the softness of thy heart makes the glorious promise of the Gospel not to be writ on thy soul; for as God writes the Law of obedience in the hearts of the godly, so also the Gospel of comfort in their souls: And as hardness of heart hinders the former writing, so too much softness and moisture the latter: Know then, that all tenderness and softness, which keeps off from Christ, which rejects the promise of grace, is sinfull, and is not of God.

Secondly, *If thy tenderness and softness make thee more unfit for any service unto God*: If so weaken thee, that thou canst not pray, do or suffer for God, this is also sinful; when it makes thee have feeble hands and knees, as the childrens bones and joynts are soft at first, that they cannot go, this is sinfull. The trees that have not their sap and juice excocted out, are not able to bear up any building; and so the soul that is inordinately tender, and sinfully softned, it cannot go through with the work of the Lord: See therefore thy tenderness makes thee not less serviceable. 2.

Lastly, *If this tenderness makes thee slavishly and ignorantly scrupulous, that thou canst not enjoy the Liberty of the Gospel, and the freedom of the spirit, which Christ hath purchased for thee*: Though this may seem wonderful tenderness, yet it is not so indeed: It is true indeed, as we told you, the godly through their tenderness abstain from all appearances of evil, and they fear sin may be, where it is not; yet they do not incourage a slavish, scrupulous disposition; but they labour for a sound mind, and a filial frame wrought by the spirit of adoption: So that although there are too too few in the world, that need the regulating or moderating of their tenderness; yet some there are, and this may be a word of season to them, Do not take that doubtful, fearful spirit of thine, for this heat of flesh; let not the water over-flow the banks, for then it presently gets soil, and is turned into mud. 3.

Let the conclusion be by way of Information, concerning the cursed and miserable estate of those, who have not this promised mercy of a heart of flesh. As *Ezekiel's* Scroll had woe and lamentation written within and without; so hath such a one the inward and outward curses of Gods word belonging to him: Oh thou rock and stone! that art neither by the instruction, exhortations or reproofs of the Word softned; nor yet by his mercies or judgements mollified: How could thy heart endure against all those ways God hath used to melt thee. Consider that thy heart is naturally a heart of flesh, in respect of the frailty and weakness of it; Why then should it not be an heart of flesh in a gracious sense? Were thy heart of brass, and iron; were it immortal, and such as could not dy; then thou mightest go on with boldness in thy sin, and say, Who shall contradict? But it being an heart of flesh, fainting, miserable, and alwayes dying: Oh why should not this stir thee up to be partaker of this inestimable mercy! Oh cry out, and say, Lord, my weak frail flesh, crieth out for that tender heavenly flesh; and further, thy heart being naturally of flesh, how unable is it to combate with the wrath of God, who is an infinite

ſpirit? Thy heart cannot keep off thoſe ſharp arrows, which he ſhall ſhoot into thy heart of fleſh; Why then doeſt thou not take that counſel, to agree with thine adverſary in the way, with God; who for the preſent is thy enemy, while thou art in the way, before death come, and then there be no ranſom: Oh that you would meditate of the terrour of God, how eaſily he can fill the heart of fleſh with helliſh horrour; how ſpeedily he can make the Devils take thee by the throat, and hale thee to damnation; and if ſo, there is no remedy but to cry out, Lord make good this promiſe to me: Oh it is this I want, this would make me happy.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

Handling Grace under the Notion of *Gods putting his Spirit within us, and causing us to walk in his Statutes.*

SERM. LXXXIX.

Of Gods giving his Spirit to a Man, and what that Promise implyes. Also of the Operations and Effects of the Spirit of God where it so comes.

EZEK. 36. 27.

And I will put my Spirit within you, &c.

WE have a further description in this Verse of the grace here promised; for although it be the same thing, yet the different expressions represent different notions about it. That which in the verse before is called an heart of flesh, is here called, *My Spirit*: And in the Verse before, *a new Spirit*. For the opening of the words, let us consider, the mercy vouchsafed; and secondly, the subject receptive of it. The mercy God calls, *My Spirit*. The Subject is, *Within you*. Of which in its due order.

At this time let us take notice of the mercy, *My Spirit*. It will be very impertinent to give you a Theological, and Biblical use of the word *Spirit*, which is of a great latitude in its signification. In this place a three-fold sense may claim to be understood, which also may easily be composed and united, not opposed. For,

First, By Gods Spirit may be meant the third Person in the Trinity: so that they are promised here to be made partakers of it. It a very grave and solid dispute in Divinity, whether the godly besides the graces and fruit of the Spirit are also made partakers of the Spirit it self: some affirm it, others deny it. But no doubt several places of Scripture do evidently demonstrate that we do receive

ceive not onely the graces of the Spirit, but the Spirit it ſelf; and therefore the Spirit is ſaid to dwell in us, and we are the temples of the Holy Ghoſt: But yet this is in ſuch a ſupernatural and myſticall way, that though the plain Texts compel us to believe it, yet the manner how is very difficult to expreſſe: this is not my work to doe at this time.

A ſecond ſenſe may be by ſpirit, to underſtand the ſoul, or ſpirit of a man, as renewed and qualified by the graces of the Spirit; and therefore its called in the verſe before, *A new Spirit*, which is the ſame with *a new heart*. So that Spirit is here put for the ſoul of a man, enlivened and quickened by the graces of Gods Spirit: and this ſenſe we conceive to be the moſt genuine and proper. Hence *Ezek.* 18. verſe 31. where you have that commanded as a duty, which is here promiſed as a gift: *Make ye a new heart, & a new ſpirit*, which cannot be primarily underſtood of the perſon of the ſpirit, but the graces of the ſpirit. The laſt ſenſe that may here come in, is to take ſpirit, for heavenly activity, vigor and holy impulſes, and motions from God, which are as the winde to the ſails, to carry it to its expected Haven. Now the firſt and this latter ſenſe cannot wholly be excluded, yet the ſecond is that, which I will pitch upon as moſt proper, bringing in the other by conſequence.

Doct. Doct. *That Converſion is the enlivening, or qualifying of a man with the graces of Gods Spirit.*

Thus *John* 3. *That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.* Hence the Godly are ſaid to have the Spirit in them, and guided by it, led by it, and are ſaid to walk after it. I need not multiply places for this. As Chriſts body was by an extraordinary ſupernatural manner, the Holy Ghoſt over-ſhadowing the Virgin *Mary*; In ſuch a miraculous way as to humane power and ſtrength, is this new, holy, and ſpiritual Creature begotten. The Spirit of God moving upon the waters of the Ordinances, produceth this ſpiritual man: As at firſt God made the Fowls of the aire out of water, which ſoar up to the heavens.

To improve this neceſſary point, let us conſider, what is implyed in this promiſe, *I will put my ſpirit into you*: And,

What is implied in this promiſe, I will put my ſpirit within you.

1. Firſt, *It ſuppoſeth every man naturally a meer dead lump, without life or motion of himſelf to any thing that is holy.* For as God at firſt breathed into *Adam* the breath of life, *and he became a living ſoul*; So God doth ſtill infuſe into us his graces, that make us live the life of the Spirit. Hence ſome Expoſitors make this promiſe to be Parabolically repreſented in the next Chapter, by the reſurrection of dry bones, whereas the winde is called upon to come and breath upon the Bones and ſinews and all parts to be united together, that they may live: So doth God in the Converſion of men. But that Parable is to repreſent the recovery of *Iſrael* out of their Captivity, and miſerable eſtate; which as to the eye of ſenſe, had no more poſſibility ever to return again than thoſe dry bones to live. Yet by way of ſimilitude, it may alſo repreſent their reſtitution unto a ſpiritual life of Grace, unto which they had more impoſſibility than to return to their own Land. Oh then this very phraſe, *I will put my ſpirit into you*, Should fall like thunder and lightning upon all thoſe Doctrines and Opinions that maintain Free-will, or the power of nature in Converſion. Can man co-operate to the infuſion of Gods Spirit? The order of nature, and the order of Grace, differ as much as heaven and earth, and one cannot prepare for the other; ſo that this expreſſion doth inform that we all are animall or ſenſual, deſtitute of the ſpirit: And as bruit beaſts cannot perform the Offices or acts of Reaſon; ſo neither can men naturally doe the actions of grace; he cannot pray or hear ſpiritually, he cannot love God, or repent of a ſin in a ſpiritual manner:

2. Secondly, *This doth ſuppoſe an elevating or lifting up the heart of a man to thoſe affections and actions, which otherwiſe are far above his power.* For as the Spirit of God, when it came upon men in other extraordinary wayes of aſſiſtance, they did thoſe things they were never able to doe before. Thus *Sampſon*; the Spirit came

came upon him, and gave him such mighty strength; so *Paul* had another Spirit, in respect of Government; those gifts of Gods Spirit in the Church that made them work miracles, speak with tongues, lifted them above humane power; so this Spirit of God sanctifying, doth also raise a man to such holy, spiritual, and sublime duty, that in former times he was not acquainted with, neither did he understand. Hence to be a men, to walk as a man, 1 *Cor.* 3. 2. in the Scripture phrase is a diminution, & a carnal imperfection, because we are to have the Spirit of God who enables us to spiritual actions in a divine manner. Thus to believe in God, to love God, to be heavenly minded, to be patient, even every exercise of Grace, are acts transcendent the power of a man, and God must put his Spirit into us to enable us thereunto. And this is that which makes the world so mistake about godliness, that makes them grossely erre about the serving of God, & repenting of sin: they do these things as men by custom, by the principles they were born in; so that till this Text be made good in you, *I will put my spirit in you*, our Congregations are but so many *Golgothaes*, places of dead mens skuls.

Thirdly, To have the Spirit of God put into us, denoteth, *That we do all our duties upon those motives which are by Divine Revelation in the Word manifested to us*, For the Spirit of God works in his people two wayes. 3.

1. *Effectually*, By inlivening, and enabling of them to holy duties,

2. *Directively*, By his Word guiding and leading of them. Now in the word of God we are directed to such Motives in our actions, which humane light would never discern, as to do duties. First, Meerly because God commands, out of obedience to his Soveraignty, because it is the Law of such a Law-giver. Where is the man that doth not by custom, or because of the talk, and report of men, good things, rather than out of obedience to God? Therefore observe the order of the promise, *I will put my spirit in you*, and then I will cause you to walk in my Commandments, & do them. Thou then that prayest, heares, abstainest from gross sins; why is it? Is it because thou hast respect to Gods Commandment: God saith it, and therefore I do it. This is to have the spirit in us. But secondly, not meerly because of Gods command, but from an inward principle of love, & delight in God also, therefore we perform our duties: *If ye love me keep my Commandments*, Joh. 14 15. Love to God, that presently makes us do or suffer any thing for him. Now love, that is reckoned in the front of the fruits of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. and the Spirit of God descended in tongues of fire. Of fire, to represent the nature of the Spirit of God: Hence we are commanded not to quench the spirit, 1 *Thes.* 5. 19. which is like burning fire in our hearts Oh this performance of duties from love, is that which crowns them, is like the perfume and Frankincence at the Sacrifice. Thirdly, We are to perform holy duties, not onely out of love but for holiness sake, because God is holy, and the duty is holy. *Hate evil*, and cleave to that which is good, be glued to it, and made one with it. *Be ye holy, for I am holy*, saith God, *Lev.* 11. 44, 45. Now as God loveth holiness for holiness sake, wills good for goods sake (or rather good is good, because he wills it) Thus ought we to imitate him, I there may be earthly motives, and humane advantages, which may incite the heart to what is good; but goodness for the beauty & glory of it, should make thee in love with it: Say then as *Abraham* to the King of *Sodom*, *I will not take so much as a Shoe-latchet from thee, lest thou shouldst say, thou hast made Abraham rich*: so do thou; I will not so much as entertain, or consult with any earthly advantage, lest that should say, I have made thee pray, I have made thee profess the Name of Christ. Wicked men are carried out to evil for evils sake: But there is more fulness, goodness & excellency in God than there can be appearance of these in sin: Therefore its unsufferable, if when Draff shall move for the sweetness it hath to a distempered swinish appetite, that honey it self shall not affect a sound appetite. But I have somewhere else spoken of the nature of this spiritual life: I shall therefore in,

two things more onely instance the property of Gods spirit dwelling in the godly, and then speak of the concomitant effects of Gods spirit in us.

4. Fourthly, To have the spirit of God put into us, as in duties to be done, it lifteth us up above humane strength, or motives, *So in matters of sufferings, herein the Spirit of God doth wonderfully demonstrate it self in the Converted.* For hereby they are more than men: God is plainly in them, that they can deny their dearest comforts, endure the most exquisite torment, & that with joyfulness & alacrity. Look upon *Paul* & the Disciples of Christ in the New Testament, what reproaches, persecutions, spoiling of their goods, taking away thir lives, were frequently executed upon them? and yet with what gladness of heart, with what patience, faith, courage did they endure all, rejoycing that they were accounted worthy to suffer any thing for the Name of Christ, *Acts* 5. 41. The History of the Martyrs doth abundantly declare the spirit of God put into Believers; and therefore this should support the godly they are afraid that in the times of temptation & of great troubles they should never be faithful to God, they find their hearts so weak & feeble that they shall never be able to persevere. Why, dost thou not consider that the same spirit of God which lifts thee up above nature for active obedience, will also for passive? To love God, to believe in God, to do any religious duty spiritually, flesh & blood can no more do it than Iron of it self can swim: But the spirit of God takes thee & fixes thy heart upon heavenly things. So flesh & blood cannot be persecuted, imprisoned, cannot dy for the glory of Christ, but the spirit of God can & doth inable hereunto. *Sampson* could not do those extraordinary actions of strength as a man but as having the spirit of God mighty upon him so he did: Neither canst thou do or suffer in a gracious manner as a man, without any more power than thy own; but as spiritual, as having Gods spirit in thee so thou canst. What mans power can do in the hour of temptation, *Peter*'s presumptuous expression will teach us, *Though all men forsake thee, yet I will not*; & yet he forsook Christ more desperately than any else. Oh therefore do nothing that may grieve, or chase away the spirit of God: For who knows what conflicts, what trials God may reserve thee unto? and then without the mighty work of this spirit of God, thou wilt prove an Apostate, & so a very *Judas* or *Cain* at last: for first a man is forsaken by the spirit of God as sanctifying, and then as comforting. Not that the Holy Ghost is totally & finally ever driven away from him that once had him graciously, but there are many looked upon as godly & forward in profession, who are judged so by others, & they themselves make account also they are godly; yet in the day of trial make a woful Shipwrack of their Faith & a good Conscience. Lastly, because the spirit of God is thus put into them, they are therefore said to be the Temples of the holy Ghost, 1 *Cor.* 3. and if their bodies be, much more their souls are. O what a strong obligation is this to all godliness, *You are the Temples of the Spirit of God*, No uncleanthing might enter into the Temple! How did God complain, when they made his Temple a Den of thieves. How angry then must he needs be, if thou make this Temple a sty of Swine, or an hell of Devils? This evidently proclaims that most men never had this grace in the Text vouchsafed unto them: For what is there no unclean, no brutish & polluted thing that enters in thy soul? Is thy heart as the Temple, a house of prayer, an heart of prayer, thy soul a soul of prayer? Dost thou not defile this Temple every day by prophane and filthy lusts? What hopes canst thou ever have that this is made good to thee? Do not hear these things as if they did not at all belong to thee. Doth not thine own heart tell thee, that if the spirit of God did dwell & work in thee, thou couldst not do as thou dost, nor commit such sins as thou daily committest? It was the Devil that was in the swine, & hurried them violently into the Sea, but the spirit of God appeared in a Dove: With what holiness then, and all godliness should you walk, who have this benefit vouchsafed to you? What manner of per-

per ſons ſhould ye be who are the Temple of the Lord, whoſe ſouls are made an heaven? Is it for you to be vain, earthly and immoderately affected unto any Creature? have you not that within which may be inſtead of all comforts to you? Thy frail body is a Cabinet wherein excellent Jewels are.

Now that we may the better know whether the Spirit of God be in us, cauſing us to walk in his Commandments, conſider whether the other effects attributed to the Spirit in the Scripture be alſo in thee: for as the Sun vouchſafeth heat as well as light, and is not with either of theſe alone: ſo the Spirit of God comes not alone, but hath divers and noble operations with it. Hence ſome expound that place *from the ſeven ſpirits* in the Revelations, *Revel.* 1.4. of the holy Spirit in its manifold operations. As, Of the operations of the Spirit in a Man.

First, *Its called the good Spirit*, Pſalm 143. *Let thy good Spirit lead me*, in oppoſition to the evill ſpirit. So that as the evill ſpirit or the Devil in wicked men is continually inclining and moving of them to all evill thoughts, affections and deſires: They think evill, they conceive evill, they act evill: as the Spider doth onely vent poiſon, ſo the good Spirit of God in good men doth incline and move them to good thoughts, good affections, good actions: Hence they are ſaid to have a good Treaſure in their hearts. And of what conſequence it is to have this Spirit of *God*, appeareth, in that its named for all good things: For whereas one Evangeliſt ſaith; *If ye being evill, know how to give good things, how much more will your heavenly Father beſtow good gifts?* Mat 7.11. Another ſaith, *How much more will he beſtow the Spirit?* Luke 11. 13. So that the Spirit is inſtead of all good things. If then it cannot lie hid, it will be quickly diſcerned, whether this good ſpirit, or that evill wicked ſpirit abideth and dwelleth in thee. The fruit will diſcover the tree: Its ſtrange that people ſhould no more conſider what the Fountain is from whence all flows, whether it be bitter or ſweet. 1.

Secondly, *Its a Spirit of Prayer* and Supplication, joyning with a tender mourning heart, *Zachary* 12. and *Rom* 8. *Groans* unutterable are ſaid to come from the ſpirit; yea, in that place is excellently deſcribed the help, guide and ſupport, which is afforded to the Godly in Prayer, by the Spirit: We know not what to pray, or how to pray: ſo that if thou haſt this mercy in the Text, thou findeſt it mightily working the duty of Prayer, enlightning thy minde, heating thy affections, ſoftning thy heart, ſupporting thee againſt unbelief, fear and diſtruſt. Indeed the ſpirit of *God* giveth a gift of prayer, which many unregenerate and hypocrites have; yea, they may be admirable in it: but there is the grace of Prayer, when the ſoul is poured out in a gracious manner, and this is onely in the godly. A naturall man cannot pray acceptably, and they truſt in a broken Reed who put confidence in their good prayers, which yet they have by Rote or Cuſtome, not through *Gods* Spirit. Do not then ſcornfully paſs over this touch-ſtone. 2.

Thirdly, Its called *The Spirit of Wiſdome* and Revelation, *Iſaiah* 11.2. which was firſt communicated to Chriſt the Head, without meaſure, and then like *Aarons* Oyle deſcends to the Members of Chriſt. This Spirit of Revelation, is to ſee and behold the glory of thoſe things revealed in the Goſpel, and the diſcerning of things in a ſpirituall manner, which the naturall man cannot doe; and the ſpirit of Wiſdome is to make a man underſtand the matters of Religion in a godly and practicall manner, ſo to believe and know, as to referre all to godlineſſe. Now how deſtitute many are of the Spirit in this ſenſe, the ignorance and dulneſs about holy things doth evidently Demonſtrate; they know and underſtand nothing in the principles of Religion, ſo as to have their lives transformed by the power of it. 3.

Fourthly, and laſtly, *Its called the Spirit of Adoption*, Romans 8.15. which puts a Filiall boldneſs into us, and makes us call *God*, *Abba Father*: 4.

Those slavish fears and suspicious doubts in thee, they come not from Gods Spirit. Those drive thee far off from God, they fill thee with hard and discontented thoughts against God: No, its the Spirit of Adoption; and as of Adoption, so its a Comforter, and an Advocate, *John* 14. 16. As Christ is an intercessor in heaven for us; so the Spirit is in our hearts pleading Gods love, his readinesse to forgive, his willingness to receive: as the godly are to pray for the Spirit of Sanctification, so also for the Spirit of Adoption; you are to pray for the Comforts of the Spirit, as well as the Graces; for, these are wings to the soul.

Use Use of *Instruction*: How necessary this Grace is to all our Congregations. Oh that God would breath this spirituall breath into your souls. Oh that you knew experimentally what it is to have the Holy Ghost descend upon you. We speak not of an extraordinary Miraculous way, much less of fantasticall Delusions and pretended Revelations by the Spirit of Darkness; but the gracious operations of the Spirit in a Sanctifying way. Oh where will you Blasphemers and wretched Mockers appear, who scoff at the Spirit, and make a jeer about it? This is not onely to grieve the Spirit of God, which is a grievous sin, but to do despite to it. Now if the Spirit of God be vouchsafed to you, it will come with this two-fold benefit.

First, Its a Spirit of Truth, its called so, and its promised to lead the godly into all Truth. Therefore let men never so much talk, or boast of the Spirit; if they be Errors and Heresies which they broach, the good and holy Spirit is not in them; or if they be Opinions that carry to loosenesse and liberty; For its an holy Spirit.

The second benefit is to do duties no more in the oldnesse of the Letter, but the newnesse of the Spirit; this the Apostle cals for. Now to do a Duty in the oldnesse of the Letter, is customarily and formally to perform any thing without Christ, and his Spirit inabling of us: This is a dead Religion, a dead Faith, and yet few, even very few, go any further.

SER.

SERM. XC.

That the work of Grace is a deep, powerfull, and inward affecting of the whole man. *And how far Grace may be tendred or received, and yet not to be put effectually into our* Inwards. *Also what this* inward, deep work of Grace is, *with the signs and effects of it.*

EZEK. 36. 27.

And I will put my spirit within you.

THe grace promised in this Text hath been dispatched, *viz.* The putting of Gods spirit in the converted. The next thing considerable is, *The subject recipient*: The subject wherein this grace is put; and that is briefly but very emphatically expressed, *Within you.* And indeed the English doth not rise up to the efficacy of the Hebrew, which is, *in the midst*, or *the inward deep parts of you.* Hence it's translated *in intimo vestri*: So that there is a great deal of weight lieth upon this Hebrew phrase, for it supposeth the work of grace to go deep into a man. Is an hearty rooted work, it excludeth all superficial, formal or notional, and meer brain-work in godliness: And its good to observe, how in parallel places this promise doth still retire to that intimate deep working of grace upon the heart *Ezek.* 11. 19. there is the same promise repeated, with this Emphasis; so that you may see the excellency of this promise for conversion to God, in the repetition of it, as if the Prophet delighted to mention nothing but this. The Prophet *Jeremiah* also doth twice or thrice declare this grace here promised in the Text, and *Chap.* 31. 33. with this Emphaticall description, *I will put my law in their inward parts.* Oh this is the main thing, All outward profession, all parts, all notions, all inlargements, if these be not accompanied with grace in the inward parts of a man, they are but a blaze: they are a tinkling cymball. Such mens Religion is like *Davids* great men in the world, compared to grass upon the house top, with which the mower filleth not his hand.

That the work of grace is a deep, powerfull and inward affecting of the whole man.

The Spirit of God is put into their inwards, the law of God is written in their inwards; and therefore the spirit of man as sanctified & renewed, is called often the *inward man*; Rom. 7. 22. 2 Cor. 4. 16. Alas, we may say of many, it's the outward man of their godliness, not the inward; because it consists only in the tongue, and in expressions, and outward affections at farthest, but as for the deep constant & solid working of Grace, that is a mystery they understand not. Now that the work of grace is such an inward deep changing of a man, is also plain, in that it is called so often, life. Now we know life is not the external motion, or speaking, or eating, or working; but the inward fountain of these. Life is the

actus primus, the firſt act, or fountain, or riſe of all other motions. The Painter he can give external lineaments, and outward repreſentations; but he cannot give this *actus primus*, this life. And the hypocrite or unſound man, he can give many outward colours, and glorious repreſentations of grace, ſo that he may be admirable in the eies of others, and confident in his own goodneſs, but yet not at all acquainted with this grace in the inward parts. This point deſerveth a powerfull opening, to go to the inwards of it, as well as that muſt go to our inwards. And firſt, Let us ſhew how far this grace may be either tendered or received, and yet not put into our inwards.

How far this grace may be tendred or received, and yet not put into our inwards, 1.

And firſt, it's eaſily granted by all, *That as long as the word of God ſounds only in the ear, and [illegible] further, here is no deſcending of it into the bowels*: and yet are not the moſt part of our auditors no further wrought upon, than as to the ear! They come and hear, they ſit and hear, it may be; but ſtill here is no work of the Spirit upon the heart. Our Saviour in his parable compareth ſuch to the high-way ground; the ſeed fell upon it, and preſently the devill, like the birds of the air, fetcheth it away. Oh that men ſhould judge it a great ſin, if they did not come and hear, and not alſo think it a greater ſin to hear, and not inwardly to receive the power of the word. For the end of hearing is to let the word fall down into the very bottome of thy ſoul. Phyſick in the mouth, not received into the ſtomack, cannot do any good. Rain upon the ſurface of the ground, and not ſoaking to the root, will never make the plant grow; and thus it is here, Though thou heareſt a thouſand ſermons, thou that neglecteſt not any Sabbath day; yet if thou heareſt and heareſt, and only heareſt; the word doth not like *Aarons* oil go from thy ear, thy head, but to thy heart, thy inferiour deep parts of thy ſoul; thou goeſt home as ignorant, as prophane, as obſtinate as thou cameſt hither. Know then that the perfection and fulneſs of every action lieth in accompliſhing its end, without which it is in vain. Eating without digeſtion doth not nouriſh, but breed diſeaſes; ſo the end of hearing, is to have a potent and divine operation upon the very bowels of thy ſoul. As *Saul* when he was among the Prophets, the ſpirit came on him, and he alſo propheſied. Thus while the word of God, the inſtrument of the ſpirit, is diſplayed before thee, what a mighty change & deep alteration ſhould come upon thee! Thou ſhouldſt go home praying as others, repenting as others, fearing God as others. Do not then give the ear onely, but the heart alſo; otherwiſe Chriſt only ſtands at the door and knocks, thou doeſt not let him in.

2. Secondly, A ſecond outward and inſufficient work is, *When the word is received with underſtanding, and the grace of God doth indeed open his eyes ſo far, that his minde is inlightned, that he doth not know and believe the truths of Religion, but goeth no further.* Although this work be inward, being upon the minde of man; yet I call it outward, as in reſpect of the inward parts, mentioned in the Text, for that ſpeaks of more than a minde to know, or an underſtanding to underſtand the things of Religion. Although inlightning be ſometimes put for the whole converſion, and light for grace, yet at other times its made a diſtinct work from it, and ſuch even as reprobates have, and apoſtates, as *Heb. 6.* where inlightning, though it be a good, yea, and a great gift of God; yet the Apoſtle hopes for better things of them, and things that accompany ſalvation: So that knowledge, parts, underſtanding in Religion doth not neceſſarily accompany ſalvation; & we hope better things of men, than to be able to repeat or remember Sermons, or with ſome underſtanding to give an account of the principles of Religion; and many times knowing of Gods will, and doing it, are put as two ſeparable things; how far then are they from the fruit of this promiſe, who remain in groſs ignorance, who have blinde eyes, know nothing about their corruption and miſery by ſin, or about Chriſt, & faith in him! To whom all our Sermons have been as a book ſealed up; unto whom, though in Engliſh, yet we have preached unknown matter: A people likely to die, & to be

be damned in ignorance, for ill understanding knowing men, who receive the word with attention and knowledge, yet if they finde it not changing their inward man, come short of grace, where must the ignorant man appear?

Thirdly, *The retaining of the word of God in the memory, that is not this grace in the inward parts*: That indeed is very laudable, and a forgetful hearer is blamed by the Scripture, *James* 1. 25. *Davids* resolution is, *To hide the word in his heart*. And this is a great cause to make it work so deeply; for a man cannot carry coal of fire long in his bosom, but they will set all on a flame; yet the meer retaining it there, doth not attain to the inward parts in the Text. 3.

Fourthly, *The transient and sudden working upon the affections and heart, are not also the putting of his spirit within us, or the writing of the Law in their inward parts*: This comes nearest, but they want root and continuance, and so at last wither. *John* hearers did for a season rejoyce in his light, the temporary Believer doth receive the word with joy, and yet he hath no root: This is a two edged sword, this truth makes divisions between the secret and hidden things of the heart: Oh how nice a point is that, wherein the temporary and the true convert differ! both pray with sorrow, both hear with joy, both perform duties with some inlargements and sweetness: *Simili fere sensu afficiuntur*, saith *Calvin*: Yet as two high hills may seem very near together at the top, when their bottoms are far distant one from another; so these inlargements, affections may seem very near, when the bottom and root do much differ. Oh the Minister of God should never be upon this point, but even horror should take hold on the hearer, & he be like one that looketh down an high pinacle, & trembleth to see how easily, and yet dangerously he may fall; and yet looking upon the buttements he holds upon, the grace of God, and the promise of God which his soul hath had experience of, have hope; so put faith and trembling together! 4.

Lastly, *The meer external cleansing of a mans life, from former lusts and gross impieties, is not this putting the spirit within us*: As the Angels, when they took humane bodies, they did but seem to eat, and seem to do vital actions of life; they could not indeed, because they were not personally united to the assumed body; so all men who have their lives cleansed, and they set up a form of Religion, they do not these things as vital actions of grace; they move as the wheel of the mill is moved, by the force of the water, not by an inward principle of life: These are compared to Swine washed in the water, but returning afterwards to the mire: Though the Swine be made as white as the sheep, yet because not inwardly made a sheep, therefore she turned at last to her former impurity; but I hint only these things, because treated on before. 5.

Let us in the next place come to consider positively, what this inward deep work of grace is, wherein it doth consist: And What this inward deep work of grace is.

First, *It is then fulfilled in us, when the things of Christ, his Glory, Will and Commandments are closest, and neerest to the heart*: For that is indeed within a man, and intimate, which is next to his heart, as we say; and this our Saviour requireth in every Disciple, *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me*, Mat. 18. 37. We know the love of father and mother is a most natural thing, it comes not by teaching, by custom, its inbred in us as soon as we are born; and yet the love of Christ, his Glory, and his Commandments should be more intimate than this. Hence the Apostle, to expresse this innate and inward life, saith, *I no longer live, but Christ in me, the life that I live is by faith on Christ*, Gal. 2. 20. What an emphatical expression is this, *I do not live, but Christ*: I live not the life of sense, I eat not, I drink not, I breath not bodily breath; that is, comparatively to the life of faith: So that you see our very natural life, which is the most inward and deep thing in a man that is, is said not to be lived, in respect of this life of grace, which is more in- 1.

ward

ward than these. Oh then examine, how close and dearly heavenly things lie to thy heart: Is there any thing more prized than God, than Grace, than Godliness? then know, God hath not put his spirit in thee, but the Devil, or the world, and sin have put their lusts in thee. Now this is a sure discovery of the woful and sinful state of most people, *God is not in all their thoughts*, Christ is not in their affections, they chuse other things rather than him. Furthermore as God and Christ is the beloved of their heart; so that which is most hated and abhorred from the heart, is sin and all evil, its more loathed than any other thing, more feared, more avoided; so that they chose affliction and all misery rather than sin, their hearts is most sensible and apprehensive of this. Oh what then can they think of themselves, who harbour and nourish sin? they no longer live, but sin in them; this is their meat and drink, to do the works of the Devil: Oh then that at last men secure and bold in sin, would be awakened. How cometh that to be embraced in thy bosom, and practised in thy life, which thou shouldst avoid as hell it self?

2. Secondly, *This inward work of grace is seen, when the work of humiliation is laid low enough.* We read of the Parable of him that built an house, and when the tempest and storms arose, all fell to the ground immediately, and why? because this was not digged deep enough: Now our repentance & humiliation is then deep enough, when its for sin as sin, when its for sin because its an offence to God, and displeases him, when they loath themselves, and account themselves abominable in this respect. To be humbled for sin, as *Ahab* and the *Israelites* were oftentimes, because of the temporal judgements following sin, was not to go deep enough: Oh! herein people come too short, they cry out of their sins, in the fear of death, in the extremity of pain: Alas, this is not to go to the bottom; there is a worse thing in sin, than all the temporal calamities it brings with it; and that is, to offend God, to separate between his favor and thy soul: its therefore very meet, that thy humiliation should be for that which is the worst evil in sin. Again, in humiliation men go deep enough, when they do not only stay upon actual sins, but go to the very original and fountain of all: Thus *David*, *Psal.* 51. he went deep, when beyond his actual sins of Murder and Adultery he also bewailed the native corruption of his soul: Oh! the grace of God must indeed have a close and inward work in that man, who discovers the root of sin, as well as the branches; the fountain, as well as the stream. God in the universal destruction of the world, did not only look to the actual impieties then committed, but to the imaginations of the thoughts of a mans heart, *which were onely evil, and that continually*, Gen. 6. and thus he that will make a save and good issue of his humiliation, must still dig deeper and deeper, and see more and more abominations, till he go to the foul and bitter root of all.

3. Thirdly, *Then the word of God is put in our inward parts, when we do truly, sincerely and unfeignedly, perform all the duties God requireth.* This is to do it with the whole heart, and if we had any thing better than our hearts, they should be offered up to God: Thus *David*, *Psal.* 51. *Thou delightest in the truth in the inward parts*: Oh! this a man should have in all his service he doth for God! So that all those, who by Religion accomplish their self interests; all those who seek themselves, have carnal motives in the profession of Religion; these are but pictures, not living creatures in the way of grace: Great is the number of hypocrites, even among those that profess the name of Christ: Its damnable blasphemy to charge it upon all, as wicked men do, this is to condemn the generation of the godly, to blaspheme Christ and the Gospel; yet it cannot be but that through the hypocrisie of many, grievous offences and scandals will fall out: None of those who follow Christ because of the loaves, or who tread out the corn meerly because they may feed on it, set up in seeming manner the ways of Christ, that they may get outward advantages, can by experience witness

witnes this promise made good to them: They pray, they hear, they perform holy duties, but still they want something within, still the soul of all is wanting, but its not the appearance of Good, nor the name or profession of it, will bring thee any true or sound comfort: The time is coming, when all things without will fail thee, and leave thee, it must be something within that may support thee.

In the next place let us observe, What are the signs or the effects of this inward deep work of grace in a man; and they are excellent. Signs and effects of this inward deep work of grace in a man.

First, *He doth not rest in the external outward performance of any holy duty, if all within him be not moved and excited thereuntos*: He hath no comfort, no content in praying, hearing, or any Religious duty, if all the inwards of his soul, and the depths of his heart, have not also been moved herein. Thus *David, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all within thee praise his holy name*, Psal. 104. 1. *All within thee*, observe that. Thus the godly, as the Cock stirreth up himself before he crows, do prepare and stir up themselves to every duty: *Hear the word of God, O my soul, and let all within thee give ear thereunto*; so that the dull, sleepy, and formal performances of holy duties, discover a man void of grace, as well as grosse impieties: Not onely prophaneness and ungodliness thereof, but dull, lazie, and formall duties, and that in a constant manner, discover a man devoid of this work of Grace. Oh if this were in the depth of thee, in the midst of thee, it would break out more vigorously than it doth. 1.

Secondly, *Where this deep work of grace is, there a mans inward thoughts and meditations are often about holy things*: The tree that is deeply rooted, hath several strings, as it were, whereby its fastned to the earth, as the young infant in the womb is to the mother: So that thou art to observe, what thy inward thoughts, thy inward meditations do most run about: If grace be deep within, thy soul will be like an heaven, such holy thoughts, holy meditations, holy affections do lodge in thee: Thus the godly is described, *By meditating in the Law of God day and night*, Psal. 1. 2. As the Psalmist describes the wicked man by his thoughts, *God is not in his thoughts*; and *his inward thought is to leave himself a great name*. Thoughts are the first-born of the soul, they most discover what a man is, they come nearest to the fountain. As the liquor tastes and smells of the vessel, so thoughts have either filthiness or godliness in them, as they come immediately from the heart; Oh then consider, what thy inward thoughts for the most part are, for such art thou as they are. 2.

Lastly, *A man that hath this deep grace, be it well rooted and established*, he is upon the rock Christ, and so he can abide all Temptations: If there come the temptations of persecution, he can shew his patience; if of errour and heresie, his godly wisedom and soundness of mind: When men want a bottom, or are not built upon a rock, they are like children tossed up and down with every wind of Doctrine. 3.

Use of Examination: This Doctrine should even amaze you, and put you into a godly fear; for do not most men content themselves with the externals in Religion? Is not all the whole worship and godliness of many in the meer form? others place it in disputes, in opinions, but to have grace in the inward man is rare: Oh consider that place, *Every mans way is good in his own eyes, but God pondereth the heart*, Prov. 21. 2. And God is often described by this, *He trieth and searcheth the hearts of men*: Not that these outward duties of Religion and Worship are to be neglected; but we are not to judge of godliness in ourselves by these; the soul and excellency of them lieth in the inward man; Oh remember, that if there be not a good treasure within, thou wilt roar and tremble one day, when all things else will fail. *Hezekiah* comforted himself in this, that he had *walked in truth and uprightness of heart*: Then something within, will be a joy to thy soul, even then, when all outward things will leave thee. *Use*

SERM. XCI.

Of the Order and Method that God takes in our Conversion; First Working in us inward Principles, and then causing us to walk in his Statutes; opposite to the Doctrine of Pelagians, Papists, Arminians, and Moral Philosophy; Also signs to discover whether our outward Duties proceed from Grace within, or from Humane respects.

EZEK. 36. 27.

I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes.

THE precious and great mercy of conversion promised in this Text under several Titles and Notions, hath been fully considered of and improved. There remains several other particulars, which are not without their great weight and moment. As in the first place, The Order and Method of the promise is to be taken notice of, for he worketh in the same method as he promiseth: the Method is this: First he promiseth to give the inward root, then the fruit; first the fountain, then the streams: He first promiseth the inward principles and habit of grace, a new heart, a new spirit, and then he will cause them to walk in his commandments. God is both the Author of Nature, and the Author of grace; now as the Author of Nature, he first worketh the principles of life, he giveth the principles of Motions, and all vital Actions, and afterwards the exercise. So it is here, God doth in the way of grace bestow a supernatural principle upon men, and then being First made good Trees, then they bring forth good fruit. The Observation.

Obs. Gods method is first to give the inward principles of holiness, and then grace to live holily. The point illustraced by some considerations.

That God doth first work the foundations and principles of holiness, and from them men walk and live holily. Thus the Apostle saith, *We are his workmanship, created to every good work*, Eph. 2. 10. We do not first do good works, and so become Gods workmanship; but we are first his workmanship, and then we exercise our selves in good and holy works.

This Doctrine hath its great use, both in matter of information, and exhortation; and there is more consequence in it, than an ordinary apprehension will at first conceive. Therefore to clear this, we will first illustrate this Truth, by the opposite of it, or contrary opinions.

1. Grace doth not come into the heart at first, as sin came into the world.

And first, *Grace doth not come at first into the heart, as sin came into the world*; for *Adam* was not made a bad tree, & so brought forth bad fruit, he was not made wicked, & his nature, & then that infected his Actions; but God made him

him after his own image, in righteousness and true holiness: So that all being furnished with all graces, as the heavens are adorned with several stars, he might have continued in all holy actions suitable to his original perfection. Now sinful disobedience did not so cure, flow from a pollute fountain to cure, but from the meer liberty of his will: and when he had thus actually transgressed, then that actual sin infected, and poisoned his whole nature. Thus you see the actions of sin were before the habits, and principles of sin: there was a branch before a root, there was a sweet fountain, and yet a bitter stream: but God in converting & changing of us, doth take the contrary course: he first sanctifieth our Natures, all the faculties of the soul; layeth a spiritual habitual foundation, and then begining thus inwardly enlivened & enabled, we are carried out to all holy actions. So that all the glorious outward actions of religion, that are visible to the eyes of the world, if they be built without this inward foundation, they will prove but a Bubble. They are but like *Sodoms* apples, glorious for shew, but indeed dust and ashes. It is good to observe, How that God in the Creation of the world, both in vegetative, and sensitive creatures, still created the principles first, and that in perfection, Seminative, able to beget & propagate others; and thus it is also in conversion, he works in them holy and excellent principles, which afterwards are operative and vigorous.

Secondly, *God working thus a new Nature, & thereby enabling to new actions, takes a far other course to make holy, than Moral Philosophy teacheth.* For if we read all the Moral Philosophers, perswading us to be temperate, just or prudent, if you ask them, How shall we come to have the habits of these things? They will tell you, by frequent actions, *justa agendo fumus justi*, by doing many righteous actions frequently, so we come to have habits. Thus they know no other way, & there is no better Divinity in most people, for they think by doing godly actions they are made godly: and so they think by walking in Gods Commandements to get a new spirit, which is the clear inverted Order to the Text, for God first giveth this New spirit, & then causeth to walk in his Laws, we indeed are commanded to be diligent in the use of the means, we must attend to the Ordinances of grace; but till this spiritual life be infused, there is not one good action done by us in a good manner: All that thou doft till this new principle be put in thee, hath but the body of a good action, not the soul of it. Nothing thou doft is pleasing to God, *Heb.* 11. 6. God is angry with thee all the day long, *All things are become poltured, and unclean to thee*, Tit. 1. 15. Oh were not men hardened in their sins, and led captive by the Devil according to his pleasure; they could never eat, or drink, or take any rest, till they got out of that damnable estate, wherein all the day long they were treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. *Belshazzar* saw but one hand-writing in the wall against him, and he knew not what it was; yet it strook him with terror and trembling: But now thou hast many hand-writings and Ordinances against thee, even the whole word of God, and thou canst not but know what they are, yet thou art not affected with fear. What was written of *Belshazzar*, *Thou art weighed, and found too light*: The same Gods word saith of all thy Duties, performances, and seeming religion, It is weighed, and it is found too light. And the reason is, because all thy religious duties are like leaves fallen from the tree dried, and without sap or moisture.

God takes another kind of course to make holy, than the Philosopher teaches. 2.

Thirdly, *This work of grace is in a far other manner than Pelagians of old, or Papists and Arminians of late do confidently aver*, for they attend not to this Order in the Text. But they say, that man by the power of Free-will, doth joyn with the grace of God, & co-operate with that, and so partly from free-will, partly from Gods grace, comes this new spirit, this new grace. But this doth directly contradict many places of Scripture, which make Regeneration and a new birth necessarily to go before all holy actions; & if a man canot make himself a man, much less like God, as grace doth. But say they, *Ezek.* 18. 31, there the Scripture saith, *Make ye a new heart, a new spirit*; Therefore we by our working

The work of Grace far otherwise than Pelagians, Papists or Arminians teach. 3.

chaine new hearts. But this is answered thus: That the same thing may be both our duty, and Gods Gift: when the Scripture saith, *Make ye a new heart*, this there is declareth our Duty, what we ought to do: but when God saith, *I will give you a new heart*, there he shews our Impotency, we are not able to make it our selves: and therefore God graciously worketh it for us. Augustine did learnedly and orthodoxly defend this truth. That we were not made holy by doing holy Actions, through Grace and Free-will, but God first made us holy, as faith *Augustine*, the wheel turns round not to make it self round, but because it is round, therefore it runneth round. Indeed our Saviour Christ saith, *Make the Tree good* (*Matthew* 12. 33.) *and then the fruit will be good*; but he doth not there describe our power, but that excellent order all should look unto in Religion. The Pharisees, like most people in our dayes, they looked to the outward Actions, did not dare to omit them. They washed the cup of the Cup, but saith our Saviour, *wet the outside, but the inside must be first cleansed*. The Tree must be first made goodness the fruit last. Oh there is nothing more necessary than this. Who looketh to good inside? Many dare not neglect the outward Obedience unto Gods Commandments, but who minds the new heart, the new spirit, writing and hence they for most part presse only upon the work of Conversion; they think by good Deeds, by outward Duties to obtain a new spirit from God, not considering this is to build the top of an House before a Foundation be laid. *Non per opera venitur ad fidem, sed per fidem ad opera*, We do not come to Faith by Works, but to Works by Faith: Oh then be affected with this excellent Order and Method that God calleth our Conversion, beginning where God beginneth. What the Apostle said about his Preaching, *As a wise Builder* (1 Cor. 3. 10.) *I lay a good Foundation*. So do thou as a wise Builder for Heaven lay a good Foundation. Tempests and floods will arise, God will have his winds and waves to assault you, to the intent you be built on a Rock, you cannot continue immoveable.

These things premised, let us consider the Reasons why God takes this order, first giving a new heart and spirit, then causing us to walk in his wayes and

Reasons of the doctrine, or point.

I.

First, *Otherwise our Duties would be dead Duties, there would be no Life in them*. If a Ball or Wheel move, this Motion is not a vital Action, because it is not from a Principle within, it comes wholly from without; so all thy Obedience to Gods Commandments is but a dead Obedience, dead Work, if thou hast not first an heart to serve God in the Old Testament it excepted of dead Sacrifices to be offered to him, but now we must give up our selves, as living Sacrifices, Rom. 12. 1. The Scripture delights to call the Work of Grace, a Life, and the graces of Gods Spirit are compared to living Waters. And thus indeed it is, Every Prayer must be a living Prayer, thy Obedience living, or lively Obedience, but this cannot be, till God begins in the inward man first: therefore thou canst not delight in a dead Wife, dead Children, so neither doth God in thy dead Religion. We Ministers, while preaching of these things, may say our Hearers are teaching of good things, and our Mouths drop like the Honey-combs, for how glad should thou hear of a way that may put life into all thy dead Duties? If those that lived in Christs time, did so exceedingly rejoyce to receive their Friends from the dead, what joy should it be to have all thy Duties as it were from the dead? How necessary is this for such who live in a meer formall customary way of Duties! We read of the *Egyptian Plague*, that the first-born in every Family was dead, and thereupon in the Morning there were great out-cryes in every Family for a dead son. Oh how should this quicken many Families mourn for their dead Duties, their dead Religion! Where is no life in any thing thou doest, till God begin quickning, and so turn thee outwardly,

Secondly,

Secondly, *As there is no life in thy Duties, so there is no worth, no excellency, no fairness in them, if first Gods Law be not written in your inward parts.* We read in the Canticles of large commendations that Christ gives his Church, viz. every godly soul, and how her graces are commended for the loveliness, sweetness and fragrancy in them; whereas if she had only paintings, a mere outside without the inward substance of Grace, there might have been some glittering but no true worth. What worth is there in an Image of clay and dirt, though covered over with gold? Godliness is *aurea* not *deaurata*; the Churches glory was within. What worth is there in leaves or flowers, when their juice and moisture is dried up? The hypocrite is compared in his saplings to a Bulrush, and such a Bulrush is every mans godliness without this inward foundation; it is empty and light. Therefore weigh your Duties in the ballance of the Sanctuary, do not judge that godliness and holiness which the Scripture rejects as refuse. As the Prophet speaks of the *Israelites, Reprobate Silver shall men call them*, Jer. 6. 30. So reprobate Duties, a reprobate Godliness, shall both men and God call theirs. As God by the Prophet complains of the deformed and defective Sacrifices, *Go and offer such to your Governours and Rulers*; so we may say in this case, Go to men and serve them without an inward heart, without inward affections, and will they thank you or reward such service? 2.

Thirdly, *As there is no worth, so there is no suitableness in such Duties to God*: for God is a Spirit, and he searcheth and tryeth the hearts of men, our Saviour from this consideration inferred, that those who worship him, must worship him in spirit and truth, Joh. 4. Now then if God have not begun this foundation in thee of a new heart, a new spirit, here is no congruity between God and thy worship. Oh how remote are these things from the common understanding of most men, who know no further in Religion than a bodily praying, or a bodily hearing! *Sursum corda*, was the ancient acclamation at the administration of the Sacrament, to take them off from the Elements of Bread and Wine; and this should be a daily *Memento*, Lift up your hearts on high in every Duty you go about. But men that would be thus elevated in their hearts, and fasten upon God himself, must go out of all their low and bodily apprehensions. As God had *Abraham* come out of his Tabernacle, and then to look up to heaven to number the Stars if he could; thou must be drawn out of the Tabernacle of thy bodily affections, before thou canst set thy heart upon God himself. Oh then consider that as long as this new spirit is not in thee, there is no more proportion between God and thy soul for any holy Duty, which is nothing but a familiar communion with God, than is between Earth and Heaven. 3.

Fourthly, *Therefore God begins here before the outward man be sanctified, because the greatest power and strength of corruption lieth in the inward parts.* As the Law of God is in the inward parts of the godly, so the Law of sin, as the Apostle calls it, is reigning in the members of every wicked man; so that the godly have a good Law in their inward parts, and the wicked the Law of sin. If therefore God should only enable us to outward Obedience without this new spirit, his greatest work of grace will be but unsound; for it is not the body so much as the soul that the Devil possesseth, and taketh for his own. The greatest part of wickedness lieth there, where most men do neither perceive or feel it. Though sense is when it comes to the heart so presently felt, yet sin when it cometh to the heart, and lieth at the heart, is not felt as a burthen till Gods Spirit convince a man; seeing therefore that this converting Grace is vouchsafed as an healing, and a medicinal cure, it is necessary that the greatest operation of it should be upon the most part wanting. So that as in unregenerate men, the imaginations of the thoughts of their heart are only evil, and that continually; so the imagination of their thoughts should be godly and heavenly. As the wicked fountain doth send forth iniquity like water, so rivers of living water should flow out of their bowels. As in the wicked no man can bring the clean out of an 4.

unclean, so it should be hard to bring an unclean from a clean. In these things lieth the marrow and quintessence of Religion, men are but in the porch, and never enter into the Holy of Holies till they be experimentally acquainted with these things. O that all our Congregations were understanding of these things. If Ministers preach against outward gross impieties, such as the light of nature condemneth, with that you can go along; but concerning this new birth and new heart, or the old heart and old man, which the Scripture so much speaks of, you know nothing of it.

Signs to discover when Duties proceed from this new Spirit within, and not from other grounds.

In the next place let us consider, What are the Signes that may discover when we perform holy Duties from this new Spirit within, and not rather as most do from Education, Custom or carnal Respects to the good or ill will of men. For this is certain, All men perform holy Duties, either from inward principles of Grace, or outward principles of humane respects; now how shall we know when a man doth them from this inward new Spirit?

1. First, He that doth them from an inward principle, *is constant, and uniform, and immoveable in them, for that is made a divine Nature in him.* Now as all natural principles in the creatures do carry them on in a constant setled way; The fire doth alwayes ascend upwards, the stone descend downwards; so the wicked man he is constant to his principles of sin, you shall never finde him checking or stopping himself, but by some extraordinary power; Thus the godly man his heart and soul doth carry him on to the things of godliness, and if he be at any time stopped in it, or hindered, it is, as they say the disease is to the body, *Preter Naturam*, besides the nature and inclination of a godly man. Hence *Paul* makes such a miserable complaint of those lusts that did stir, & move in him, as those that had led him away Captive against his will, *Rom.* 7. Look to this then you who are inconstant, and are for holy Duties in some fits, in some sad moods. So that it is accidental, and wholly unexpected, if thou set upon any religious Duty, we may by way of wonder cry out, as they did, *Is Saul also among the Prophets?* What makes thee pray, come to Church? What putteth thee in this fit? What good disposition art thou in so suddenly?

2. Secondly, *Men that perform outward obedience from inward principles, they do it with delight and joy.* There is nothing so pleasing and connatural to them. All principles have a kind of delight in their connatural actions and objects. Thus the voluptuous principle is for the pleasures of the flesh, the ambitious principle for honours and earthly greatness, and the godly principle is for holiness and godliness. *David* how often doth he profess his delights, and even ravishments in the Ordinances of God, and the enjoying of him! Christ called it *His meat, and drink to do the will of his Father*; and why? Because the Law of God was written within his heart. Indeed the godly sometimes find dulness, listlessness, and even a wearisomeness upon them in the wayes of God. But yet their main and chief delight of soul is in God and the Ordinances that lead to him, rather than in any thing else; *Thou hast put more gladness into my heart, than they have had, when their wine and oyl encreaseth*, Psal. 4.

3. Thirdly, *Where inward Principles are, they will carry to the Obedience of Gods Commands, though there be no outward encouragements to allure and draw on.* The Father and Mother love their Children, though they have no outward advantages by them, because it is a natural principle. You do not hire and encreat an hungry man to eat his meat, or a wearied man to take his rest. Natural appetite calls for these things. Thus he that hath the new heart and spirit within him, he is godly, and liveth holily, though there be no favour, no encouragement, no honour to such men.

4. Yea, fourthly, *Where inward Principles of Grace are, They grow the more powerfull and active, by how much they are the more opposed.* Thus the water that is stopt doth swell the higher. The colder the weather is, the hotter the fire burneth,

neth by an oppoſition; And ſo the people of God have been moſt holy in times of Troubles and Oppoſitions: They have born the beſt fruit, and looked moſt green in the Winter time: Whereas when men have not inward principles of grace, then they preſently wither as ſoon as the Sun riſeth; becauſe they have no root. The godly are Stars, that ſhine moſt in the night, in dark times.

Uſe of *Exhortation*, Still and ſtill to look from whence all thy external Obedience comes. Whence is thy Hearing, thy Praying, thy Family Duties? Yea, what advantage is it to ſet up *Dagon*? He will fall down again and again, as long as he hath no inward life in him, and it will be no profit to thee, or comfort at thy death, or at the day of Judgement, to ſay, I have prayed, I have heard, I have been diligent to come to Church; if firſt this new Spirit have not been put in thee. But Oh! How long ſhall theſe things be dark Parables, and hidden Myſteries to moſt men? Who will give you underſtanding in theſe things? Remember your inwards of Nature decay every day, and your outward body; lay up then ſome enduring Treaſure.

SERM. XCII.

That true Principles of Grace within muſt needs Demonſtrate themſelves by an outward godly Life.

EZEK. 36. 27.

I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe them to walk in my Statutes, &c.

WE deſire not to loſe one jot or tittle in this gracious promiſe, a drop of this cordial is of great prize. The Order and Method which God uſeth both in promiſing and working, hath afforded us one Obſervation already; but it is ſo fruitful as to bear a ſecond Crop. We may in the ſecond place obſerve a Practical Doctrine; which is,

That whereſoever God works the principles of Grace within, there they cannot but form themſelves in the outward life and converſation.

For thus God promiſeth, he will firſt put his *Spirit within them*, and *then cauſe them to walk in his Statutes*. There is a neceſſary connexion between theſe two, God hath put them together, and ſo neither man or Devil muſt put them aſunder. Thus our Saviour ſheweth, that the heart within is either the good Treaſury, or the bad, out of which flow either good thoughts and actions, or bad,

Mat.

Mat. 12. 34, 35. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*, the mind thinketh, the hand worketh.

Conſiderations touching the Doct.

To open this Doctrine; conſider

1. First, *That there are many in the world, who flatter and bleſs themſelves with the goodneſs of their heart, when yet their lives are full of noiſome luſts.* You would wonder men ſhould be ſo bewitched; and yet how often is it? Take the prophane man, and the moſt ungodly wretch that is, yet he will ſay, He hath as good an heart as the beſt of men; not conſidering how impoſſible it is to divide a good heart, and a good life one from another. As men do not gather Grapes of Thorns, nor Figs of Thiſtles: So neither can Thorns be gathered from Grapes, or Thiſtles from Figs. As we cannot expect a clean thing from an unclean; ſo neither an unclean thing from a clean: So that the lives and conſtant wicked actions of moſt men, do declare it to their faces, that there is no new heart or ſpirit within them: And as there are ſuch kind of ſelf-deceivers: So there are another ſort of Perſons, called *Nicodemites*, ſuch who thought they might lawfully communicate in any falſe or Idolatrical Worſhip, or might deny the outward profeſſion of the truth of Chriſt, if ſo be that they kept their Conſcience clear to God. This grievous error did much prevail when the outward profeſſion of Chriſt and his Truth was accompanied with great and imminent dangers: They thought they might give up their bodies to any outward pollution, ſo that they kept their ſouls for God; but God will be glorified in ſoul and body alſo, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. And as we muſt with the heart believe, ſo we muſt with the mouth make confeſſion to ſalvation, *Rom.* 10. 10.

2. Secondly, *Even in the godly, the heart many times may be deſirous of that good which yet through the power of corruption they are not alwayes able to perform.* So that although a new heart be within them, yet much corruption and many frailties may be in their life, *Rom.* 7. *Paul* exceedingly groaned under this miſery, *That the good he would do, he could not do*; and although out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh, yet the mouth cannot ſpeak all the abundance of the heart: There is more ſtrength of grace in the heart than poſſibly can be expreſſed outwardly. As no child can expreſs how much it loveth its Father; ſo neither can any ſoul manifeſt how much it loveth God. Howſoever therefore a new heart is in the godly, yet becauſe it is not perfectly & abſolutely new, it faileth in many outward performances; ſome outward or inward temptations make it come ſhort of the grace it deſireth. Thus the Apoſtle, *The Spirit and the fleſh luſteth one againſt another, ſo that ye cannot do the things ye would*, Gal. 5. 17. A godly man then muſt judge wiſely concerning himſelf: they are ready to think, Oh if grace were in my heart, if the ſpirit of God did dwell in me, how could I be overtaken with paſſions, with dulneſs and ſluggiſhneſs; they muſt remember that though the ſpirit be willing, the fleſh is often weak; yea, many times both ſpirit and fleſh alſo may be weak: But why do we ſpeak of this as a ſtrange thing? That where the principles of grace are, men may fail in outward duties; for ſometimes we ſee where they have been, yet foul and groſs ſins have been committed, yea, and for ſome ſeaſon continued in. *David* had the ſpirit of God within; yet in his Murther and Adultery did not walk in the Lords Statutes; and ſo of divers others. So that we muſt not abſolutely condemn thoſe as hypocrites, & without any true principles of grace, who living after a godly manner, yet ſometimes fall in the mire, and tumble in blood: For although ſuch a condition is very terrible, and greatly ſcandalous; yet the ſeeds and inward principles of grace are not quite extinct; and therefore when we ſay, a godly heart & a godly life are neceſſarily conjoyned together, that is to be underſtood for the moſt part, and according to the nature of things, though accidentally, through ſudden temptations, the clean contrary may appear.

Thirdly, *There may be inward principles of Grace, and yet no outward fruits of* righteouſ-

righteousness: When either the subjects are not capable of actions, or they have not time and opportunity to produce them; No doubt, but in Infants that are elected, the inward principles of grace are infused, and therefore they are made Members of Christ: yet as they have a soul, but that soul cannot put forth any actions of reason; so they have the principles of grace, but they bud not forth into Fruit. The Thief also that was converted at the last hour, there was a new spirit in him, yet he had not time to bring forth the fruits of righteousness: so that it is one thing not to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, because there is no inward fruit within; and another thing, because there wants an opportunity, or the objects about which such graces are exercised are not present. *Paul* speaking of the Saints care and love to him, excuseth them, because though they were ready to do good to him, yet they wanted an opportunity, *Phil.* 4. 10. A godly man is indeed a Tree that is planted by the waters side, and brings forth its fruit, but it is in due season. Though Christ cursed the Fig-tree, that had no fruit on it, although it was not the season; yet thereby (haply) he would admonish the *Jews*, of how much more curse they have cause to be afraid, who had the season of grace, but neglected it.

A Godly man therefore ought not to be dejected, if he do not abound in such plentiful exercises of graces as others do, if his minde be willing: Only he hath not such opportunities, not such instruments, whereby to make his light shine before others, as many of the Children of God have.

Lastly, Consider this, *Although a constant practice of ungodliness be a sure demonstration of a graceless heart, yet a constant abstinence from evil sins, is not presently a sure evidence of a good heart.* Understand this, that thou do not deceive thy soul: for many think, if they indeed should wallow in the mire and filth of sin, it were sure they were beastly Swine, but because they keep themselves clean from the grosse Transgressions of the wicked, therefore they conclude, this new heart is within them; but you have heard, that men may be restrained from sin, by the providence of God and other wayes, who yet have not this spiritual life infused in them. For this Spirit of God doth not only cause a man to forbear from sin, but in such a manner also, and upon such grounds, that the most painted sepulcher, the most exact formalist can never reach unto. These things laid as a foundation, it is good to consider, why a man cannot carry this coal of fire, this principle of grace in his bosom, but it will break out into a flame. And,

1. *The reason is evident from the nature of Grace*, or this new heart within us, it is of an operative, and spiritual vigor, it will not let a man alone, he can have no rest or quiet within himself, if he should not outwardly practise that goodness, the root whereof is in his heart. Hence the principles of grace are compared to active and vigorous things, to seed sowen, which though little in quantity, yet is great in efficacy: Thus *John* saith, *A man born of God, sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him*, 1 *John* 3. 9. And to the Word of God received by faith in the heart, is compared to seed sowen, that brings forth much fruit. Thus *Jeremy* and *David*, when they were withheld sometimes from good duty, felt a fire kindled in their breasts that burnt and scorched them, and could not but speak: So the *Apostle*, *We believe, therefore we speak*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 13. *Reas.* 1.

And grace is compared to a Fountain of living waters, always springing out of the heart of the Godly, *John* 7. 38. *The love of Christ constraineth us*, saith the Apostle, this is the new wine that the Spirit of God puts into the Converted, whereby they are heartned, & cheered within. O then be afraid of thy negligence, and deadness, and neglect of an holy life: If grace were like lead, like fire within, it would fetch thy whole conversation on a flame. Now grace in the heart must needs be like fire, to wound him, seeing that it is in the hand of Christ, and the finger of God, so that it cannot but conquer him in the life, seeing Christ and the

spirit dwells in those that are his. *Greater is he that is with you, then he that is against you*, saith the Apostle, 1 *Joh.* 4.4. And though Satan be the strong man, that keeps all things in quiet, before conversion, yet Christ is stronger. No wonder then, if grace in the heart rest not, till it reformeth the life, and subdueth the most strong corruptions in a man; for Christ and his Spirit sets these on working: and therefore the Apostle saith, *If they be led by the Spirit, they shall not fulfill the deeds of the flesh*, Gal. 5. *And sin shall not have dominion over them, because they are under grace*, Rom. 6. 14. So that as the house of *Saul* did wax daily weaker & weaker, and the house of *David* stronger and stronger, because God had forsaken the one, and was with the other: Thus it must needs be, that a new heart will make a new life, because the new heart hath God on its side, Christ and his Spirit is with her. We may see the Combate of sin and grace excellently represented in the Israelites fighting with the Canaanites, how wonderfully did they subdue all their enemies? no adversaries, though they were of the most terrible Gyants, were able to stand before them: so its here in Conversion: No sin, though never so pleasant, so sweet, so powerful, is able to stand before the Spirit of God, crucifying the deeds of the flesh; and therefore let none excuse themselves, saying: Such a sin, or such distempers, I cannot overcome, I am not able to master such infirmities: Why saist thou so? for grace inlivened by Gods Spirit, is able to destroy all thy stoutest corruptions; Though they be too strong for thee, yet not for him.

2. Secondly, *A new heart within, must needs have an outward godly life, because that is the end, and the perfection of it.* In Moral Philosophy Acts are accounted the perfection and end of their Habits; and they use to say, That power is in vain, which is never reduced into act: and thus it holds in Religion, God gives us the principles and inward abilities of grace, that they may be in action and exercise. Hence God requires actions principally, & the inward principles by consequence. Thus God requires the act of Faith, and the act of Love, *Thou shalt love the Lord*, viz. *actually*: So that all inward principles of grace being for this end, to be in outward action and exercise, it cannot be that they should be frustrated of this: yea, in the Scripture to have a Talent, and actually to improve it, is all one: and they are said to receive the grace of God in vain, who do not put it forth in exercise: so that every godly man, who is not diligent in the daily exercise of grace, should consider, Why God hath given him the principles of grace; why a power to believe, a power to be heavenly-minded, when this is not demonstrated in his life; and all those who live in grosse impieties, yet boast of a good heart, may conclude they have a good heart in vain: for a good heart is to have a good life, especially the people of God, who have indeed the principles of grace, yet walk dully and negligently, they should startle at this saying. Have I received all my grace in vain? hath God wrought all these great works in me in vain? How severe was that Servants Master to him, who took his Talent, and hid it in a Napkin! Even as they buried their dead, tying them in Napkins. *Cast that unprofitable Servant* (saith he) *into utter darkness*, Mat. 25. 30. Not prophane, deceitful, thievish, but unprofitable Servant. Marke thou not fear this doom, thou who happily hast enjoyed the principles of grace within thee, but thy outward life is like a barren Wilderness. Stir up thy self therefore and say, All principles of Grace are to act with, are to be daily exercised and improved.

3. Thirdly, Therefore principles of Grace within, will demonstrate themselves in a godly life, *because God at the day of judgement, will make our actions and words the measure of his judgement.* The judicial proceis will not be according to what is within, but what is without. Thus *we must all appear before the judgement-seat of Christ, to receive according to what we have done in the flesh*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. *whether good or evil.* Why then hast thou any hope, who livest in all manner of ungodliness? Think not the cry of thy prayers, nor the groans of thy heart will be

above

above thy crying sins. At that great day, God will not only enquire what thy thoughts, or thy desires have been, but what thy actions have been. If therefore any grain of wisdom be in thee; thou wilt be sure to look to that against which the Judge will most surely manifest himself, and that is thy actions. It will be then no plea to say, Lord I had a good heart, a good meaning, I desired to do otherwise, if thou hast not indeed done otherwise.

Fourthly, *The Scripture doth expresly declare such to be Hypocrites*, who having a profession of Christ, and of faith and love of him, do yet vow themselves in all impieties: *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. And the wicked mans Sacrifice, the wicked mans prayer is an abomination unto the Lord: the Apostle *James* doth at large vehemently presse this, That Faith without the good Fruits and works of Righteousness is altogether dead, and he calls that man a vain man, who reasons otherwise. Thou then who art so apt to brand those who endeavour to walk strictly, and in an unspotted manner from the World, with hypocrisie; see thy self the most notorious hypocrite of all, for thou sayest, Thou believest in Christ, thou sayest thou lovest *God*, and yet thy life is full of prophaneness, and enmity to his holy will: Sincerity is the sweet accord and harmony of the heart, and actions together; and it is hypocrisie to pretend heart and affections for *God*, when with thy works thou dost deny him. As the Prophets of old complained of such, who would come into *Gods* Temple, call upon his Name, yet curse, swear, steal, and commit adultery, *Jer.* 7. With no lesse zeal may the Ministers of the Gospel complain, That men will be Christians, will come to Church, will hear, and yet their lives are full of such noisome sins. 4.

Fifthly, *Therefore Grace in the heart will break out into action, because the godly are to endeavour the conversion of others.* They are to be examples of holiness, to win others thereunto: now this can never be without holiness in the life: For men cannot try, or discern the hearts of men, they judge of the Tree by the fruits; so that if ever we would be instruments to reclaim others from a wicked life, we our selves must be exemplary in our own: Thus *the believing Wife is exhorted to walk in such an holy manner, that her unbelieving Husband may be brought to the faith thereby*, 1 Cor. 7. 16. Our Saviour exhorts his Disciples, *That their light should so shine before men, that they beholding their good works, may glorifie God in the day of their visitation*, Mat. 5. 16. Oh what a sad thing is it for thee by the wicked and ungodly life, to harden others in impiety! They see thee a rich man, a great man, a wise man, scoffing and opposing the way of godliness, and this confirmeth them the more in their impieties. 5.

Sixthly, Therefore the Spirit of *God* within, will cause us to walk in all holiness, *Because the daily exercise of Grace affords a great deal of sweetness, comfort, and a good assurance of our interest in Christ.* Though good works and a godly life, are not a cause of our justification, or sanctification, yet by these we come to have comfortable evidences of *Gods* love to us, and ours to him. As *Leah* said, *Her Husband would love her, because she was fruitful in Children*, and thus it is here, Our Elections is made sure to us, by adding one grace to another, one godly action to another: Barrenness in the knowledge of *God* is reckoned a great curse by the Apostle *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 8. and hence it is, that the more *Gods* own Children fall in a daily and diligent practice of godliness, the lesse comfort and assurance they have in their own Consciences. 6.

Lastly, Principles of grace, will have the acts of grace, *that so they may stop the mouths of all those who would reproach and blaspheme the holy profession of his Gospel.* *David* by his wicked action of murder, had opened the mouths of *Gods* enemies to blaspheme him: And the Apostle complaineth, *Rom.* 2. *That by their ungodliness, the Name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles.* Oh then, if nothing else, yet let this move thy heart and life accord in the power of godliness, that the name of *God* may not be blasphemed, that his pure honour may not be wounded. 7.

Vse 1. Of Instruction: How vainly all those do comfort themselves, who plead duties or opinions, or any high thing in Religion, whose lives are not cleansed: Its a vain thing to plead the spirit of God in thee, if that cause thee not to walk in Gods Statutes, and to do his judgements; yet this hath been, and is a great deceit; men think duties, and external acts of Religion, are enough to save them, though their lives be full of noisom filthiness.

Vse 2. What a wonder it is, That there should be any in Christian societies, that have their lives stained with any grosse sin; for who is there that doth not think and hope that he hath this new heart, the Spirit of God within him, when yet his life speaks nothing but open rebellion, and enmity against God? Is not what thou art here in the Church, with the appearance of piety and devotion upon thee, but what thou art with thy Companions, in the temptations of sin. Oh who would think that thou wouldst ever go from the Word preached, from Gods presence, to commit any lewdness more; yet nothing is more ordinary: Oh how wilt thou endure the triall at the day of judgement? Thy works, thy wayes, what thou hast done, they will be examined.

SERM. XCIII.

Gods not onely insuing the inward Principles of Grace, but also vouchsafing his Quickning, Actuating, Assisting Grace unto his people, inabling them to walk in his Statutes; maintained against Pelagians, Arminians and Papists; Also, the happy condition of those who have this latter grace, as well as the former.

Ezek. 36. 27.

I will cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements.

THe method that the Spirit of God useth in promising these great mercies, hath afforded us profitable observations.

In the next place you may remember, that in the general division of this Text, there was the grace of God vouchsafed *in the root*, and *in the fruit*, in the principles or habits, and in the actual exercise of grace. We have already dispatched grace in the root, in the principles, which is called *A new heart*, and, *Gods spirit put into us*: Let us now admire the goodness of God in the fruit, for the Text beseech both an holy root, and holy fruit, and this is expressed in this promise, *I will cause them to walk in my Statutes*. This is a further distinct mercy of God; it is the first and principal mercy indeed, *To put his Spirit in us*, and its the second, and no less necessary mercy, when this is done, *To cause*

cause us to walk in his statutes. So that the former part of the promise, is for the principles of grace; the latter part, for the acts and exercise of grace. We read in Scripture, that *David, Peter*, and others, who had the inward principles of grace, yet for want of the actual exercise of them, did grievously wound their own souls, and sadly dishonour the name of God: So that here we have a special remarkable point afforded us, *viz.*

That God doth not onely at first infuse the principles of grace in his Children, but its necessary he should also inable them to act and improve those principles. *Observ.*

He doth not only give us power to holy actions, but he works also the very actions themselves: So that not only the principles of Believing, Repentance, &c. are the gift of God, but the very acts also of these graces: Thus the Apostle saith, *That God worketh in us, not only to will, but to do*, Phil. 2. 13. not only the power, but the action it self. This point in the explication of it, will much manifest and exalt the grace of God as all in all; and then it will set forth the exact duty of Christianity, whose glory lieth in the daily exercise of grace, not in the principles or Root of it: And

First, *We will open the sense of the Doctrine*; and then prove it by several Arguments; for *Pelagians, Arminians*, and several *Papists*, are against this excellent and glorious truth, attributing indeed, the sufficiency and power of doing a good action, to Gods grace, but the actual efficacy of it, to a mans will. I.

In the first place therefore, consider, that there is a twofold grace of God, as to our matter in hand; *There is grace Regenerating, or Converting*, whereby of men dead in sin, and wholly senseless, we come to have a life of Grace, and a Divine nature we are made partakers of. Considerations to open the sense of this Doctrine.

Secondly, *There is after this a quickning, preventing, or exciting grace*; whereby that former principle of grace is stirred up, and provoked to action. I shall not strictly attend to the School-distinctions of grace, Prevenient, Concomitant, and Subsequent, of grace operant, and co-operant: I shall use the Scripture phrase, *Quickning Grace*; which is not only at first of men dead in sin, and giving life unto them, in which sense *Paul* useth it, *Ephes.* 2. but also for the exciting and stirring and stirring up those principles of grace in us, both to act, and also to increase, as *David, Psal.* 119. prayeth many times, especially, *verse* 88. *Quicken me after thy loving kindness, so shall I keep thy testimonies:* This is a blessed temper, and happy are those who do not by negligence, or any other sin, provoke God to withdraw this exciting grace; for although a godly man lose not his principles of grace, yet if he lose this quickning, this acting of grace, he is for the present, like a barren Wilderness: So then you see, God hath a twofold grace, *Initial* and *Converting*, *Exciting* and *Quickning*, which we need every hour, every moment, and must pray for more earnestly, then we would for our daily bread.

Secondly, *You must know, that there is a great difference in man, while he receiveth the one, and while God enableth him to the other.* These are not speculative notional points, that tend not to edification, but are exceeding profitable; for if we consider man as the subject of that first converting grace, so he is meerly passive, he doth not at all co-operate, or work with the grace of God; for you heard, he had *A stony heart*, and he is *dead in sin*; and grace converting, is compared to the *Resurrection*: So that as *Lazarus*, when he was raised to life, did not contribute any help thereunto of himself; but was wholly passive; so it is in every man, that is at first converted to God, he doth not further this great work, he doth not desire, he doth not set on it; yea, he useth all the power and resistance he can against it, till God conquer the heart by his Omnipotent power; but it is otherwise in this exciting and quickning grace, for there being the supernatural principles of grace before, when he is stirred up, he is not meerly passive, but being stirred by the grace of God, we then act and move also, so that we are voluntary and free in those exercises of grace, though grace moves, yet we also move: 2. 3.

move: This is excellently expreſſed by the Church, *Draw us, and we will run after thee*, Cant. 1. 4. The Church was liftleſs, unprepared, therefore ſhe deſireth the grace of God to *draw her, and then ſhe would run after him*. Draw a dead man, and for all that he cannot run; but the Church had the life of grace in her, only ſhe wanted this quickning, exciting grace.

Thirdly, When we ſay, *That God doth not only work the principles, but alſo the acts of grace, that is to be underſtood as an efficient, not as a ſubject*: So that although we ſay, God worketh in us our Faith, our Repentance, yet we cannot ſay God believeth, and God repenteth; for they came from him as an efficient meerly, but from us as Subjects, in a vital form all manner, *Deus non poteſt ſupplere vicem formalis aut materialis cauſæ*: So that we are the formal cauſes, as well as the efficient. Even as God in the order of nature, worketh all natural actions for us, *In him, we live and move*, ſaith the Apoſtle; yet we cannot ſay, God liveth, or God moveth, or God eateth or God walketh; becauſe he is the efficient cauſe of theſe onely, not the formal.

Grounds of the Doctrine.

Thus you have the ſenſe of the Doctrine; let us obſerve the grounds: And

1. First, *Iet clear, that God doth not only give a new heart, but cauſe us alſo to walk in the wayes of holineſs, becauſe theſe are two diſtinct mercies, and are very ſeparable one from the other*: It may be, and experience tells us, it doth too often fall out, that where the former mercy is of Gods Spirit, and a new heart in his people, yet the latter may not be. *David* you heard, even while he committed thoſe foul and groſſe ſins, yet had not the principle and ſeeds of Grace quite dead within him; no more than the Tree in Winter, that is ſtript of all its Ornaments, is dead at the Root; yet he was far from this latter mercy in the Text, *To walk in the Statutes of God*: And ſo at any time, when the Children of God fall into ſins of luſts, or careleſneſs and negligence, they are not fallen from the Root of Chriſt; but yet this exciting and quicking grace, they have loſt for the preſent. Seeing therefore, that this latter is ſeparate from the former, and you may ſee, even one of Chriſts ſheep for the time, wallowing like the Swine in filthy mire, it is neceſſary, that God ſhould not only do the one, but the other alſo for us: Therefore the people of God are to conſider this: pleaſe not your ſelves, that you have had the experience of converſion upon your ſouls; you can tell, that God hath made a wonderful change in you; for how doth God accompany you with this exciting, acting grace? Are ye not all over ruſty, as it were, are you not very often unfit for holy duties, unprepared to hear, to pray? Are not your hearts like a barren Mountain, yea, like a noyſome Dunghill ſometimes? Do you not refuſe to open the Door, that Chriſt may come in, who hath ſtood all night knocking at the door, while his locks are full of dew? Is it not thus, and far worſe with you many times, who yet hope of your converſion to God? And whence is all this? you have not this acting, this exciting grace, and ſo thou art like one in a dead ſleep.

2. Secondly, *The people of God have earneſtly begged for this acting Grace, as not thinking the principles of grace enough*: Thus *David* often, *Quicken my heart, incline my heart* (ſaith he) *to keep thy teſtimonies*: That man prayed, *That Chriſt would increaſe his faith*; yea, all the prayers that you read any godly men have made for the acts of grace, that they might repent, believe, walk holily, all theſe do plainly convince, that God doth not only give the life of grace, but the conſtant motions of that life afterward: So that if God did not work theſe exerciſes of grace for us alſo, it would be a vain thing to importune God in prayer for them.

3. Thirdly, God doth this latter, as well as the former, *Becauſe he encourageth the godly to ſet upon the exerciſe of grace, becauſe he will inable them, and aſſiſt them therein*: Thus the Apoſtle, *Work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling*: Why? becauſe *it is God that worketh in you to will and to do*: This Argument may ſeem very ſtrange, *Work, becauſe God worketh in you*; but its the greateſt rea-

Phil. 2. 12.

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ſon and comfort that can be: Do thou ſet thy ſelf upon the works of Faith, Repentance, Mortification of the deareſt and ſtrongeſt corruption, though thou art apt to be diſcouraged, and ſayeſt, It cannot be, yet God is ready to help with his hand. *Paul* ſpeaking of thoſe high expreſſions of grace, *To know how to abound, and how to want*, he addeth, *I can do all things, through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me*, Phil. 4. 13. A godly man hath a kind of Omnipotency; he can do what God can do, becauſe he hath the help of God inabling him thereunto: A Chriſtian then ſhould not diſhearten himſelf with ſuch thoughts as theſe, What ſhall I do when death comes? What if ſuch ſuddain calamities ſhould over-whelm me? for he muſt remember, that God uſeth to put forth his hand at that time; and then *Peter* is imboldned to go upon the waters to Chriſt.

4. Fourthly, There muſt be ſuch acting and inlivening grace, as well as the principles, *Becauſe otherwiſe, God would loſe great part of his glory, in bringing a man to Heaven*: For not only Juſtification, but Salvation is attributed unto Grace; and *Rom. 9. Its not of him that willeth, or runneth, but of him that calleth and electeth*: Now grace could not have the glory of all from the beginning to the end, if God ſhould not conſtantly inable and help in the progreſs of godlineſs, as well as at the beginning: So that if God did only give principles of grace, and not daily aſſiſt and enable; we might indeed be thankful unto him, for what once he did for us, but we might thank our own power, and ſacrifice to our own will, for what is done afterwards: *But what haſt thou*, ſaith the Scripture, *that thou haſt not received?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. Its a general aſſertion, *Every good and perfect gift, comes from the Father of lights*, James 1. and we cannot think a good thought, much leſs have any good affections or deſires, though already converted, of our ſelves, if grace were not alwayes ready at hand: So that this truth ſhould put the ſaints into daily and conſtant thankfulneſs, becauſe it hath daily and conſtant ſupply from the throne of grace.

5. Fifthly, *If ſo be that in natural things, where God hath given natural principles of actions, yet they cannot act, without daily concourſe of God, how much more muſt this holds in ſupernaturals*: Take the fire, that is a natural Agent, and ſo determined to one action, *viz.* to burn, yet if God doth ſuſpend his influence, his actual motion, as in the example of the three Worthies, then it cannot burn; and this is much more ſeen in natural Creatures: *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, ſaith the Apoſtle; we do not only live by him, but we are not able to move or ſtir without him. Now if it be not enough for a man to have God give him life once, but he muſt daily inable him to move and ſtir, will not this follow much more in ſupernatural things? Cannot we ſtir the hand or the foot without him? and can we ſtir the heart or affections to God without him? So that as God, though he did reſt from the works of Creation, yet he doth not from them of Converſation: *But hitherto*, ſaith Chriſt, *I and my Father work*: So neither in the ſpiritual new Creature doth God ceaſe from daily converſation, and conſtant help in all its actions.

6. Sixthly, The *Dominicans* arguing againſt the Jeſuites in this point, reaſon thus, *Every thing that is potential, muſt be reduced into act, by ſome thing that is it ſelf in act*: Now, ſay they, God he is *Actus primus, & purus*, he is the firſt and pure act: The principles and habits of grace are potential, and therefore they muſt be determinated and actuated by God, who is always in act: This Argument hath much ſtrength in it, but it is too metaphyſical: I come to a more popular one;

7. And ſeventhly, God doth not only beſtow principles of grace, but alſo excites and quickens, as is plainly evidenced, *In that two godly men, living under the ſame meaſure of grace, yet the doth not profit, but groweth colder and colder; the other grows, and thrives more and more*. How comes this difference to be? but that one hath the grace of God aſſiſting and inabling of him, the other hath not; not that

that he who falls into sin may blame God; for his sloathfulness, negligence and carelesnes, make God to withdraw his helping hand in that need: So that although the cause of one mans fall, is his own sin: yet the cause of the other mans standing, is Gods grace vouchsafed unto him, yea, the same godly man, as *David*, since a great change in his own heart: sometimes he is able to trust in God, to overcome temptations; at other times he is cast down, and hath no strength within him; Whence is all this? but from the ebbings and flowings of exciting grace: And this is a clear experimental demonstration of this truth. At sometimes the least temptation, the least snare, is ready to make a godly man fall; at another time, though strong winds and tempests blow upon him, yet he is able to stand like Mount *Sion*, that cannot be removed. Now this difference comes not from within a man, but from without, as this assisting and exciting grace is ready, or a far off.

What a blessed state it is, to have both these graces.

In the next place, let us consider, how blessed and happy a thing it is, to have not only the principles of grace, but the actings and exultations of it: And

1. First, *Hereby the soul will be kept from negligence, dulness, and all abatements, or falls in our love to God*: All the while grace is thus causing thee to walk, causing thee to be alwayes doing, no dulness or stupidity will enter upon thee; all the while a man is in exercise and motion, he doth not take cold; all the while the streams run, they cannot grow muddy: Now a godly man is said, *To have Rivers of living water flowing from his belly*; he is not a Fountain sealed up, they are daily flowing, and then they cannot grow noisom; the Iron that lieth still, groweth rusty, and is not fit for use: Now what a comfortable condition is this to the godly, to have thy heart never be still, but alwayes hungring, thirsting, or moving after God and good things one way or other? As the heart it self, you see, never lieth still, but is alwayes in motion; so grace in the heart, when stirred up by God, it is always working, putting on, drawing out the soul: What makes the godly so grieved, to dejected many times? its the decay, the fall they finde within themselves, but this causing grace makes all things flourish.

2. Secondly, This causing grace, as it preserveth from decays in the degree of grace, *so much more from gross and foul sins*: Oh *David* and *Peter* wanted this help in the midst of their temptations, and therefore they were so dangerously overcome: This is the only Preservative and Antidote against sin; not the principles of grace, but the actings of grace: This is called by the Apostle, *Grace to help in time of need*, Heb. 4. 16. *Auxilium vite*. Oh this is admirable, when grace comes in the very need thou were in; thou were even falling into such a sin, thou were even drowning, and this comes and lifts up thy head.

3. Thirdly, *This actuating grace will make a man in a prepared frame for every duty, and to resist every kind of temptation*; And what can be more desired then this? Ask this of God, and you beg the whole Kingdom of grace: He that is prepared to do every duty, and to resist every temptation; though he should drink any deadly thing of sin, though a Viper of lust should fasten on him, yet it would not hurt him: Thus the Scripture speaks often of being prepared, and ready for every good work: When God commands Faith, Patience, Zeal, to say, My heart is prepared or fixed, *I come to do thy will, O God*: The heart of it self is no wayes fitted for any good action; and though the principles of grace be within, yet a man may be very indisposed to what is holy: Now this causing grace is the file to take off the rust, its the whetting of the edge, its the stirring up, or blowing of the coals into a flame; and the excellency of this grace, is to be seen in the confirming and corroborating of the heart against temptations: We are taught to pray constantly, *That God would not lead us into temptation*. Temptations have discovered the rottenness, guile and falshood of mens hearts: It was a temptation discovered the second kinde of ground to have no root: who knoweth his heart in temptations? *Peter* in a temptation, differed much from himself when without it. Now there is nothing doth so fortifie and make

make the heart inflexible, as this grace, to help in time of need.

Fourthly, *This actuating grace will make a man fruitfull and profitable in his place*: This is the trading and merchandizing grace, this makes a man redeem the time, take the present seasons of grace, observe all opportunities, that he may serve God in his Generation; so that no good thing will be wanting to that man, who hath this daily influence; whereas men lie like lumps of Earth, or stand like dead and dry Trees in the Garden of God, if this grace doth not always water them. 4.

Fifthly, *This causing, exciting-grace, puts a man in a comfortable posture*; insomuch, that whensoever our Lord and Master shall come, he will be pronounced faithful and blessed: Thus our Saviour, *Blessed is he, whom his Master, when he cometh, shall finde so doing*, Luke 12. 43. He must be doing, he must be in his Masters work: This will make a man have oyl enough; Oh therefore, that the people of God would hunger and thirst more after this working, living, and quickning grace: How many opportunities dost thou neglect? how many prises are put into thy hand, and thou like a fool dost neglect them? how often is thy heart sluggish, dead, and very much indisposed, if Christ should come at this or that hour? All is from want of this grace, which puts thy heart in tune; but this would wind up thy soul, so that thou wouldst be ready for the work of the Lord. 5.

Use of Conviction, Unto the greatest part in our Congregations, that they are such who never felt the power of this Text upon their souls: Where God renews, there he causeth men to walk in his Statutes, he will overpower their hearts, he will subdue their contumacy, he will remove their unwillingness: But alas, wo, and again wo for thee! thou findest the Devil, that unclean Spirit ruling in thy heart, he causeth thee to walk in all the lusts of sin, he moves thee to serve this corruption, and thou doest it; that sin, and thou doest not refuse it; what is more plain and evident, than that yet this mercy is not vouchsafed to thee? and yet how confident, how secure art thou? what, art thou not afraid of Gods word? doest not thou believe? doest thou think to mock God, and to find his word false? Oh miserable and wretched men! the more to be pitied, because they pity not themselves, neither consider how near they are to eternal wo. *Use* 1.

Use 2. Of Admonition to the Children of God: you have the principles of grace, know, that is not enough, but the sweetness and comfort of these, lieth in the exercise of them. In all good things of this life, thou doest judge the use and improvement of them all in all; why not then in the principles of grace? Be always ready to say, My heart is prepared, O Lord, I can do and suffer thy will; especially take heed of all those sins that may drive or chase away this exciting grace; take heed thou doest not provoke God to withdraw this assistance and strength from thee, for that is easily done; and know, nothing doth sooner bereave you of this assisting grace, then neglect of the Ordinances, or the careless and sluggish performance of them; for in and by the use of these, God doth discover his power: He bids us wait for this strength, and expect it in these. *Use* 2.

SERM. XCIV.

Shewing that true Converts make Godlineſs their ordinary Practice; And what to walk in Gods Statutes implies.

Ezek. 36. 27.

I will cauſe you to walk in my Statutes.

THis latter part of the promiſe contained (as you have heard) grace in the fruit, and the exerciſe of it, *I will cauſe you to walk in my Statutes.* To ſubdivide this Promiſe of actuating grace, conſider the action promiſed, and the object about which it is converſant. The action promiſed, is, *To walk.* The object, *My Statutes.* I ſhall ſpeak only of the action vouchſafed, *To walk.* Its ſo known a thing, that I need not ſpend time, to enumerate places, that to walk, doth denote the conſtant courſe, endeavour, and practice of a mans life, and that whether in good or evil. Many examples of Scripture might be produced, to evidence this, even as the word *Way* alſo in Scripture doth ſignifie that form of Doctrine, Worſhip, or manners a man accuſtometh himſelf to. And this expreſſion of walking, is excellently transferred from the body to the ſoul, for by faith, love, and other graces, the ſoul walketh as well as the body, by feet; and it doth ſignifie not ſudden fits, and tranſitory affections about godlineſs, but a daily ſetled, ſtedfaſt, and unmoveable way in godlineſs: ſo that the Doctrine is:

Doct. *That a man converted, makes godlineſs his conſtant, ordinary practice.*

Its a walking, yea the Scripture calls it, περιπατεῖν, *Epheſ.* 2. 10. To walk round and round in the whole circle of good works. All Chriſtians are of the Peripatetick Sect in this ſenſe, *Gal.* ult. The word to walk is στοιχεῖν, (who walk after this Rule) and that denoteth an exact methodical walking, as in a word, a man doth careſully put one letter after another to make ſenſe; but the opening of particulars, will give life to this matter: Let us therefore, firſt conſider, what is implyed in this expreſſion or Metaphor, to walk in Gods Statutes. And,

What to walk in Gods Statutes implyes. 1. First, *It ſignifieth, that we make Religion and Godlineſs our buſineſs,* our ἔργον, our main work, our *Joſeph*, our *Benjamin*; whatſoever is neglected, that is not: Thus our Saviour, *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of Heaven, and other things ſhall be added,* Matth. 6. 33. Grace is the principal; things of this life are but acceſſory. Hence 1 *Cor.* 7. We muſt buy as if we bought not, we muſt marry as if we married not, and do all earthly things, as if we did them not; that ſo we may ſerve the Lord without diſtraction: Chriſt gave us a good example, in doing Gods will, when he did ſo attend on it, that ſometimes he refuſed natural refreſhments, to promote Gods glory, giving this remarkable aſſertion, *Its my meat and drink, to do my Fathers will,* John 4. 34. And *David* deſcribeth the godly man by medita-

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ting in the Law of God day and night. That phraſe doth not imply, we ſhould give over our Callings, and read nothing elſe but the Bible, it only ſheweth, that we make it our chief buſineſs and imployment, to attend that rule. Therefore the *Rabbin* took it too litterally, when being asked, whether a man may read Greek Authours, or any humane Books but the Bible? He anſwered, If there were any time, that was not part of day, or night; he might take that time, and ſpend it in reading ſuch Books: but this was too ſtrict. It commands us to give the Principality, to give the ſat, as it were, to the matters of God. Oh, but who then is converted, if this be ſo? Where is the man that makes Godlineſs his main work and buſineſs? Who riſeth up early, and goeth to bed late to get this bread of life? Look into Perſons, into Families, are not the matters of the World preferred before the matters of godlineſs? Do not earthly things make you pray, as if you prayed not, ſerve the Lord, as if you ſerved him not? You that are godly, think of this truth, and mourn; it is a two-edged Sword: Doth not thy own heart tell thee often, that thou doſt not make godlineſs thy main buſineſs: The cares, the ſnares, and the temptations of the World, makes thee many times ſeek the things of the Earth in the firſt place.

Secondly, *It imployeth voluntarineſs, delight, and pleaſure in the wayes of godlineſs.* Its not only our imployment, and labour, (for we may be haled to that) but it is our delight, our joy, our greateſt pleaſure we have in this life. To walk, is a voluntary action, and frequently uſed for the expreſſion of a mans delight. He is gone to walk, or He walketh in his Garden. Thus God, to expreſs his protection, and delight he hath in us, he promiſeth to walk with us, or amongſt us, and ſet his Tabernacle amongſt us, 2 *Cor.* 6. 15. So that thoſe who are converted, find it ſweeter than Honey, Riches, or all advantages, to be doing the will of their Father. Hence *Pſal.* 110. they are called a willing people, or willingneſſes. *David* doth many times expreſs that great delight and pleaſure he takes in the Commandments of God: And *Paul* Rom. 7. *I delight in the Law of God, in the inward man.* If therefore Grace and Godlineſs be thy walk, how great will the joy and gladneſs of thy heart be in all approaches near to him? Every duty will be like the Mount of Transfiguration, of which thou wilt ſay, *Its good to be here.* As our Saviour ſaid, *He that drinks of the old Wine, would not care for the new.* And thus the godly man that hath taſted of the goodneſs of God, and the ſweetneſs of grace, will forget his earthly pleaſures. This *Manna* will make a man deſpiſe Egyptian Garlick: This fatted Calf will make a man regard no more any Husks: So that you who look upon all godly duties conſtantly as a weariſomneſs, a burden, how can you ſay, God hath wrought this new heart in you? Indeed the dulneſs, ſluggiſhneſs, and partial weariſomneſs that ſurprizeth, even the godly many times, doth argue, Converſion is but in part, and imperfect: and therefore they ſhould be in an holy manner grieved, and ſhamed in ſoul to hear and think of theſe things, ſaying, Theſe holy truths have too much luſter and dazeling in them, more then my weak infirm eyes are able to behold. Oh then hunger and thirſt more after this ſweetneſs and pleaſure, which is to be had in holineſs. This will be Oil to the wheels; yea, like the ſpirit in *Ezekiels* wheels, to make the ſoul move ſweetly. 2.

Thirdly, *To walk, denoteth diligence, frequency and Cuſtomarineſs.* There is a great difference, between ſetting a mans foot accidentally, or occaſionally in a path, and walking in it: *Ahab* occaſionally humbled himſelf, but it was not his way. *Balaam* deſired *to die the death of the righteous*; but did he ever do ſo before? *He did not walk in the way of righteouſneſs.* To walk, is a conſtant, frequent, cuſtomary exerciſe of a man, and doth not ſignifie what a man in ſome fits, or ſome occaſions may do, but what he is accuſtomed to: Even as the godly man, he ſometimes turns aſide out of the path of righteouſneſs, into wayes of wickedneſs: *David* and *Peter* did ſo; yet we do not ſay, they did walk in wickedneſs; wickedneſs was not their conſtant cuſtomary practice; ſo it is with the wicked man, they 3.

ſometimes, eſpecially under calamities and fears, ſtep into the wayes of godlineſs; they do ſome godly and righteous things: but this is not their way, its not their cuſtom: So that its not the bare doing holy and righteous actions: but are theſe thy way? doſt thou walk in theſe? Is it not by meer accident, ſome ſuddain occaſion; as a contrary wind ſometimes driveth in the paſſenger to another Port, than he expected or deſired?

4. Fourthly, *To walk, implyeth progreſs and increaſe in godlineſs.* To walk, is a progreſſive motion, and every ſtep a man takes, he gaineth more ground, and is nearer to his journeys end; and thus it is in godlineſs. The Converted man, he gaineth, he groweth, he is nearer the top of the Hill than he was. Thus *Paul*, you may ſee him not only walking, but even running; διώκω, I preſs hard after, I forget the things that are behinde. Oh this is a neceſſary point: for who attends to growth in Grace? to get more of this Treaſure, though the Scripture doth ſo often preſſe it. The old rule is, *Non progredi, eſt regredi*; Not to go forward, is to go backward. Yet how many are at a ſtand, yea decay and abate in former graces? Is this to walk in the wayes of God? like *Hezekiah's* Sun, thou art gone ſo many degrees backward. Into what a Conſumption art thou fallen? who would take thee to be the ſame thou wert once? Every duty and grace is ſo withered, that as *David* ſaid of his body, *Thy bones ſtand out through leanneſs.* It may be indeed, even a Converted mans condition, not to walk on forward, but to fall backward, and be many degrees ſhort of what others are, who ſet out at the ſame time with him, but then they recover again to their great advantage. As Children, after a Diſeaſe hath pulled them down, when they recover, they ſhoot out higher. As ſtumbling makes a man get more ground, ſo that even in their very ſins, though they be *extra ſemitam*, yet not *extra viam*; for the grace of God recovering them, will make this very letting, a whetting to them, and be more zealous and active, by how much they have been negligent. Howſoever therefore there may be accidental obſtructions, and checks to grace in its walk: yet the nature and inclination of godlineſs, is to be always carrying us on to further perfection. This walking, is ſtill nearer and nearer to our journeys end: Faith is increaſed, Love and heavenly-mindedneſs are more promoted. Remember therefore, thou art a Traveller, thy godlineſs is a walking; ſit not down, and ſay, *Soul take thy eaſe*, for thou haſt grace enough, godlineſs enough: This is an Argument, thou haſt none at all. When *Laodicea* ſaid, *She was full, and rich, and wanted nothing*, then ſhe was poor and miſerable, and wanted all things, *Rev.* 3. *Apelles* when he had drawn his line, would write *faciebat*, in the imperfect Tenſe, and not *fecit*; to ſhew that ſtill he did intend to perfect, to complete it; ſtill ſomething is wanting, and this may be written upon all our graces, *Credebat*, not *credidit*; *amabat*, not *amavit*; There is ſome imperfection, yea, many defects which are conſtantly to be amended. I earneſtly deſire this truth might be faſtned upon the godly. They are not in growing poſtures: they come not and ſay, *Lord, this Talent of five hath gained ten*; they ſay not, This Muſtard-ſeed is grown up into a great Tree; they ſpeak as a Child in grace, and not as perfect men.

5. Fifthly, *As to walk, implyeth Progreſs, ſo it ſuppoſeth, that in this life, we can never attain to a period, to a full reſt*; all is walking here in this life, in Heaven there is reſt, then we are ſet in our Thrones after victory and conqueſt over our luſts, and the World. As God in the old Teſtament firſt had his Tabernacle, which was not fixed; but ambulatory, removed from place to place; and afterwards his Temple, a place of reſt; where his people were to ſit down and enjoy God: ſo it is with his Children in the New Teſtament, they are in a Tabernacle here, their Temple is in Heaven: This ſhould comfort the people of God, as the former might provoke and inflame them; they have not ſuch maſtery over their hearts as they deſire, they are in continual combate and conflict, they are exceeding ſhort of thoſe excellent graces propounded to them; let not this diſmay them, they do but walk as yet in the way of godlineſs, they are not come to their Journeys end, they are

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not yet to sit down. The godly would have an Heaven here upon Earth, whereas God hath made this life, and that to come, in two distinct dispensations.

Sixthly, *This walking in the way of godliness doth suppose a guid, a light to direct and inform them, that they may not stumble and fall.* There are Land-marks and Sea-marks for Passengers; and so the Word of God that is the guide, that is the light to walk by. *As many as walk according to this Rule*, saith the Apostle. There are many walk in a disorderly, loose, and lawless manner. They have no Law but their lusts, no guid but their blind passions, and affections: but the walking of the godly, is in an exact, orderly, and godly manner. Now only the Word of God can direct and guid herein. Hence *David* doth so often commend it for *a Lanthorn to his feet, and a Lamp to his paths.* No man can tell how to live, or how to believe, or how to worship God, without his Word: We cannot tell how to pray, how to hear, how to live godlily, and righteously, without this rule: so that thousands of people discover they have none of this mercy in the Text vouchsafed to them; for, do they not live like bruit Beasts? Are not their lusts, their fancies, the rule they live by? Give me the man that lives by the Scripture, that walks by the Scripture, that thinketh, that speaketh, that doeth by Scripture-directions. There could not be such walking in darkness, and stumbling therein, if men did attend to this light. Oh that this truth might enter into you; My life is a walk, and I must have some Rule to guid me; and what is that but Gods word? How then can I lye, curse, blaspheme, by that information? Where doth the word allow, or command me such things? Be no longer like the Horse and Mule that have no understanding, but remember you are men, and so must have a rule of reason and piety to live by, and that is Gods Word. Men are convinced that they must have no other faith or Religion then what the word commands: but they do not consider this is as true also for their lives: They must live no other lives, do no other actions, then this word requireth. 6.

Seventhly, *As Gods word is the Rule they walk by, so God himself is the Companion that they ought to walk with.* You are not alone in this walk, but God is with you. The Scripture hath a three-fold phrase: There is walking with God, walking before God, and walking, or following after God, and they all have their peculiar Emphasis. To walk with God; Thus *Enoch* is said to do, *Gen.* 4. 22. and that implyeth an heavenly, holy, and humble, yet familiar enjoyment of God in our way. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* And therefore no wicked man can walk in these paths of godliness, because not agreed with God: God is an adversary, and an enemy to them: but the godly in this their journey to Heaven, have sweet communion with, and enjoyment of God: As God spake to *Moses*, as one friend to another, by way of apparition; so doth God in a spiritual way to the godly; God is graciously present with him, he supports him, comforts him: And if he said, *Comes jucundus pro vehiculo est*; A pleasant Companion is instead of a Coach in the Journey; How much more admirable, is it to have God our Companion in the way. Then there is to walk before God, *Gen.* 17. 1. thus *Abraham* is commanded; and that is, so to walk in the wayes of godliness, as to eye God, to have a respect to please him, to take heed of the most secret sins, knowing God hath an omniscient eye, and therefore that is the ground of sincerity, which the Scripture calls perfection; *Walk before me and be perfect.* Lastly, the Scripture hath the expression of walking after God, in opposition to that phrase, of walking after their Idols, or other gods, *or the imagination of their own hearts*, Jer. 18. 12. And that is, when men follow the directions and guidance God vouchsafeth, especially in matter of worship: God goeth before us, as it were, with the light of his Word in his hand, and we are to follow after. This truth hath been too spiritual, even for all the ages of the Church almost, who have not followed God in their Worship; but the Customs and superstitious Inventions of men. Now among other qualifications in walking, that the Scripture may speak of, there are four observable. 7.

1. First, *To walk uprightly.* He that walketh uprightly, *Prov.*10.9. walketh boldly. Contrary to this is halting in the way of godlineſs. The Apoſtle, *Heb.*12.13. exhorts them to make ſtreight paths for their feet, *leſt that which is lame, be turned out of the way.* Its not enough to be in the way of godlineſs; All Hypocrites are ſo: but we muſt take heed, we halt not between God and *Baal*, as the Scripture ſpeaks. *Judas* was in Chriſts way, but he halted between Chriſt and the affections of the World. As the Heifers taken from their young ones, they went ſtraight on with the Ark, but they bellowed and moaned for their young ones: ſo it may be, thou art driven on in the external wayes of holineſs, but thou moaneſt, and thy heart runs after ſin, or the World.

2. Secondly, *To walk by Faith*, and not by ſenſe; ſo the Apoſtle, *We walk by Faith*, 2 *Cor.*1.7. And this is ſuch a walking that the World doth not underſtand, To walk by Faith is to be above all principles of ſenſe, carnal reaſonings, worldly fears; or delights, eying the promiſe, beholding Gods favour in Chriſt. This is a comfortable, peaceable, and ſecure walking.

3. Thirdly, *To walk, requireth that our feet be ſhod with the preparation of the Goſpel*, Epheſ.6.15. That was part of their Armour in former times, to have a defence or munition for their feet; and this the Apoſtle makes the preparation made by the Goſpel of peace. We have many doubts, fears, and other diſcouragements in the way to Heaven: Not ſluggiſhneſs, but truth it ſelf may ſay, There is a Lion, yea, many Lions, and ſuch as go roaring to devour in the way: and the guilt of ſin may make every man a *Cain* to go up and down trembling. Now the Goſpel makes a ſure and good preparation againſt this.

4. Laſtly, *Its required that we ſhould walk circumſpectly.* So the Apoſtle, ἀκριβῶς *Not as fools, but as wiſe*, Epheſ.5.15. And were this the main intent of the Text, it would have been profitable to ſhew the grounds of this circumſpect walking; we may hint them to you. The way you walk in, is a ſtraight narrow way, its eaſie ſtepping out of it into the pit, Godlineſs is bounded with limits, but ſin is a broad way. Now how difficult is it, ſo to order our ſteps, as to ſtep aright continually? *Tertullian* calls Chriſtians, *Funambuli*, Rope-walkers, Thoſe that ſtep in the leaſt manner awry, are in danger of killing themſelves. How apt are we to take that for faith, patience, and zeal, which is not ſo. Secondly, walk circumſpectly, becauſe we have a great journey to go, and a little time; our walk is a very long one, and night is ſuddenly comming on us; if he ſaid, *Ars longa, vita brevis*, we may ſay, *Pietas eſt longa, lata & profunda.* Thirdly, there are many Enemies, Thieves, and Robbers in the way, ſpiritual and inviſible adverſaries, in heavenly places; and theſe watch to intercept thee in thy journey: They do not lie in wait, as thoſe ſpies to kill *Paul*, but damn the ſoul. Thy Grace is a precious Treaſure, and they ſtrive to rob thee of it.

Uſe 1. Uſe of *Examination*, Try thy ſelf by this Touch-ſtone, what is thy walk, thy way, thy imployment. Is it not to make proviſion for the luſts of the fleſh: The Scripture ſaith, Some mens hearts walk after their own imaginations, others after covetouſneſs; ſome mens tongues are ſaid to walk through the Earth. Oh do not think, if thou walk in ſuch wayes, that Heaven will be the journeys end. Neither mayſt thou take Sanctuary under thy Duties, thy Devotions on ſome ſolemn occaſions; for theſe are not thy walk, thy way; and ſo they will not be owned for the paths of godlineſs: we that walk and paſſe away as ſhadows, how ſhould we lay up for an enduring treaſure?

Uſe 2. Uſe of *Exhortation* to the godly: Make Godlineſs your chief imployment, your buſineſs and your great delight. Oh take heed of every thing that ſhall ſteal away thy heart. Though grace indeed be ſuch a Treaſure, that Thieves and Robbers cannot by violence ſteal it away, yet there are ſpiritual Thieves, that are ſweet and ſugred enemies, either temptations within or without; and theſe may deprive thee of thy choice Jewels, if thou watch not. Oh ſay, I am not my ſelf, I am not as I would be, all the while I am hindred or oppoſed in

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the work of godlineſs. Is thy heart at any time over-charged, and even drunk with the comforts of this life? Reprove and chide thy ſelf. Count every day and hour loſt, that doth not make for Heaven one way or other.

SERM. XCV.

That Converted Perſons are very careful and tender of the Worſhip of God, obſerving that *and onely* that *which he hath commanded.*

Ezek. 36. 27.

I will cauſe them to walk in my Statutes, and keep my Judgements, and do them.

WE ſubdivided the Grace here promiſed in the latter part of the Chapter, wherein was conſiderable, The Action, *I will cauſe you to walk*. 2. The Object of the Action, *In my Statutes*; and this we are to treat upon at this time.

Now although there are three words in the Scripture, which often are uſed for the ſame thing, *Commandments*, *Statutes* and *Judgments*, yet there is alſo in many places a difference between theſe.

Commandments being properly thoſe perpetual Rules of the moral Law, which enjoyn the ſame duties in all ages of the Church. Commandments.

Judgements are ſtrictly uſed for thoſe Duties of the Judaical Law, which concern Juſtice and equity one to another. Judgements.

Statutes are all thoſe Rites, and that manner of worſhip which God had commanded: and howbeit, we may in this Text make *Statutes* and *Judgements* all one, yet its better to diſtinguiſh them, becauſe the holy Ghoſt doth here ſeem as it were, to branch out the whole practice and life of a converted perſon, which lieth in two things, His Duty to God, and that is, *To walk in Gods Statutes*; His Duty to man, and that is, *To walk in his Judgements to do them*. And although in the New Teſtament, we have not the ſame Statutes of worſhip as they had, nor the ſame judicial Law for juſtice and equity between man and man, yet the meaning is, that God will cauſe his people to walk in all that worſhip and equity which God at any time ſhall command: And it is very uſual in the Old Teſtament, to expreſs the Worſhip of God, which ſhall be uſed in the times of the Goſpel, under theſe names, which were proper to the legal Adminiſtration. This then is the ſenſe, That when God hath put this new heart and new ſpirit into his Children, he will make them diligent in all that worſhip which he hath commanded, they will be careful to worſhip him in that pure and holy manner, which is appointed: All their worſhip will be Statute-worſhip, there is the Statute-Law of the Scripture for it. They dare not take up any form or manner of worſhip concerning which God may ſay to them, *Who hath required theſe things at your hands?* From whence obſerve. Statutes.

That converted Perſons are very careful and tender in the Worſhip of God, obſerving all that, and only that, which he hath commanded. Doct.

You may diſcover the work of Grace in a man, as much about his principles and practice

practice in the worship of God, as about moral principles and actions. Idolatrical and superstitious worship grosly practised, is no more consistent with grace, then prophane and ungodly wayes. I grant indeed, that even godly men, may, for want of light and better information, live in some reliques of superstitious worship: As in some good Kings Reigns, the high-places were not taken away; and *Johns* Disciples, yea, and Christs Disciples, they were but old bottles, they were not able suddenly to receive such pure and spiritual worship, as Christ intended for them: Nay, in the infancy of the Church, how much were Believers led aside with their love of, and doting upon the ceremonial Worship? they would be circumcised still, they would observe meats and dayes still, yea the Worship of Angels was brought in under pretence of humility.

Considerations to open the point.

To open this point, consider,

1. First, *That Divines make a twofold Worship, Internal and External: Internal, are all those spiritual graces of the soul, which are immediately terminated upon God himself.* Thus faith in God, and love of God, to give him the preheminency and chief room in the heart, is the worship of God: This is spiritual and inward, and this Worship is commanded in the first Commandment. But the external Worship of God, consists in all those visible parts and means of worship, which God hath appointed; as, in the Old Testament, praying, reading the Word, offering of Sacrifices, and many bodily adorations; and these are commanded in the second Commandment: for when God forbids the worshipping of him by Images, he doth thereby forbid the making to a mans self, without the Commandment of God, any part or means of Divine Worship. In the new Testament, Gods external Worship lieth in prayer, reading and hearing the Word, administration of the Sacraments, sanctifying of his Sabbath, and singing of Psalms; so then, he who is truly godly, he will be careful to perform all those Duties of Religious Worship, which are commanded in the New Testament. He doth not take up the vain customs of men, neither doth he follow the traditional worship of his Fathers, but he worshippeth as it is written; he knoweth God is most jealous of his Worship; God is very sensible of any abuse of his Worship, any corruption or mixture of it, by humane presumption.

2. Secondly, *Although God hath commanded this Statute-Worship, yet that golden Rule of our Saviours, must alwayes be remembred,* John 4. where Christ taking off the Woman of *Samaria*, from her old traditional Worship, thinking that such a Mountain was better to worship God on, then other places, *God* (saith he) *is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and truth, and my Father seeketh such*: By this we are admirably instructed, that *all external Worship of God must yet be spiritual*: It is not the bowing of the body, nor the external humiliation that God looks after, *God is a Spirit*, and so doth chiefly require Spirit-Worship: This Text would have been like the flaming fiery Sword, to have kept off that intolerable burden of false Worship, which afterwards crept into the Paradise of God. It is a sin that we are very prone unto, to rest upon an external Worship, not lifting up our hearts unto God, and that made the Apostle speak so contemptibly, even of the ceremonial Worship, and all those Jewish Ordinances, though appointed by God, calling them carnal and beggarly Elements. The superstitious Jews made them Elements, even the first principles and foundation of Religion; but he calls them beggarly, because they were without Christ; so that all thy outward service and worship of God, is but an empty, beggarly Religion, unless it be spiritually performed, and that is mainly by resting on Christ in those Ordinances. But I do not intend an exact treating upon the religious and divine Worship of God, I shall therefore in the next place instance in two or three of the New Testament Statutes, which God hath commanded to be religiously observed, and then shew the grounds of this pious and religious disposition in converted persons.

Prayer.

And first one of Christs main Statute-worships, is *Prayer*. Not in the *Socinian* sense, who make Prayer a new instituted worship by God, and that it was not a

Duty

Duty commanded before; Not so, only Christ continueth and confirmeth this Duty, revealing the manner of it more clearly. Thus you have many Precepts and Examples for prayer; yea, and this is to be done fervently, humbly, incessantly; and it is recorded as a sign of *Pauls* Conversion, *Behold he prayeth*, Act. 9. 11. and *Zach.* 12. The Spirit of Prayer and Supplication, with mourning and hearty grief, is promised under the Gospel: Insomuch, that you cannot have a surer sign of a graceless man then one who is not diligent in this Duty and worship of God, Prayer. For although our own manifold necessities of all sorts, might provoke us to this Duty, God hath also so diligently enjoyned it, that there might be an opportunity to open the Fountain of his mercy to us. Oh then, how few are there that partake of this benefit? Where is he, of whom we may say, *Behold he prayeth*, constantly, fervently, effectually? nay, in stead of Prayer, there is cursing, sweating and blaspheming; if they do pray, they have some short Prayers by rote, which they utter as Parrats, understanding nothing of it, and so irreligiously discharging of it: Now Prayer is three-fold, private-personal Prayer, of which *David* speaks much, and Christ went many times apart to prayer. Tell me then; Dost thou take Christs Command, *Enter into thy Closet, and shut thy door after thee*, Mat. 5. Doth God see thy secret groans, thy secret tears, thy private debasements? if grace be in thee, thou wilt be diligent in this course. Then there is publick prayer, of which the Prophet *Jeremiah* speaks, and Christ alledgeth it, *That his house shall be called an house of Prayer*; and our Saviour speaks of two or three, any Company gathered together, *Matth.* 8. 20. to ask any thing of the Father in Christs Name. Now this publick Prayer is also much observed by the new heart; for therein is an united strength and force to lay hold upon God, and God is in the midst of his People so gathered together, to open his hand plentifully to bestow on them his mercies.

Lastly, There is Family-Prayer, so *Joshua*, *I and my house will serve the Lord*, Jos. 24. 15. And God takes special notice of *Abraham*, He knew *Abraham* would make his Family to serve the Lord, *Gen.* 18. 19. *Jeremiah* prayeth, *That God would pour his wrath upon those Families that call not on his name*, Jer. 10. 25. You may read of the Churches in some Christians houses; because of the spiritual worship of God therein. If then God had ever wrought this new heart in thee, how diligent wouldst thou be to walk in all the Statutes of Prayer, Private, Publick, Family-prayer; Thou darest not for a World, so sinfully neglect this worship of God, as thou dost; Think not that any civil and honest conversation in the World is enough without this worship. Oh but what unclean dens, yea noysom Hels are some mens families! Is prayer there? Is there constant religious calling upon God? No, in stead of these, dissolutenes and prophaneness; Oh the Pillars of the house, and the walls thereof, will one day witness against such.

The second Statute for religious duties, I shall only instance in, is of *The Lords day*, and the strict holy Observation of that: Where godliness is, there they will call the *Sabbath a delight*, Isa. 58. 13. and not speak their own words, or think their own thoughts; that is a promise to be fulfilled in the times of the Gospel. That the observation of a seventh day is not Jewish, is plain, because it was instituted for *Adam* in innocency; so that although *Adam* was made so pure and holy, that in all his works of his Calling, *viz. To till the Garden*, &c. he could not but have an heavenly heart, yet God would have him to have one day, which God blessed & sanctified, for the wholly applying of himself to the immediate worship of God. And for the continuation of a seventh day, though the Jewish day be altered, you have upon Christs Resurrection plain examples of the altering of it to the first day of the week, so that we read of their Church-assemblies on that day; and *John* calls it, *The Lords day*, Rev. 1. All which conjoyned, make it appear, That there is a moral and perpetual obligation, lying upon us, to the diligent observing of it. So then, where God puts his new Spirit, there he makes a willingness, a tender conscience and delight to sanctifie it; Oh then take heed of those licenti- The Lords day.

ous Doctrines that cry down the Lords-day, for by the holy sanctifying of it, thou wilt come to delight in the Lord more, thy graces will increase and flourish: As some from corrupt principles neglect it, so others from vicious and prophane affections, or from worldly covetous desires. Thus they in the Prophet asked, *When will the Sabbaths be over, that they might buy and sell, and get gain?* Amos 8. 5. Thy tender Conscience therefore about the holy sanctifying of the Sabbath, will much demonstrate the savoury work of grace upon thee. This may suffice for two examples of the Statute-worship of *God* in the New Testament.

Why the godly are so tender about Gods worship.

Now let us see, why the godly are so careful, and tender about *Gods* Worship.

1. And first it is, *Because God himself is so tender about it.* There is no sin about which *Gods* jealousie is so much said to be provoked, as in matter of false worship: Read the Prophets, you shall see the great controversie *God* had with his people, was for the corrupting of his worship; This in every Chapter, is almost complained of; therefore the common word the Scripture useth for Idolatry and false worship, is abomination: And Christ using that expression, What is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination unto *God*, speaketh it chiefly to that pharisaical instituted worship, wherein they did place all their righteousness; now this, that was so highly advanced as the only Religion and serving of *God*, was abomination unto him: Seeing therefore that *Gods* worship is the apple of his eye; the main thing he is so jealous about, and his judgements have been so terrible upon men, who have in any manner violated his order about religious things; as his punishing *Nadab* and *Abihu* for offering with strange fire, and striking *Uzzah* dead, for not keeping meerly to order, makes a godly man very careful about the worship of *God*, to see he giveth nothing but that, and all that, which *God* requireth.

2. Secondly, *He therefore is diligent in this, because the word of God is the only Rule of Worship, and so every one must be able to give a Reason from Scripture, because of such and such religious Duties.* Those that have a new heart, are made *light in the Lord*; They take the Scripture for the way to walk in, and whatsoever is not Scripture-worship, what Religion is not Scripture-Religion, they dare not own it. Tell a godly man of the Antiquity of such worship, of the universality of it, of the excellent fitness it hath to keep humble and devout, all these are but fig-leaves. Is it commanded Worship? Is there the Statute-Law of the Scripture for it? Alas, let thy Fathers and Grand-fathers, yea let all the World admire such and such worship; if it be not *Gods* Command, it is a vain thing: How clear is our Saviour, *In vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines, the traditions of men.* Our Saviour told the Woman of *Samaria, She worshipped she knew not what, because she had not the Scripture*, Joh. 4. Oh then, how might this put to silence all the cavils and fooliſh pleas many people have, for superstitious false ways of worship, bring thy Scripture for it, shew Gods word for it: Thy doting and raging for these things, where Gods word is no light to thee, is as great an Argument of a carnal heart devoid of grace, as well as prophaneness, and they for the most part go together; Those that are for such superstitious worship, are commonly prophane, and ungodly in their lives.

3. Thirdly, *Therefore the people of God are careful of Worship, and that only which God hath commanded, because they are a spiritual heavenly people, endowed with knowledge and wisdom out of Gods word, and so able to discern of things that differ.* The Apostle, *Col.* 4. useth this Argument against observation of superstitious worship, which he had spoken against in the Chapter before, *If ye be risen again with Christ, seek those things which are above, and set your affections on things above*; which *Calvin* doth solidly understand, not only of lusts and earthly things, but also of those humane Ordinances, and will-worship he had immediately spoken of.

of before, so that he is of a brutish, blind mind, an unclean beast that never cheweth the cud, who doth not consider, and well advise about the worship of God, but takes every thing out of custom, and what is obtruded upon him; but a godly man is of a more noble rational spirit, he will search the Scripture, whether such things are to be done or no.

Fourthly, *Therefore the godly are diligent in the pure worship of God, because God draweth nigh in those religious Duties*; where every thing is done according to his will, there he delights to be present; How many glorious blessings did God promise to his pure worship in the Temple, till they defiled it by abominations; and then he destroyed both the Nation and the Temple. Where therefore the pure Worship and Ordinances of God are, there he walketh, there he poureth out his love. The Church is then in no strange habit, but the beautiful Ornaments God hath decked her with; and when Gods worship is thus purely performed, he addeth to their graces, *None seek Gods face in vain*, his promise and institution go along together; let a man a thousand times over, use such Ceremonies and Worship God hath not commanded, he will never be the more holy. There cannot be any spiritual effect communicated unto him, because God will only work there where he hath promised, and his promise is only to his own Institutions. 4.

Fifthly, *They are careful to observe his Statute-worship, because it is a Duty to God*; He is their Lord and God, their Soveraign from whom they have all, and outward worship is a paying of homage to him, as an humble and submissive acknowledgement of God; *Come* (saith the Psalmist) *let us fall down and worship before him, because he hath made us, and not we our selves*; All solemn religious Duties, they are not only instituted means of grace, but solemn testifications and acknowledgements of our humility, submission, dependance upon God, and exaltation of his great excellency; so that if the godly man should be negligent here, he should not give unto God that which is Gods: And hereby is greatly discovered the falshood and arrogancy of those spirits who think they are above Ordinances; for suppose (which is not in this life) that thou wert already so holy and perfect, that thou wert above any benefit by the Ordinances, that thou didst not need the benefit of the Word preached, and the Sacraments; yet thou canst not be above them, as they are testifications of thy duty towards God. Hence the Angels in Heaven, they worship and serve God according to their way, and wilt thou (O vain man!) set up thy self on so high a Pinacle, as not to worship God? Remember, Ordinances are not only means of grace, but solemn testifications of our humility and dependency on God. 5. Men that say they are above Ordinances.

Use of Examination, Try the work of grace in you by this particular, how tender and careful are you about the Worship of God? Are you such, who pray for the purity of Ordinances, to have every thing in Church-assemblies done according to the pattern in the Scripture? *David* cryed out, *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts?* In what zeal was Christ, when he saw the Temple of God *turned into a den of Thieves*? What holy invectives doth *Paul* in his Epistles, make against superstitious worship? yet how few are the men that minde the pure instituted worship of God, that would have the Fountains of *Israel* without the mixture of any mud in them? Outward oppressions in Popery were nothing so heavy upon the godly, as the corrupt mixtures in Gods worship; but if you observe the general disposition of men, they are wholly carried out to some sensible superstitious ways of worship. They love not the simplicity and purity of Gods Worship. It is great proficiency in Christianity, not to have our minds corrupted herein. As Children delight in Babies, so do men in some worships of their own that they have made. What is Popery but a meer stage-play in the worship of *God*? And if you ask of hundreds of Ceremonies they have, *whose Image and Superscription is upon them*? you shall find none of *Gods* imprinted on them. There were the Statutes of the Heathens, *Levit.* 20. and these *Use*

the people must not go in, *Ezek.* 20. *There are Statutes of our Fathers we must not walk in:* Oh there is too much of this superstition still in men! Men by false worship, manifest they have not spiritual hearts.

SERM. XCVI.

Of Righteousness and Equity between man and man: And how tender and conscientious a true Convert is therein.

Ezek. 36. 27.

And ye shall keep my judgements, and do them.

I Am now upon the latter general Branch, into which the whole work of Conversion divideth it self. *Religion to God*, and *Righteousness to man*, are the two Pillars upon which this spiritual Temple is sustained: God hath put these two together, yet how often doth the Devil and mans corruption divide them! some attend wholly to the Religious Worship of God but are grosly neglective of righteous and just things; others glory much in their righteousness to man, but shew no piety at all in their lives to God. Now where God giveth this new heart, there is a tender conscience of both: And the first hath been dispatched, under the notion of *Statutes*, which strictly taken, relateth to the purity of Gods instituted Worship.

We come to the second particular, *viz. Righteousness and Equity to man*, contained in these words, *Keep my judgements, and do them*: It cannot be denied, but that the word *Judgement* in the Scripture, is of a vast and large signification, which I shall not enumerate at this time: Here I take it strictly and distinctly, as in other places, for obedience to those Laws of God, which contain righteousness and equity between man and man; in which sense the Prophets often call upon the Israelites, *To do judgement, and justice, and to break off the ways of violence, oppression, wrong, and all unrighteousness.* So that we may observe:

Observ. *A Converted person is very conscientious, and tender in all the duties of righteousness and equity to others.*

He dareth not pray, hear, make a strict profession of Religion to God; and yet lye, cozen, deal falsely, wrong or defraud any man in his dealings. *He hath a respect to all Gods Commandments*, Psal. 119. he knoweth the same God, who commanded the Precepts of the first Table, containing duty to, and worship of God; doth also equally and indispensably require duties of faithfulness and righteousness to men. This point is of singular use; for wherein doth Religion get greater wounds, the Gospel more dishonour, then when men in repute for godliness, are found guilty and blame-worthy in the ways of dishonesty? To have wicked men lye, swear, and forswear, to defraud and injure others, the World expects no better, looks for no other; but for thee, a professor of Religion, it expects all truth, fidelity, righteousness, else thou art a dead flie in the box of Ointment, a scandal and reproach to the ways of God; and thou hadst better never to have been born, than to prove such a stumbling-block in the wayes of piety. Indeed, there are passive scandals, when men will maliciously and falsly raise slanders and false reports of the professors of Religion, laying

laying to their charge things they never did, believing lyes, and misinterpreting their words and actions; and these will be, as long as wicked men are in the World: And hence it is, that all godly men are looked upon as Hypocrites, as such as will lye and do falsly, yea, do any thing for their advantages: But these are passive scandals, and these offences come from the venomous disposition of wicked men; and the godly may rejoyce in their innocency, while such crimes are laid upon them. But then there are active scandals, when men of strict profession, do indeed walk in such unjust and unrighteous wayes, that thereby the name of God is blasphemed among wicked men: Our Saviour saith, *Wo be to that man, by whom such offences come*, Matth. 16.7. So that we desire this truth should sound aloud in the ears of all those, who take themselves for Converts; their faith and piety must be accompanied with all righteousnes and honesty. Hence whereas converted persons have several Titles and Attributes, denoting several qualities in them; there is nothing more frequent and ordinary, then to call them *Righteous*, this is in every page; How then is a Lyer righteous in his words? how is a breaker of his word and promise, righteous in his fidelity? how is a cheater, or an over-reaching man righteous in his dealings?

To open this, consider, *That there is a twofold original Fountain of Righteousnes towards man*: 1. There is the immediate Command and Word of God, and that is called *Jus Divinum*, Divine Righteousnes. 2. There is the Law and Command of Nature, and that is *Jus Humanum*, An humane Righteousnes, or Right: And this is either general, the first and immediate principles of nature, such as the Apostle speaketh of, *Rom.* 1. concerning the Gentiles, *That they had a Law written in their hearts*, Verse 7. about just and unjust things, and their consciences accusing or excusing, upon the omission, or commission of such things, or else they are more remote and particular dictates, such as the good and wholsom Lawes of all Law-givers, in respective Nations: So what is righteous and just between man and man, is to be determined by the Laws of that Land, where they live: Indeed, if any Law-givers (as some Heathenish have) commanded or allowed any thing that is against the Law of God, or the universal dictates of right reason, such commands are not worthy the name of Laws, they are rather unjust decrees, and so do not binde: But otherwise, the Laws of a Land determine what is righteous and just between man and man: for although it be Gods command, *That a man should not steal*, yet they are humane Laws that give the bounds and proprieties of estates to men: So that we Christians, and the Jews, do something differ about the Rules of Righteousnes and Equity; for God was the immediate Law-giver unto that people: *Moses* as a Messenger from God, received from Gods mouth the Judicial Law, which he delivered to them, so that the Judicial Law appointed by God himself, was the Statute-Law of that Realm: Their Laws were not Humane, as all the Laws of Kingdoms and States are since Christs comming, but they were Divine: Their Laws about a Thief, a Murtherer, the Buyer and the Seller, were all Divine Laws, because immediately commanded by God, though the matter was meerly humane: Now its greatly disputed, how far these Judicial Laws, commanding Judgement and Justice between man and man, do binde us Christians; and whether all Law-givers and Statesmen, are not bound to bring in those Judicial Laws? for who can determine what is Righteousnes and Equity better then God, a righteous and wise God? Its not pertinent, to wade into this excellent Question at this time: Though some in this point are very rigid, to make all Obligatory, that are not expresly repealed by Christ; and some again are very remiss and lax; yet all conclude, That the Moral Equity and Reason that was in every Judicial Law, doth binde Christians as well as Jews; and with that we shall conclude this particular, whatsoever Law God made about Justice, Restitution, or punishment to the Jews; the Equity and reason of that Law, doth still binde us, though not the particular manner. As for the New Testament, Christs Kingdom was not, temporal

The fountain and rise of all righteousnes between man and man. Humane laws,

temporal, or of this World; and therefore he only commands Righteousness in the general, and commands that excellent Maxim, which an Heathen Emperour did so much admire, saying, He received it from Christians, *What ye would have men do to you, do ye to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*, Mat. 7. 12. that is, All the duties commanded by the Law, or required by the Prophets, are comprized in this Maxim, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them*: Oh the World would not be full of such wickedness, unrighteousness as it is, if this were observed: And further mark, when our Saviour had pressed them to earnest prayer, and incouraged them therein, he addeth this as a necessary condition to their prayers: So that let men be never such Angels in duties and expressions, let them pretend never so much Piety and Religion, if they walk not by this rule, they follow not Christs directions: Christ therefore he hath only given us general rules of righteousness, and for the particulars, he doth command Christians to obey and submit to the wholsom Laws of that place where they are; as *Rom.* 13. *Pay tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom*: And this the Scripture doth often press, that none might think that the freedom they had by Christ, did take them off from Humane Obligations and Relations: This was a great temptation, they thought because they were Christians, and made free by Christ, that this also did take them off from obedience to Civil Magistrates, and from the Laws they lived under: No, the Scripture is diligent to teach this, That Christianity and the Gospel doth not abolish political and civill Government, but rather greatly advanceth it as an institution of God, pressing obedience thereunto for conscience sake.

Freedom by Christ, takes no man off from Humane Obligations.

Thus I have opened unto you, the fountain and rise of all Righteousness and Equity between man and man.

Now let us consider, what are the grounds why converted persons are tender to do what is just and righteous; yea, the Doctrine may be heightned, They are not only tender about righteous things, but they are very conscionable to do them, though to their external losse. The Psalmist describing who shall ascend into the holy hill of *Sion*, a type of Heaven, giveth such Characters, most of which relate to duties of honesty and righteousness, *Psal.* 15. 2, 3, 4. Verity in words of assertion, and veracity in Promises and Oaths. Our Saviour is large, *Mat.* 5. in convincing and heightning those duties against Murther, Adultery, Periury, condemning all the subtil distinctions the Pharisees had invented to palliate their guilt. And you may read of *Zacheus*, when converted, the first thing that works upon his conscience is, to restore fourfold, where he had wronged any: He went above the Command of God, that required not so much; but a godly man is so tender, in matters of wrong and injustice, that he had rather do above than under his duty.

Reasons of the Doctrine.

Well, Let us see what is the cause of tenderness herein: And

First, *Because this new heart promised in the Text, is nothing but that which in other places is called the Image of God*: Now the Apostle saith, *The Image of God*, which is renewed in all converted persons, *consists partly in righteousness, and partly in true holiness*, Ephes. 4. 24. *Holiness*, that lieth properly in the things that belong to God, *Righteousness*, in the matters that belong to others; So that wheresoever the Image of God is, there is righteousness as well as Holiness; so that as we are called upon, *To be holy, as God is holy*; so to be righteous is our duty, as God is righteous. The Scripture doth much celebrate this attribute of Gods righteousness, that his nature is righteous, his judgements, his word, his actions, yea, all his ways: And now every converted man, labors to write after this Copy: If then you see a man unjust, unconscionable, and false in his ways, say, How is the Image of God in this man? how is God, the father of such an unrighteous man? Oh, its not thy prayers, thy parts, thy abilities, all thy spiritual inlargements, can witness thee to have Gods Image on thy soul, unless this also be accompanying thy conversion.

Secondly

Secondly, *A converted person cannot but keep the judgements of God, and do them, because God doth expresly reject all his Worship, though performed never so zealously and fervently, if we do not also the things of Justice and Equity.* Shouldst thou walk in the Statutes of God, the Ordinances of his Worship, and not keep his Judgements, God will not own thee, *Jer. 7. Will ye lie, and steal, and swear falsly, and come into my house, and say, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord?* See with what indignation God rejects such hypocrites; *Will you come to my Worship, to my Temple, and yet live in those sins of fraud and injustice?* Oh then think, God speaks to thee, if such guil and falshood may be found in thy life: Wilt thou cozen, lye, deal falsly, over-reach others? and yet pray, repeat Sermons, speak of God and Christ? Oh thou vain man, know, God is not mocked. The Jews who were more forward in outward Worship then others, they profered ten thousand Rams, and Rivers of Oyl, yea, the first born of the Womb; But what saith the Prophet *Micah, Cap. 6. 8. He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly?* Oh notable place! worthy all your considerations that profess Religion in a strict manner: Its not parts, opinions; no, though thou hadst Revelations, and the high admirable points of Religion, that will advance thee, unless thou do justly also; and Verse 11. *Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and the bags of deceitful weights:* See, God accounts no such pure, or to have purity, that use any fraud or deceit in their dealings. 2.

Thirdly, *A godly man must needs walk righteously, because such outward actions between man and man, are objects that work upon the Conscience, or are matters wherein the Conscience is concerned, as well as in any thing else.* Consider what *Paul* saith, *Herein I exercise my self, to keep a good Conscience, both towards God, and towards man*, Acts 24. 16. *He exerciseth himself*, that sheweth his diligence, his industry, his setting of himself apart with all his might, to keep a good Conscience, and then observe a good Conscience towards God; for if I be never so just and righteous towards man, yet if I do not also perform all that Worship, and all those duties that immediately belong to him, I have not a good Conscience: And then, towards man; see, Conscience is exercised in things towards man, as well as towards God. A man of Conscience is seen as well in humane affairs, as in religious; he abhorreth that speech, *Quicquid libet, licet*, What is pleasing to a mans desire, that is also lawful: Conscience is not only seen in matters of Religion, and matters of worship, but also in civil and worldly matters; yea, how many cases of Conscience do learned men handle, about the righteousness and unrighteousness of civil actions: *De Jure, & Justitia*, what exact disputes are there? do not then think, that Christ hath purchased any such freedom, as that thou needest not make conscience about civil things; its no matter for them, if thou keep the Doctrine and Worship of Christ: This is a sinful delusion; *For the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared, teaching us to deny ungodly lusts, and to live righteously and soberly:* So then, not only the things of God, are matters of conscience, but the things of man; yea, the things of man work more upon a natural conscience, because they are discerned by the natural principles of reason: Hence the sins of unrighteousness and injustice, do more trouble the Conscience, if once awakened, then any other sins: The pardon of them, or the sense of the pardon, is difficultly obtained; and such sinners have much ado to get comforts, because they have sinned against the plain and clear light of nature; and therefore for such sins that a natural Conscience would condemn, a Catalogue whereof the Apostle giveth in *Rom. 1. 29, 30, 31.* men have had more terrible wounds of Conscience, than for other sins: It must needs then be, that a converted person abounds in all righteousness, because his conscience is tender, its *An heart of flesh.* 3.

Fourthly, *Therefore they walk righteously, because there are so many promises in Scripture made to righteousness:* That must needs be a duty in an eminent 4.

manner,

manner, to which ſo many great and glorious promiſes are annexed: Now you ſhall ſcarce find any action ſo incouraged by God, nor any men, ſo much as righteous men: If a righteous man have but a little eſtate, yet that little, is better then many riches of the wicked, *Pſal.* 37. 16. To have great eſtates, to have large Revenues in this World, and not by righteous wayes, by fraud, oppreſſion, violence, either by thy ſelf or Anceſtors, is like *Jonahs* gourd, that gave him ſome eaſe and ſhelter for a ſeaſon, but preſently there aroſe a worm within it, that conſu-
Prov. 10, 2, 3. med it: So that a righteous man with his little Cottage, little morſel of bread, with his little cruiſe of drink, is better then rich *Dives*, that gets his wealth unjuſtly. The rich man may fare more deliciouſly every day, but the other fareth with more true joy. *Lazarus* may be glad of his crums, but *Dives* may be glad of the crums of his ſpiritual joy and contentation; yea, the righteous man hath that promiſe, which the greateſt Potentate in the World hath not, Verſ. 22. *The righteous ſhall never be forſaken, nor his ſeed beg their bread.* Thus you ſee, righteouſneſs hath Gods ſpiritual bonds for his outward happineſs. And then for outward calamities, if they overtake a Nation, who is looked upon but a righteous man? *Noah*, a righteous man, and a preacher of righteouſneſs, 2 *Pet.* 3. 5. God makes an Ark to ſave him: And from *Lots* example, ſee what a comfortable concluſion *Peter* maketh, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the righteous*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. So that if thou art never ſo forward in any Religious parts and duties, if thou art not a righteous man, thou canſt not lay hold on any temporal mercies, neither mayeſt thou expect deliverance in time of publique calamities; yea, righteouſneſs in evill times, is better then all policy, all wiſdom: Men think, if they take this ſide, or that ſide, then they are ſure to do well; Oh! remember, righteouſneſs is the ſureſt wiſdom, and the ſureſt ſafety, *Prov.* 4. 18. *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day*; yea, righteous men are the Saviours of a Land, of a Nation; For as injuſtice and violence deſtroy it, ſo righteouſneſs exalteth a Nation.

Uſe 1. *Uſe of Admonition*, To all thoſe who have a tender reſpect to Gods Worſhip, they long for a Reformation in the Church, they pray for godly order, they obſerve the Sabbath, they are diligent in Family-duties; Oh take this along with you alſo, Remember righteouſneſs, let thy words be righteous words, void of lying, guil, falſhood, let thy actions be righteous actions, without fraud, oppreſſion, or over-reaching thy Brother, elſe God will caſt all thy duties and Religion, as dung upon thy face: Oh let the World bluſh, and be for ever aſhamed, to take up ſuch reproaches, as that thoſe who will not ſwear, will lye; will over-reach, will deal unjuſtly; Oh let all men be ready to ſay, They regard thy word, more then other mens oaths.

Uſe 2. *Uſe of Inſtruction*, How far moſt men are from this new frame of heart: May we not with the Prophet, go and ſearch for a righteous man, and find none: what lyings, falſhoods, what fraud, what unjuſt trading, and over-reaching of other men! Oh that many men can ſleep in the houſes they are in, can walk in the fields alone, for horror of ſoul, for their unconſcionable dealings, for their unjuſt bargains, for their ſecret fraud they have uſed to get wealth? Doeſt thou not hear the very timber in the wall groan againſt thee? Doth not the ruſt of thy money witneſs againſt thee? The cryes and ſighs, and groans of thoſe whom thou haſt wronged, cry aloud for vengeance.

SERMON XCVII.

The Hammer of Arminianism: *Demonstrating, That God in Converting and Changing a Sinner, works after an Omnipotent, Efficacious and Irresistible Manner. Against the Patrons of Free-will and Power of man to Supernaturall things.*

EZEK. 36. 26.

A new heart also will I give you, and I will take away the heart of stone and give you an heart of flesh.

IT is now time to draw nigh to a conclusion concerning this full and quintessential Text. There remain two particulars only to be improved, that were taken notice of in the main division of the Text. For as we told you, here was observable, the *precious mercy promised*, described both *positively*, and *oppositely*. Here was also the *efficient cause* of this mercie, and the *fruit* thereof: So we told you there was a two-fold *modus*, or manner observable about this mercie: There was *modus rei*, and *modus dicti*; The manner of *Gods* working this grace in those whom he Converts; and that is, *By his mighty omnipotent power*, efficaciously, insuperibly, irresistably: For consider with what authoritie *God* speaks it, *I will take away the heart of stone, I will give an heart of flesh*. *God* will do it, and Mans will shall not hinder: Here is no conditionate, suspended operation, as if *God* should not convert, or turn our hearts to him, till we also by our Free-will began to turn to him: *So that this Text is an Hammer to beat in pieces all those Doctrines of old, and which now of late multiply, concerning Free will, and the power of man to supernaturall things.* May not this Text satisfie every man? Doth it not make every mans heart by nature a stone, insensible and stupid about holy things? Doth not *God* here appropriate the whole worke of Conversion to himself? *I will give an heart of Flesh, I will take away the stony heart*: Yea doth he not also declare the manner how he will do this by his Soveraign, Omnipotent, and irresistible power so that the heart cannot but bow and yield, and give it self up. Whereas now, if the Patrons of Nature and Free-will, who are enemies to *Gods* grace, did speak truth, then *God* should have said no more but this, *I will give you an heart of flesh if you will*; I cannot do it alone, unlesse your Free-will go along with it also; I must suspend, or stay my work till I see what you will do. This is the first manner observable. Then there is *modus dicti*, the second manner how *God* will vouchsafe this, and that is *by way of Gift*, by a free absolute Promise, *I will do thus, and thus*; he does not suppose any previous, or antecedent Condition on our part. I shall at

this time pitch only upon the manner how God works this glorious mercie in us. And from thence observe,

Observ. *That God in Converting and changing our hearts works, after an omnipotent, efficacious, and irresistible manner.* When Gods speaks to the soul to believe, to repent, to reform, it cannot, it will not but repent, he makes of unwilling willing: Even as at the first Creation God said, *Let there be light, and there was light*: There was no power in the Creature to reject Gods Omnipotency: so it is, when God seeth a man wallowing in his bloud, or dead in his sin: if he say, *Arise and walk*: Come forth out of the grave of sinne, as he did to *Lazarus*, presently the soul obeyeth. This point both Doctrinally, and Practically, is very necessary. The Orthodox handling of it, makes much for the excellent praise of grace, and the utter overthrow of those dangerous and proud errors that advance Free-will, giving it either all, or part, in the work of conversion, Contrary to the whole scope of the Scripture, which continually debaseth man, discovering his imporerie and unworthines, but giving all to the power of God. Let us first explain this *Doctrine*, and then prove it.

The Doctrine explained.

1. Man in the first work of conversion is passive and doth not co-operate.

First therefore, *we distinguish between a man in his first Conversion, and afterwards in the progresse of it.* In the first moment and instant of Conversion, which is the taking away the heart of stone, and giving an heart of flesh; there we say, man is meerly a subject passive, and receiving the work of God, he doth not any wayes co-operate, he hath no strength or power to joyn with God; but as *Austin* saith well, These things are wrought in *nobis*, *sine nobis*, in us, yet without us: *God* works this spirituall life, this tender heart in us, without our help or strength; Even as when Christ raised up any dead men, he put natural life into them, this was done in them, yet without their help; Life was put into *Lazarus*, and *Lazarus* had no helping hand to effect this: I shall prove this in the grounds of the Doctrine, I onely now explain it, This then is the truth of *God*, and plainly grounded on Scripture, that man in the first instant of Conversion, hath no Free-will, no power working with *God*, but is a meer passive subject receiving the mighty work of *God* upon his soul: but if you consider man in the progresse of Sanctification, thus having received this heavenly supernaturall life; he is not a meer patient, but being acted and moved by *God*, he also acts and moveth: Then indeed we need grace to quicken and inliven those principles of grace, as before was proved; but yet we do not need a new life to be infused into us.

2. Hereby mans will is not taken away.

Secondly, *Although this is the good truth of God, yet hereby we do not take away the nature of a man, and make him a beast*, as the Adversaries calumniate. Oh say they, this is to turn man into a stock or stone, or deprive him of reason and libertie of will. No, we deny the consequence; for although we say, That he is thus passive for the initiall working of Grace, yet we say he hath his understanding, his reason still, he hath a will still; only, to discern, or will what is good, that he cannot: So then we deny not but a man hath understanding, hath a naturall liberty of his will, he cannot be a man if he have not these: but yet in respect of that which is holy, so his minde is blind, his will is obstinate, and rebellious against it. So that in man here are these three things; To be able to understand, to be able freely to will; this is of meer nature. To have a corrupt understanding, and a corrupt will, is of defiled nature. To understand and will what is good, is of sanctified nature: So then what is the true state of the question? not whether there be an understanding, and the naturall faculty of Free-will in a man, or not. None denyeth that, every man hath Free-will in natural and civil actions; only the question is about the object of these, whether he hath power to understand or will things that are meerly spirituall and supernatural; and this the Scripture doth expresly deny.

3. Thirdly, When we say, *God* doth work grace thus powerfully and irresistibly, the meaning also is not, as if the heart of a man in conversion did not resist and reject the work of the Spirit, in some measure, and in some degrees; for there is no question but the heart of a man doth naturally refuse and oppose the Spirit of *God*. *Stephen* told the Jews, *They had alwayes resisted the Spirit of God*, Acts 7.

And

and the word of God is said to cast down those *strong holds, and every high thing that exalteth it self against God,* 2 Cor. 10. So that as there is a natural contrariety, and active opposition between fire and water; thus there is a constant enmity, and active resisting of Gods Spirit by our spirit; for if this combate and conflict remain still in a godly man, how much more in natural men, that are altogether carnal? You must therefore distinguish between a prevalent conquering, and a resisting gradual: God in Conversion so works, that he takes away the prevalent, but not the gradual resisting. Though a man before he be converted, is froward and full of cavils and prejudices, is unwilling to be saved, cannot abide the truth, doth what he can to stifle all good motions; yet if he belong to Election, God will at last overmaster his heart, and make him of unwilling, willing: his hard heart cannot refuse this Converting grace, because the first thing it doth, is to take away the hardness of heart.

Fourthly, *Therefore its not every kind of grace that a man may acknowledge is enough,* unless it be such a grace as is antecedently efficacious to our will, and omnipotently bowing, and changing of it. *Austin* said, That the *Pelagians* did use the word Grace, *ad frangendam invidiam,* to decline the hatred that their opinion might get; so those that cry up Free-will: They will acknowledge grace, and God forbid they should speak against grace: But thou must know, there hath been in this point, an horrible abuse of well-meaning men, by acknowledging grace, but not such a grace as we told you, that is efficacious of it self by its inward power, not depending upon mans will. *Pelagius* of old, when he saw his opinion was universally distasted, as if he disputed against grace; he then to avoid such an *odium,* began to use the word, and to acknowledge it: insomuch, that he deceived an whole Council, by his ambiguities and generalities, who acquitted him: yea, *Austin* himself, who was so diligent an opposer of him, was almost deceived by him. If therefore any, who dispute for Free-will, speak also of grace, and they say they are for grace; remember, its not every kind of grace that is enough, but such as shall mightily change the heart; not that shall work with Free-will, but first make the will free, which was a Servant, and a Captive to lust: *Tunc est liberum, quando liberatum, Then are ye free, if the Son hath made you free,* Joh. 8. 32. 4.

Fifthly, *Although God thus omnipotently bow the heart, and grace be* vorticordis, *as* Austin *called it, yet there is great use of the Ministry;* of exhortation, of reproof, of commands, of promises and threatnings; for presently men are apt to cavil, and say, If God work all, why then is the Ministry? Why are we exhorted, when we have no power! why doth God command, when we have no ability? For exhortation and the Ministry is necessary, because its the instituted means, by which God will work this, as Christ did not in vain say to *Lazarus, Lazarus* come forth, because it was a practical powerful word, and thus it is here; the Ministry speaks not in vain, we exhort not in vain, because in and by this, God inflames the heart, and quickens it to Good. And so the commands to turn to God, to love him above all things, are not in vain, because they are not to demonstrate our power, but our duty. The Creditor may lawfully demand of his prodigal Debtor, the sum of money he oweth, though he be not able to pay, especially we being full of self-righteousness, carnal confidence, and earthly adherence, these commands are the more earnestly to be pressed, that we may be ashamed and confounded. 5.

Sixthly, *It cannot be denyed but that this Doctrine of Gods sole power, and efficacy of Grace in Conversion, hath been, and may be abused,* and that two wayes, either to sluggishness and negligence, men thinking, that if God take away the stony heart, what need I care? I may sit down and take my ease: Or to *Enthusiasm,* such as will not pray, nor go to the Ordinances, they will only stay at home, and expect the Spirits immediate working on them; and these were two reasons, saith *Chemnitius,* why *Pelagius* a *Brittan,* otherwise an ingenious man, and famous; as also very innocent in his life, did fall into his error on the other side. But there is no truth of God can be preached, but carnal hearts wil abuse it. *Paul* doth abundantly 6.

testifie this, when he speaks of those corrupt inferences some made from his preaching of grace; and the best truths corrupted prove most dangerous: as when they did not use the Manna, according to Gods Institution, it degenerated into noisom worms.

1. Let us discover the grounds of this truth: And first, *All those places of Scripture which do describe the totall, and universal pollution of man*, making him not so much a sinner, as even sin it self; do plainly argue, that Gods converting grace is all in all; that man is a meer patient, and cannot actively consent to the least good thing. Thus *Gen.* 6. *The imagination of the thoughts of a mans heart are onely evil, and that continually*: What can be said more, every imagination or thought that stirreth in a man, its evil, and only evil, and that continually! How then can he consent, or be active to God? so *Ephes.* 2. *You hath he quickned that were dead in sins*: What doth a dead man do, to get life again? *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.* That is, no man, God only doth: Our Saviour saith, *A corrupt Tree cannot bring forth good fruit*; And *Paul*, *Rom.* 8. *A natural man perceiveth not the things of God, neither can he*; he doth not, and he cannot. See what pregnant places of Scripture here are; Mark them, because that unsavory error doth so much spread. If these Texts be true, all our thoughts and affections are only evil; we are dead in sin; we do not, we cannot so much as perceive the things of God: how then dare any think of the power of nature, and her ability to what is holy?

2. Secondly, *This is fully proved by those excellent and emphatical similitudes which are used to declare the work of Conversion*; which the Spirit of God on purpose, useth to declare Gods glorious power in us. As its called often, *A Creation*, and Grace is *A new Creature*: we are said to be *Created to good works*. Now *Creatio fit ex nihilo*, Creation doth suppose nothing pre-existent, either physically, or morally. Was the World when it was created, any ways co-operant to its Creation? Neither is it here. Remember then, its he that hath made us, and not we our selves: If we did not make our selves men, shall we make our selves new Creatures, better then men? so its expressed by the Similitude of a *new Birth*. He hath begotten us by his word. A godly man is said to be *born of God*. Now these are full expressions to shew that we are not born by our free-will, or consent, but by Gods sole power: as *John* 1. Lastly, its compared to the *Resurrection*; *You that were dead hath he quickned*. Now was there ever any man that could raise up himself out of the grave, and give life to himself? yea *Ephes.* 1. Its compared to that *glorious power of God in raising up Christ*, the very self-same power is there said to work in those that believe. Now how can any man answer these comparisons the Scripture useth? for howsoever, Similitudes must not be stretched beyond the scope of him that useth them: yet the Holy Ghost doth for this end use such expressions, that we should attribute all to God, be debased in our selves, saying, *Not unto us Lord*, not to our free-will, or our power; *but to thy name be all glory*.

3. Thirdly, *All those places prove this, which take all ability of good from man, and attribute it wholly to God*: So our Saviour likeneth every man, out of him, to a Branch separated from the Vine, *John* 15. *The Branch out of the Vine, can bring forth no fruit*; Thus every man out of Christ: Hence our Saviour concludes, *Without me, ye can do nothing*. He doth not say, You cannot do any great thing, but nothing: And again, 2 *Cor.* 3. the Apostle saith, *We are not sufficient of our selves, to think one thought, viz.* In reference to the good, either of others, or of our selves. Thus you see, how man is made utterly impotent. Well, then see those places that positively attribute all to God; *Its God that works in us both to will and to do*. You see all is given to him. And again, *What hast thou that thou hast not received?* But above all, how plain is this, *Rom.* 9. *Its not of him that willeth, or him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*. This is a noble place, for who is likely to have it, but him that willeth, or that runneth? yet it is not of him, but of him that sheweth mercy; whereas if Free-will, or mans power had any co-partnership in this work,

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we might as well say, *Its not of him that sheweth mercy, but of him that willeth or runneth.* So that this Doctrine robs God of all that honour and glory that is due to him, both in the prayers and praises of his people. For how can the Persons of Natures Free-will deport themselves in this Duty? Must they not in effect come to this? Lord I pray thee mollifie and soften my heart, it is hard; Again, Lord I praise thee, that thou gavest me an heart to repent, when I consented and was willing; And is not all this highly derogatory to Gods glory? This made profound *Bradwardine* encourage himself to write against *Pelagius*, because he could heartily pray for the grace of God to help him in that work, whereas his adversaries could not do so.

Lastly, If so be that the will and power of man, did make grace effectual to us, so that Gods grace should not take away our hoginess, till we consented, *Then the greatest glory of a mans Conversion would belong to him*: For we may suppose God offering grace equally to the same men, They both live in the same Family, both under the same Ministery. Now what is the cause why one receiveth the Word, and not the other? Shall we say, because he by his free-will entertained the grace of God, and not the other? What derogation would this be to Gods glory? Doth not the Apostle say, *Who hath made thee to differ from another?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. Why was *Peter* converted, and not *Judas*? They both enjoyed the same means, they both saw the same wonderful miracles: Shall any man say, Because *Peter* used his free-will well, and not *Judas*? This were to make *Peter* no more beholding to Christ then *Judas* was. Oh a gracious heart knoweth not how to digest such presumptuous opinions! God made me to differ from others, *By the grace of God, I am what I am.* So then, have all these arguments in your eyes, they are plain and cleer; and then though error be never so subtilly painted, yet it will not make you inamoured with it, especially, if to all these places of Scripture, thou canst set to thy own experience of Gods wonderful change upon thee. Art not thou able to say, That though ten thousand teachers should come and preach free-will, yet thine own experience in thy Conversion, will make thee not believe it; for thou wert so far from consenting, or agreeing to the work of grace, that all thy shifts and care was, how to put off the work of God? How often didst thou labour to blind thy own eyes, to harden thy own heart; how unwilling to be convinced, how sorry to part with thy dear lusts; how often didst thou put off and defer, saying, Yet a little more, and still a little more, that had not God by his mighty power opened thy heart, made thee of unwilling, willing, to this very day thou hadst still been wallowing in thy blood!

4.

Use of Instruction. Concerning a threefold duty, 1. Of deep debasement and humiliation, How vain, weak, and unprofitable are we become? Of rich, to become poor; of honourable, to become debased, is nothing to this; of holy, and altogether holy, to become altogether sinful! Oh why doth not this wound thee? Is there any room left for pride, carnal jollity, and confidence, while in this polluted estate?

Use

2. Of daily thankfulness to God, who hath put forth his great power on thee; Oh call upon thy soul, and all within thee, to speak for the grace of God.

3. Here is encouragement to pray to God, for the subduing of any strong corruptions, or passions: He that did the greater, take away the heart of stone at first, cannot he do the lesse?

SERM. XCVIII.

The Freeneſs of Gods Grace in Converſion diſplayed and maintained againſt Arminians, *and others.*

Ezek. 36. 26, 27.

A new Heart alſo will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, &c.

I Shall now make an end of this Text, whoſe matter like our Saviours loaves, hath multiplied and increaſed in the breaking and diſtributing of it. The laſt thing obſervable, is the manner of the conveyance and beſtowing of it, which is by an abſolute free promiſe, *I will do thus unto you*, here is nothing ſpoken of what they ſhould do, but what God will do; here is no ſpeech of their preparatory diſpoſitions, but Gods gracious operation. Now although it be true, that immediately and directly this promiſe is made to the exiled Jews: therefore with the promiſe of Juſtification and Converſion, is joyned that of reſtitution into their own Land again, with all their former temporal mercies; yet the Apoſtle *Paul* makes it plain, that this is an evangelical promiſe, or the Covenant of Grace for all Ages in the Church, *Heb.* 10. 16. So that this promiſe is not to be underſtood of thoſe only in the Captivity, as the Remonſtrants would evade, whom God ſhould convert, but of all that in ſucceſſive ages, ſhall be brought home unto God. So that as *Iſaac* is ſaid to be *a Child of the promiſe*, becauſe he was not born by natural power, but by the meer promiſe and power of God, ſo all the godly are in this ſenſe, as well as in another, like *Iſaac*, the Children of the promiſe, being not born by the power of fleſh and blood, but by vertue of this promiſe. It is this Text that giveth ſpiritual life to all that receive it. It is becauſe of this promiſe, that the word of God hath any ſucceſful effect at any time.

Doct. *That the Promiſe of Converſion and Regeneration is an abſolute free Promiſe.*

Thus you ſee the Text runneth without any *Ifs*; *God will take away the heart of ſtone*, nothing ſhall fruſtrate his intention. The Lord hath ſaid it, and it will come to paſſe. *Iter ad gratiam* is *per gratiam, perque ipſam venitur ad ipſam.* Grace makes way for it ſelf. As by the light of the Sun, we come to ſee the Sun, *God* doth not only offer grace to the heart, but ſanctifieth the heart to receive it. He doth not only give the Oil, but the cruiſe to receive it. He giveth the bread of life, and the ſtomack alſo to eat it.

To open this Doctrine, Conſider,

1. First, *That a promiſe is a far more comfortable thing then a meer prediction.* God doth many times meerly fore-tel what he will do, but at other times he doth alſo promiſe what he will do: A prophecie of what will be, and a promiſe differ very much. This Text is not a meer prediction, or a meer prophecie, but it is a gracious

ous promise: Now a promise is onely of that which is good, either temporal or spirituall, but a Prophecie or Prediction may be of that which is evil, as well as what is good: All the desolations and calamities that came upon *Jerusalem*, were prophetied of, but we cannot say they were promised, for promises are to be imbraced, as *Paul* excellently expresseth it, *Heb.* 11. 13. to shew how hearty, joyfull, glad and ready the heart should be, to receive them: Oh remember, thou that art exercised with diffidence and discouragement, a promise is to be imbraced, as thou wouldest the dearest, welcomest friend in the world! Again a Promise doth induce some tie and obligation in him that promiseth, but so doth not a meer Prediction; and because *God* promising cannot properly be said to be bound to us, or tied to us; Therefore he is by his promise a debtor to his own fidelity; he cannot deny himself or his own word, *Reddit debita nulli debens*, so that the soul urging *God* with a promise, may say, O Lord, it was in thy choice whether thou wouldst do such a thing or no, but since thou hast promised it, and the word is gone out of thy mouth; Thy truth, thy constancy, thy fidelity must needs make good thy Promise.

Secondly, *The Promises of God as for the matter of them they are two-fold*, some are temporall, and some are spirituall; so for the manner they are either Absolute or Conditional; Absolute promises are such as *God* hath made, and he will fulfill, though we believe not at all. Such Promises doe not depend upon any Grace in us fore-going, neither doe they suppose any good qualification in us; Thus that temporall promise, that *God* will not drown the world, is absolutely determined, though men do not believe it, yet *God* will make it good: So *Isa.* 9. The promise of sending a Christ, a *Messias* into the world, was an Absolute Promise. The calling of the *Gentiles*, and the calling of the Jews again, after the destruction of the *Gentiles*: These are absolutely promised. For as *God* hath some absolute Threatnings for a destruction of a people; and then though there were *Noah*, *Job*, and *Daniel*, *they were not able to deliver that Land*, so he hath many absolute Promises, which all the wickednesse and unbelief of men shall not make void; and of these absolute Promises it is that *Paul* saith, *He is faithfull and cannot deny himself*, 2 Tim. 2. 13. and that our unfaithfulnesse shall not make void the faith of God, *Rom.* 3. 3. For it is plain in many Promises, if we do not believe, God doth not fulfill them; as, if we do not believe, we cannot be justified: but he speaks there of such absolute Promises, as God will certainly accomplish, taking away all obstructions that hinder.

2. Of Promises; Some are Absolute, Some Conditionall.

2. There are Conditional Promises, but that must be understood in a right sense, not as if there were any Conditions to be performed by our strength and power, as if these Conditions were causes and merits of the grace promised. No, they are onely Qualifications of the subject, without which he could not be partaker of the grace promised. Thus Justification is promised to Faith, pardon of sinne to Repentance, overcoming of temptations to him that persevereth, growth and increase of grace to him that improveth the grace he hath, and finally glorification is promised to him onely that is sanctified; Here you see are some Promises made onely to such as have grace already, Grace is the Condition for Grace, only there is no Condition or Qualification required, which is not the Absolute Gift of God at first; for although Justification be promised to him that believeth; If you ask, How a man comes to believe, here that we may not runne *in infinitum*, we must say, It is absolutely promised and wrought by God himself. I do not here curiously dispute about a Qualification and a Condition, nor of the Nature of Conditions; that is to be expected in the controversall part. Now this Promise in the Text, is of the former sort, an Absolute Promise, making way for its own self; As Kings use to carry their own Furniture for their entertainment; So it is here; Grace doth qualifie and worke the very initiall preparations, so that all is from God in a Promise. Nothing is our

plea, but a Promise; all our spirituall riches and treasures are bound upin a Promise.

What is implied in this free gift.

In the next place, let us consider what is comprehended in this, when we say, *Conversion is absolutely promised to the Converted*, and that implieth,

1. First, The free grace of God bestowing this inestimable benefit, *where he pleaseth*, and *When he pleaseth*. Who can give any reason, why God takes away *Jacobs* stony heart, and doth not *Esau's*? Who can give a reason, why God softens *Peters* heart, and not *Judas's*, but onely the meer grace and good pleasure of God? See *Paul* Rom. 11. even ravished with the depth of Gods unsearchable wisdome in this matter; and Christ himself greatly affected herein, *Matth.* 11. *I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast revealed these things to babes, and hidden them from the wise.* And *To you it is given to understand, Matth.* 13. *but not to others.* So that God making his absolute Promise to some, and not to all, doth thereby make his free grace perspicuous, that every mouth may be stopped that should boast of it self.

2. Secondly, *It supposeth, that we cannot so much as prepare, and fit our selves to receive Grace.* God findes an heart of stone in every man, and a stone is impenetrable. It was a doctrine received a long while, *Facienti quod in se est, Deus dat Gratiam*, though differently explained. Let a man do what he can by naturall strength and power, and then God will vouchsafe Grace and supernaturall Mercies to him; yea this is too much divulged at this very day; let a man use his naturalls well, and God will give Supernaturalls; but first there is no such Promise in all the Scripture; you cannot in all the Scripture find any Promise of Grace made to nature: or the improvement of Nature; God no where saith, Do as much as you can, what you are able by your own power, and then I come and help you. There is not such a Promise in Scripture, but either it is absolute, as you have heard, or else Conditionall to some Grace wrought by God already in us.

3. Thirdly, *This Promise is of a most excellent and precious Nature, it farre exceeds all temporall Promises:* Should God promise thee all the glory of the World, all that thy heart could in this life desire, it is nothing to this Promise of a new Heart. Hence *Peter* calls them *Precious Promises*, 1 Pet. 1. *whereby we are made partakers of the Divine Nature.* God to this people in Captivity, promiseth a new and a tender heart, as that which would qualifie or put a lustre upon all other Mercies; Their return from Captivity, Their enjoying of their former houses and Mercies again would be nothing, if God gave not this Mercy also; Oh then that the hearts of men were made more spirituall and wise, to look after and prize this Promise; Let thy condition be never so miserable, thy state never so distressed, yet if under this Promise, thou art in an Ark, when others are tossed up and down in the uncertain waves of this world. Even the Virgin *Mary* that was called Blessed among Women, was more blessed that Christ was spiritually formed in her heart, then that the body of Christ was corporally fashioned in her wombe: Oh then! How wretched is thy estate even in the midst of all earthly prosperity? when thou canst say, These new houses, these new honours are mine, but thou canst not say, This new heart is mine.

4. Fourthly, *This Absolute Promise is sure and certain:* For there is Truth in God, and so he cannot lie; and there is Power in God, and so there cannot be any thing to hinder him; *Heaven and Earth shall sooner passe away, then one Iota or Tittle of this Promise shall fall to ground.* How angry was *God* with *Sarah*, because through unbelief she laughed when *God* told in her Old-age, she should conceive and bring forth a Childe? Do not thou think thy heart, thy lusts are too strong, too naughe for *God* to conquer and subdue? Now the ground why this Promise is so sure, and cannot be frustrated, is, because it is the execution of *Gods* Election from

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all Eternity; and the Election of *God*, that is Absolute, and that cannot be frustrated; Read *Rom.* 11. where the Apostle in a grave and profitable way, handling this sublime Mystery of Predestination, he argueth, That *Gods* Will and Purpose must take effect, Election hath obtained, and it will obtain, If then the Election of *God* be Absolute, and that must stand, then the Promise of Conversion, which is nothing but a gracious Manifestation of this Election, must also be absolute. And this shall suffice for clearing the Nature of this Absolute Promise. But because this Doctrine is subject to carnal Cavils, I shall Answer one or two Objections which a froward Heart, not humbly submitting to the Authority of Scripture, is apt to raise. And

First, It may be said, If this Promise of Conversion be Absolute, *God* will work it, and there is no Condition on our part, that we can by our Nature perform: *Then what need we come to hear the Word preached?* What need we wait on the Ordinances? if God will take away the heart of stone, he will do it, though we be eating and drinking, and making merry, as well as if we be praying, and hearing the Word preached. But take heed of such destructive conclusions, for they do not follow from this truth. For *Object.* 1.

First, *Though we say it be an Absolute Promise, yet the meaning is not, as if it were accomplished without such means as God hath appointed.* Therefore the Promise may be said to be Absolute, either in opposition to Conditional, as if it required something as a Condition to be done on our part, and in this sense it is Absolute; or else it may be called Absolute, as it doth oppose that which is to be ordered by some means, and in this sense it is not Absolute. *Paul* had absolutely fore-told, That none in the Ship that were with him should die; yet he also said, That they must use the meanes, keep in the Ship. And thus God told *David* many times, before he went to the Battel, That he should have the Victory, yet he was carefull to order his Army, and to prepare the Souldiery: So that Gods promises, though they are many times Absolute, yet they also include Meanes for that end. Now there are Meanes of two sorts, The one external, having no immediate influence upon Grace, onely it is the necessary way that God hath commanded every one to walk in, and such are, Comming to the Ordinances, and hearing of the Word. A man hath Free-will or Power of Nature to do this, as any other civil Actions. Indeed, to hear with Faith, to hear with godly Attention and brokennesse of Spirit, that he cannot; but simply to come to hear, and in a generall manner to attend to what is delivered, that by Nature he can do; Now even this very hearing, and this bodily presence God hath required, as a Meanes wherein he will dispense his Grace; So that whosoever doth wilfully neglect the use of these, cannot promise to himself any Conversion; yea, he may certainly conclude, God will not convert him; so that here is no place for thy prophane Cavil; What need I come and hear? what need I frequent preaching? Yes, every way; for though God hath absolutely promised this Mercy, yet it is in the use and exercise of these Meanes: Oh then that those who customarily and wilfully absent themselves from the preaching of the Word, would consider, that they turn their back upon God, and in effect say, They will not be converted, We will not have this new Heart, this new Life. If a man shall wilfully refuse to eat or drink, will he not be accounted a self-murderer? and if thou carelesly, or obstinately refusest the Word of life, will not God judge thee for a self-damner? *Answ.*

But then in the next place, *There are formall and internall Meanes that do immediately receive Christ in the soul*, such as Faith, or hearing in Faith, and these a Man hath no power of himself to perform, Faith being the 2.

gift of God. So then although internal Meanes of obtaining Christ, cannot by natural strength be performed, yet there are external Meanes, which whosoever shall refuse, he doth reject the counsel of God, and pronounceth himself unworthy of Salvation. Therefore harbor no more such thoughts, unless thou wilt violently throw thy self into the mouth of Hell.

Object. 2. But secondly, It may be said, *If Gods Promise of Conversion be Absolute, This is discouraging, and may easily cast men into despair*; for though I desire, and groan after Conversion, yet if I be not in this Absolute Promise, I can never be partaker of it.

Answ. But first consider, *Though it be Absolute, yet it is also Indefinite, it doth not exclude any particular man*; So that no man in the World, living under the meanes of Grace, can truly say, he is not intended in this Promise, as well as others. Seeing therefore, God hath no where excluded thee, by name, there is no clause that shuts thee out; it is a grievous sin in thee, to shut thy self out. So then, Know those dejecting and discouraging thoughts they arise from Hell; It is the Devil and thy own black heart, not this Doctrine that discourageth. If there were a Malefactor among many others, and the Magistrate should make an indefinite promise that he would spare them, and pardon them, and doth not by name exclude any man, would any be so injurious to himself, as to question, whether he be intended in the pardon or no? No lesse injurious art thou to thy self, in disputing against this promise.

2. Secondly, *If thou livest under the means of Grace, and where the word of Life is tendered, then thou hast much more cause to hope that this Promise of Conversion doth belong to thee.* Indeed, all those who sit in Heathenish darkness, to whom the Gospel was never yet made known, they are a hopeless people, while so; there is no Promise without the Church of God: But to those who have the grace of God tendered to them, they may plead this Argument, Lord, thou hast given us the outward means, we have the Ministery, that sounds daily in our ears, Oh give us the inward Grace also!

3. Thirdly, *If thou art one who groanest and desirest after Conversion, and art afraid lest God hath excluded thee*, be of good comfort, *for those sighs and pantings after Grace; are a sure sign that thou art included, yea, that this work of a new heart, and a tender heart, is already begun in thee.* Where you hear a Sigh, or a Groan in a man, it is a sign there is a natural life; and so, where there are inward Groans and Affections for this new heart, there are the beginnings, and the foundation is already laid, *God will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoaking Flax.* Even hunger and thirst hath a promise of being satisfied, *Matth.* 5. Therefore let this turn thy water into Wine presently.

4. Fourthly, *Although the promise of Conversion be in a well explained sense Absolute, yet there is no man damned that would have been converted, only he wanted the Promise, God would not put his name in there, and that is the cause of his utter perishing.* No, this is a firm truth, *O Israel, thy destruction is of thy self*, And, *As I live, saith God, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should live. Turn ye, turn ye, Why will ye die?* This is a sure truth, Every mans Damnation is of his own self; he doth wilfully and with delight, go on in destructive wayes, he cannot say, Lord, I would have been converted, but the Absolutenes of thy Election, or thy Promise hindered, yea, a mans own wilful lusts they destroy him: Insomuch, that were it not for this Promise of God, none at all would be converted: It is well we are not left to Free-will, for then not one would be converted: And the Adversaries to this Opinion, cannot instance in one Heathen, ever since the World was made, that did use his Naturals so well, that God vouchsafed Supernaturals; insomuch, that

that the Doctrine of Free-will may well cast a man into Despair; for if my Conversion cannot be wrought till I go along with God in it, I am for ever undone.

Lastly, *Let it be granted, that there are some Difficulties in this Doctrine, that humane reason cannot untie all the knots,* yet this is no more then *Paul* acknowledged, *Rom. 9.* and reproveth man for such bold Disputing with God: Gods wayes are wise and just, even when they are hidden and secret to us. There is no end, when humane wisdom talketh against heavenly Dispensations.

Use. Is this promise, though absolute, yet ordered in the use of means to be accomplished? Then be diligent in hearing the Word: Oh pray that this new heart may at last be found in thee! Oh why is it, that we should leave this Text before every Auditor find the power of it upon his soul! Oh that the leaving of this Text might not leave one carnal stony heart! Oh that as we have done the Text, so God had done this work in you! But oh our barrenness, our barrenness! Oh the just anger and wrath of God against many persons, to whom God saith, Let them alone in their sins!

SECT. XII.

Handling the Work of Grace under the Title of *Vocation* or *Calling*.

SERM. XCIX.

The Nature of Vocation *opened, in reſpect of the Efficient and Inſtrumental Cauſes of it.*

Rom. 8. 30.

Moreover, whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called, &c.

WE have conſidered the Work of Grace, under ſeveral eminent Titles that the Scripture giveth to it. The next I ſhall pitch upon, is, *Vocation* or *Calling*; for Converſion is often notified by this term. And this Text will afford a juſt occaſion to treat of it. To underſtand the Text, let us conſider the divine and admirable Connexion of this Verſe, with the precedent Matter at the 28. Verſe. The Apoſtle after other Conſolations, adminiſtred to afflicted believers, he giveth them to this ſoveraign Cordial, *All things work together for good, to them that are called according to Gods purpoſe.* This promiſe, or faithful ſaying, is enough to bear up the heart of any troubled believer; for what can he deſire more? If this will not ſatisfie, what can? Though adverſities, temptations, &c. are called evils, in reſpect of ſenſe; yet in reſpect of thy ſpiritual advantage, ſo they are good adverſities, they are good evils, without any contradiction; and ſee how emphatical every word is. We know, not only *Paul*, but all the godly by their experience, & wiſe comparing of things together, come to know this. This is ſuch a truth, that no Chriſtian ſhould be ignorant of; And then, *All things*; he doth not ſay Some, but all things; not only proſperity, not only ſpiritual mercies, but even all miſeries and afflictions whatſoever, yea, ſins themſelves by Gods goodneſſe, being repented of, make them more wary and humble; as fire driveth out

pain by fire: and then *they work together*; though this or that particular affliction of it self may seem to make thee worse, to cause thy Sun to go many degrees backwards, yet altogether promote thy good; They do that in a Constellation, which a simple Aspect would not do. So that this true and faithful saying, if imbraced by all acceptation of believing, is enough to make a man in a continual transfiguration. Such a believer may truly say, *Soul, take thy spiritual ease, for here is much spiritual good treasured up for thee*; but this bread is only given to Children; This pearl is not cast to dogs and swine; for in the next place, we are told who they are, to whom this priviledge belongs, and they are set out,

1. By their Duty or Grace, *They love God.*

2. By Gods mercy vouchsafed to them, *They are called according to his purpose.* Whereupon the Apostle makes a golden chain of all the causes of Salvation, inseparably linked together, that none may be taken away one from another. It was a saying that a man might sooner wrest *Hercules* his Club out of his hand, then divide one of *Homers* Verses from another, the matter was so dependant and connexed together; but certainly, all these causes are so divinely joyned together, that none can part them. And the first round in this Chain is Gods fore-knowledge, or rather Gods fore-acknowledging; For by fore-knowledge, is not meant any prescience, or prevision of such as would use their free-will, and natural power well. No, to that repugneth the whole currant of the Scripture, which makes all good works the fruit and effect of Predestination, not the motive, or cause of it, otherwise it would be Post-destination, rather then Predestination; but to fore-know, is as much as to approve of, and to love, according to that rule, Words signifying acts of the understanding, are many times put for the concomitant and subsequent affections and effects thereof. Thus the simple word, *To know*, is many times put for approbation, care and love. Thus *Psal.* 1. *The Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous*, John 10. *I know my Sheep*; And the compound, to *fore-know*, also is used in this sense, *Rom.* 11. *God hath not cast away his people whom he fore-knew*, *i. e.* did approve and love. So 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God*, and so it is applyed to Christ, Verse 20. in that Chapter. Upon this foreknowledge, succeeds Predestination, and these are acts of God from all eternity; and from these as the fountain, streams the first effect in time, and that is Calling, *Whom he hath predestinated, he hath called.*

A two-fold Calling.

There is a twofold calling, one external only, consisting in the tender and offer of grace, inviting of men to come in; in which sense our Saviour said, *Many are called, but few are chosen.* The other internal and efficacious also, when God with the outward Offer changeth the heart, making it to imbrace Christ; and in this sense it is said here, *Called*; upon this follow two further benefits, Justified and Glorified. It is not my purpose to insist on them, nor to dispute the order, Whether Calling, or Justification precede; or, Whether Sanctification be included in this word Calling. These things are not within my compass; only take notice of this, That the Phrase in the Preterperfect Tense, *He hath justified*, doth not imply a Justification from all eternity, no more then that we are called and glorified from eternity; but the Apostle speaks in the past-time, either to shew the certainty of it; or else because we are glorified already in Christ our Head, and have the sure pledges of it in this life; or else, because he had begun in that Tense, when he spake of Predestination, and could use no other, he continued the same expression in the other priviledges.

The Text thus opened, I come to that particular benefit I intend, *viz. Called*, and for the sense of the word, you must know it signifies to have a being, and existence, yet such, as that it is celebrated, and publickly taken notice of. *Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Sons of God*, Matth. 5. 9. *And, behold what love he hath shewn, that we should be called the Sons of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 1. And we read of a threefold Calling;

First, That external and civil condition of life which a man lives in; in which

which sense, every one is bid to *continue in the Calling he is called unto*, 1 Cor. 7. 20.

Secondly, For any spiritual function, or office in the Church. Thus the Apostleship is often styled a *Calling*.

And lastly, For that grace of God, whereby he calls us out of the state of ignorance, Paganism and prophaneness, to a state of truth, godliness and glory; which is either meerly external, vouchsafed even to hypocrites and reprobates, or internal, bestowed on the godly only; And this the Apostle meaneth in the Text. From whence observe,

Observ. *That whom God hath predestinated from all eternity, and will glorifie in the World to come, he doth in this life powerfully call out of their sins and ignorance.*

As they are regenerated, or converted, so they are a called people: I shall first treat of this powerful Calling which the godly only have: And to consider this distinctly, let us open the nature of it:

1. In respect of the efficient cause.
2. The instrumental.
3. The nature of it.
4. The terms from whence we are called, and to which we are called.

Effectual Vocation opened.

I. In the efficient cause, God.

And for the *efficient Cause*, God is he that calleth us with this powerful lively calling: and herein consider,

1. First, *The omnipotent power and strength of God, who by his word can make such a wonderful change* He doth but call, and man who is naturally such an enemy and adversary to what is good, doth presently become a friend; so that the Scripture expressing this work of conversion, doth therein allude to Gods Creation at first, when by his Word all things were made: He said, *Let there be light, and there was light*; *Verba Dei sunt Opera*, said *Luther*, Gods words are works; this made the Apostle say, He calleth those things that are not, as if they were, 1 *Cor.* 1. Gods call gives a ready being to those things that had no existency at all before. So that herein is declared the Soveraign power of God; God at the first Creation, called for those things to appear, which lay in the dark womb of nothing, and they presently came out; Even as if a Master should give a call to his servant, who stands in the next room ready to receive his commands. Behold then, and admire at the great power of *God*, who hath made this wonderful change on thee. Christ did no sooner call from Heaven to *Paul*, but he presently answers, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* So that *Gods* call even to the deaf is not in vain, because at the same time, he giveth ears to hear. Oh then let the godly consider, How comes grace, any godly affections or desires to be in thy heart? It had been impossible for such things to lodge in thy soul, had not *God* given this mighty call, saying, Let there be faith, repentance, godly sorrow; and presently there is.

2. Secondly, *Take notice of the full sufficiency and happiness of God, who thus calls thee to communion with him.* It is not for any want or indigency, that day by day he thus calls and invites thee to come in: No, *God* is blessed, and all-sufficient: had he not created Angels, or the visible World, he had been gloriously happy in the enjoying of himself, but yet out of his goodness, he is willing to invite and call in men, that they also may be made happy; Christ in his Parable expressed this, when he sent out his servants to invite men unto the feast, and when they refused, then he sent for the lame and blind, *Luk.* 14. 21. such as he could have no need of, but they did exceedingly need him; and so there is no day that *God* sends us his servants to invite you to this spiritual feast, but this consideration should wound thee, and make thee ashamed: Oh why doth *God* thus call me? Why am I thus invited? Is not *God* happy and glorious enough? though I perish and be damned in my sins? *What is man, Lord, and the Son of man, that thou shouldest be thus mindful of him?* as if *God* could not be a *God*, a happy, blessed *God*, unless thou also wert brought into happiness.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *In Gods calling of us, consider the freeness of his grace, and the absoluteness of his purpose and good pleasure therein.* He calls some, and leaves others; yea the farre greater part of mankind, and those who have the greatest pomp and glory in this World, on whom the eyes of the World are most open. Thus the Apostle, *Not many noble, not many wise hath God called,* 1 Cor. 1. 28. but the poor and despicable things of the World hath God chosen. Indeed, God partly by his Word to some, and partly by the works of Creation to others, hath left every man without excuse; he hath given to all men, pregnant witnesses of his goodness, wisdom and power, that they might seek after him; but this is not the call of grace that is the fruit of Election; for that takes effect, and cannot be totally and finally resisted; Thou therefore who hast been thus called, cry out, *Oh the depths and unsearchable riches of Gods mercy!* There are *two in a bed, one is called, the other is left: Two in a Family, one is taken, and the other left.* As in *Pauls* Conversion, when there was a voice from Heaven, *Paul* heard distinctly, but his Companions did not; so in the same Sermon, which is Gods call, one heareth it distinctly, receiveth the power of it in his heart, knoweth the experimental meaning of it; but others hear only a general sound, they understand nothing of it. Certainly, this freeness of Gods grace in calling thee, and not others, who haply have not been such sinners as thou hast been, never committed such foul abominations as thou hast done; that hath not called others of better parts, abilities and greater wisdom, who thereby, if converted, might have brought more glory and honour to God, than thou ever art likely to do. This free arbitrary grace (I say) of which a man can give no reason in the world, but his own good pleasure, may justly fill thy heart with all astonishment, and ravishing amazements. This is the mystery of Gods grace, that thou shouldest alwayes be contemplating and beholding, Oh Lord! Why am I called, and not another? Why doth the Word of God come home to my soul, and others feel and understand nothing at all? It was a great favour of God to little *Samuel,* 1 *Sam.* 3. 9. when God called him twice or thrice, and did reveal his will to him, and took no notice of *Eli,* the Priest and Judge in *Israel.* Oh hath not the Lord done as wonderfully in visiting thy soul, calling unto thee often, when those of greater parts, and greater pomp and glory, are passed by?

Fourthly, *This Call of God, it doth alwayes speed.* There is a present hearing and obedience in those that are thus called. Indeed there is an outward calling, and many who are so called, do sinfully and wickedly reject it, and of such, few are saved comparatively; but of those who are called according to his purpose, as the Apostle here speaketh, there God giveth a ready ear, a ready heart; that they stand up presently, and say, *Behold I come to do thy will; Mine eare hast thou opened; Thy Law is written within my heart;* So that however, for a long time thou mayest not either understand this Call of God, as little *Samuel* did not, but give a little listning, and then lie down to sleep again; after that, a second time to give a little listening, & then lie down to sleep again; so thou, have some affections and desires, then presently they give over, and thou goest to thy lusts and thy sins again, then God a second, a third, yea many a time, (who knoweth how often?) gives thee further calling, and that makes thee more startle, and more awakened, but thou doest again return to thy old lusts, thy old follies, thy old distempers, yet at last God takes away all that blindness and wilfulness which is upon thee, and makes thee readily, and fully give up thy self to obey him.

Lastly, *This Call of God is very various, in respect of the time, when it is vouchsafed to them:* Some are called in their infancy, some in their youth, some in their old-age; even as in the Parable, *Matth.* 20. some were hired in to work in the Vineyard at the ninth, others at the eleventh hour; not that this should make a man procrastinate and put off his conversion to *God;* for by the 12th hour in that Parable, is not meant the latter days of a mans life, but the later days of the World

World; The Jews they were called at the 9th hour, the Gentiles they were called at the 11th, yet God giveth the same Heaven to both, that is the proper meaning of that Parable. Indeed we have an instance of one, and but of one called at the end of his days, the Thief on the Crosse, of whom *Austin* observation is obvious; There is one, that none should despair thinking it impossible for him to be converted, who hath put off this work till death hath arrested him: and yet it is but one, that none may presume: Of many men that have poisoned themselves, it may be one doth recover; but this would be no encouragement to thee, to swallow down poison: How many dreadful and sad examples mayst thou see and hear of, those who as they lived wickedly, so dyed as desperately? Howsoever therefore Gods calling be various, to some sooner, to some later, yet happy are they who are called out of sin betimes in their younger years, they have lesse wounded their Consciences, less dishonoured *God*, and they have the longer time to do him service, and the best service: Oh how happy is it, when the dayes of thy youth have been filled with the strength and power of God! Oh therefore that the younger sort of people, would expect and look after this Call of *God*! Do not think its for old men ready to drop in the grave, for them only to repent, and to leave off their sins, but you must enjoy the pleasures and lusts of youth: Oh *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*! When *God* calls thee in thy tender years, thou wilt not then make those sad shipwracks of thy soul, as others doe.

In the next place consider, *The Instrument of Gods Call, and that is, the preaching of the Word.* You may say, Where doth *God* call, and when doth he call, we have no immediate voice from Heaven speaking to us, How then can this be? The answer is, God calls you by the Ministers, we are Embassadors comming in his name to you; so that you who refuse them, speaking the word of God, you refuse God himself calling to you. They are the voice of God crying, *Prepare ye a way for the Lord*; so that every Sabbath-day God calls you by the Ministers: and you that think, that if you should have an immediate voice from Heaven calling to you, then you would obey and submit; know you would not do it, if you refuse the word of God delivered to you by the Ministry: Our saviour said, *That they who would not believe Moses, nor the Prophets neither would if one should rise from the dead, and come unto them*, Luk. 16.29. It is neither our calling or speaking, but Christ by us, that ye refuse and contemn; and how great and farre your judgement will be, who neglect this great salvation, the Scripture bids every man think within himself, *Heb.* 2, 3. Indeed there are many things have a voice to call us, besides the Word; The Heavens and all the creatures, are so many tongues calling unto us; The Rod of affliction, that hath a voice, and we are commanded to hear what that speaks; but the preaching of the Word, that is the powerful voice, and the immediate motions and inspirations of the Spirit accompanying it, these give life and quickning in speaking: That as God hath a voice of the Trumpet and the Archangel, to raise men from the dead; so he hath also of the Word, to raise men out of their security in sinning. Thus you have the efficient and instrumental cause of Gods Calling. Many practical Uses may be made of this; As

II. In the instrument. Gods word.

The creatures afflictions.

First, To magnifie and adore the love of *God* to mankind, that doth vouchsafe such a gracious and merciful call to man fallen. This is more than he hath done to the Apostate Angels, *Heb.* 2.16. To which of them hath he appointed a word of Ministery and Reconciliation? not only the Priest and the Levite, but even the good *Samaritan* hath passed by these, and taken no notice of them: yea, come we to man, Is there not farre the greater number of mankind, that though they have a witness enough to condem them, yet have not the externall offer and call of God? The name of Christ and Faith hath not sounded within their coasts. Yea, come we closer still, How many thousands and thousands are there, who have the outward call, but are wholly destitute of the inward call? Now

Use.

if God passe by so many thousands of Angels, and ten thousands of men, and give thee this inward call, May not this fill thy heart with hot burning love to God? Canst thou contain thy self? As a wicked tongue, set on fire from hell, doth also set the whole creation on fire; so thy tongue set on fire with this heavenly love, should make thee cry out to all creatures, To blesse God for his mercy. *David* had his heart thus burning within him, when he calls upon the whole creation, and every creature by name to prayse God. The Queen of *Sheba* fainted to hear the wisdom, and behold all the glory of *Solomon*; how much rather may thy heart sink within thee, through admiration of Gods love in this particular?

Use 2. *Use 2.* Of terror to those who wilfully resist the outward call of God. God speaks once, twice, yea many times, and thou hearest not; Oh consider, that if thou calleth thy servant again, and again, if yet he will not come, thou presently judgest it disobedience and rebellion; How then shall God account of thee otherwise? Again, remember this time of Gods gracious calling is very uncertain; this may be the last day, the last hour: *To day, if ye will hear, harden not your hearts*; you have put off many days already, tremble exceedingly, lest this day of grace be setting in a black dismal night. Lastly, consider, now God calls you, and you hear not; the day of death, and other miseries will be comming on thee, when thou wilt call on God, and he will mete thy own measure to thee: (See *Proverbs* 1. and the latter end); then thou wilt call to God, to Christ, to Angels, to Saints; And none will hear.

SERM. C.

Holding forth the Nature of Vocation, or Divine Calling.

Rom. 8. 30.

Moreover, whom he hath predestinate, them he hath called.

THe efficient and instrumental cause of this *Divine Calling*, mentioned in the Text, hath already been declared. We come now to consider, *The nature* wherein it consists; and the termes *from which, to which*, in it.

And first for the nature of it, because you heard it was partly external, and partly internal; even as man consists of an external body, and an internal invisible soul; so this heavenly calling hath that which is visible, sounding into the ear, and that which is invisible and internal, reaching with a mighty power even to the heart.

1. The nature of vocation. As external it lieth 1. principally in the preaching of the Word.

Because, I say, it consists of these two parts, we must consider the Nature of it first as external, and then as internal.

First, *And as it is external, so it doth primarily, and principally lie in the preaching of the word*: The merciful and gracious invitation of sinners to come in by the Gospel, is the very essence of external calling: So that the Word of God preached to you, whether it be in Commands, Promises or Threatnings, is to be

be received by you as the voyce and calling of God from heaven to you: The Scripture commanding to leave such a sin, and obedience to such a duty; is as truly the voice and call of God, as any immediate extraordinary call that God ever vouchsafed to any; its as truly and as really, and with as much faith to be obeyed; though it be not so immediately and miraculously. As for example, *Paul* had this wonderfull voyce from heaven, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Now every prophane, ungodly man, hath as really Gods voyce from heaven by the word speaking to him, *Turn, turn ye, why will ye dye?* Its said, when *Jerusalem* was so near its destruction, they had a call from heaven, saying, *Migremus hinc*, Let us depart hence: No lesse doth every ungodly man hear every day, when he is bid to depart from iniquity, and have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darknesse. Its noted as a great mercy of God to *Lot*, that he sent an Angel to call him out of *Sodom*, when fire and brimstone was immediately to be poured from heaven upon it; and whereas *Lot* delayed and delayed, the Angel even pulled him out, who was unwilling for his own good; This is a fit representation of our spirituall calling out of sin; the Angels are the Ministers of God, that cry daily, Come out of the world, lest you partake of the judgements of the world; and men are so unwilling, they do so dearly love their *Sodom*, though it will cost them fire and brimstone, that we are to compel you out of it: This then is a main fundamentall principle, introductory to our conversion, when we consider God as speaking and calling to us by his word, to look upon it as truly and really the call of God, as if there were immediate voyces from heaven speaking to us by name. *Heb.* 12. Christ is said still to speak to us from heaven; And how is that, but by the word? and the Scripture is called *The word of God*; God speaks it now, as well as at first when he commanded it to be written: Oh then tremble, lest you should be in the number of those who reject God, calling of you: Should God send innumerable company of Angels from heaven to you, to call you out of your lusts, to the state of grace, it would not be more really (though more immediately) the voyce of God, then what we out of the word declare unto you: This then undoeth you, you do not believe God himself by the word speaking to you, you do not think this is Gods voyce, that he speaks thus and thus to me, & therfore you are still setled in a willfull way of sinning. Now the word preached is Gods calling:

First, Instrumentally, as its the word of God, the word that comes out of his mouth. All the Ministers of God, faithfully discharging their trust, are voyces crying unto you, *Prepare a way for the Lord*; And κηρύσσειν, to preach, is to be the Lords solemn Herald, to offer peace to Rebellious enemies if they will come in, and if not, in a solemn and dreadfull manner, to denounce his heavy wrath and curse: Look not then on Ministers in their Ambassage, as weak frail men, subject to the like passions with others, but as Ambassadors, as coming in the name of God, that cry out, Thus saith the Lord. Oh thou sinner, wash thee from thy iniquity; thus saith the Lord, and not man, And

Secondly, The word preached doth call men objectively, the matter of it is so precious, good, excellent, and necessary, as that it doth strongly invite every man. Some Grammarians say, That that which is good and excellent, is called καλὸν, because it doth καλεῖν, it doth call and invite men to be in love with it. This is sure about the matter of Gods word; How Divine and supernatural is it? what purity, what heavenly affections doth that require? Insomuch, that no humane precepts concerning piety and honesty ever came near to the Bible: And then the good things promised, are wholly transcending mans capacity; they are such as never entered into the heart of man to conceive: Justification, the light of Gods countenance, Eternall happinesse and glory in heaven, were not men so brutishly earthly, would ravish them, and make them run after

them; as the Church said *Cant* 1. 3. *Because of the savor of thy ointments, therefore do the virgins love thee*: If therefore ye would consider, both how great that infinite majesty is, who doth call you; and what that bait is he doth invite you to, even great and admirable privileges, this would excite in you such vehement and impatient desires after them, that all the lusts and pleasures of sin, would be accounted as drosse and nolsom vomit: Oh then think more and more, and consider of this calling. Shall the Devill and lusts call, and thou runne after them, though into hells mouth? but God calleth, and thou refuse him? *Come unto me all ye that passe by*, saith the whorish woman; and in the same manner, every kinde of sin; and how many venture into her snare! *But come unto me*, saith Christ, *all ye that labour, and you shall finde rest unto your soul*, Mat. 11. in this men are refractory.

2. In the Second place, *The call of God consists in those things that are lesse principal*, and such, as without the former, would do no good; but when joyned with it, is very subservient and instrumentall. And here we may speak of three tongues calling aloud to us, two without us, and one within us; which I call externall, though within us, because of it selfe it doth not internally change the heart of a man.

The whole Creation. And the first lesse principall, *Is the whole Creation*: All the Creatures are like so many tongues, as they declare the Glory, Power, and Wisdom of God.

The voyce of the Creatures of it self, not sufficient to call men to repentance. As for that dangerous opinion, that makes Gods calling of man to repentance by the Creatures, to be enough and sufficient, we reject, as that which cuts at the very root of free grace: A voyce, indeed, we grant they have, but yet they make like *Pauls* Trumpet, an uncertain sound; men cannot by them know the nature of God and his Worship, and wherein our Justification doth consist: Therefore whereas *Psal.* 19. the Psalmist had spoken of the sound of the heavens, and how they all declare the glory of God, he comes in the latter part to commend the Law of God, for that which hath spirituall effects indeed; *viz.* To convert the soul, and to forwarn from sin: Thou canst not then look up to heaven, or down to the earth, but there is some imperfect voyce calling on thee to glorifie that great and wonderfull Creator, who made all these things: But then

The Judgements of God. Secondly, There are the Judgements and Chastisements of God upon men for sin; these have a louder and more distinct voyce: Thus the Prophet, *Hear ye the Rod*, Micah 6. 9. *The Rod speaketh*: There are no judgements, either publique or personall, but by them God calls aloud to thee to leave thy sins: Every blow thou hast, every stroke thou feelest, say, Now God speaketh, Oh let me hearken and hear what God would have me do. Those *Psalmes* that have this Inscription, *Maschil*, or *To give Instruction*, do for the most part contain the Chastisements and afflictions of God for sin: And so thou mayest say of every affliction, This is an affliction to give instruction; of every losse, This is a losse to give instruction. Take heed then of that deaf ear, that when God smiteth thee once, twice, yea, many times, yet thou hearest nothing at all; as deaf men do not hear the most terrible thundrings that are.

The voyce of Conscience. Lastly, There is a voyce that calls aloud; and that is the conscience God hath planted in thee, for that is Gods lamp put into thy breast: All the birings and accusings, and smitings that it gives thee for thy sins, is no lesse then God calling thee by that; Indeed this is a naturall call, and so reducible to Gods externall calling, yet it is more peremptory, more quick and lively then either the Creatures or Afflictions are: Hearken then to the calls, to the voyce that speaks in thy bosom; How often doth that say, O vile and beastly sinner, when wilt thou leave these lusts? when wilt thou depart from these evil ways? Is it not high time that thou wert changed from these nolsom courses? Take heed of putting out this light, do not stop the mouth of it, for it will one day cry louder:

That

That will be the gnawing worm, which will never dye. Thus much for the first part.

II. As Internal.

We come to the Second, wherein the marrow and life of this *Holy calling* doth consist; and that is in internal works upon the soul, which are carefully to be observed, that so every man may consider whether he be in the number of those called ones or no, *that shall also be glorified*; for its no mercy, yea an aggravation of misery, to be called here outwardly, and to enjoy the priviledges of grace, and hereafter to be damned finally.

1. It consists:

Now the first particular, wherein this inward calling consists, is, *to open the ear of man, to give him a spirituall hearing, so that he doth readily close with the call*: Every man naturally hath a deaf ear to *Gods* call: Though he hath a natural ear to hear the sound of the words, yet he hath not a spirituall ear; whence is that phrase so often, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*: So that God, in effectual calling of his people to him, doth not onely cause a sound of words, but changeth the ear, so that it heareth spiritually: This is called *An awakened ear*, or *A revealed ear*, Isa. 50. 4. Men naturally have their ears stopt and filled with earthly and mucky lusts: So that as deaf men cannot hear the most terrible noise of thunderings; so neither do such the dreadfull voyce of God threatning in his word: So that in this powerfull calling, *God* saith *Ephaphta*, to every deaf man, *be thou opened*. Consider then with thy self, if thou art thus called, *God* hath given thee a quick ready ear; no sooner doth God speak, but thou sayest, *Lo here am I, O Lord, to do thy will*; and although lusts, and the cares of the world make a noise, yet thou hearest Gods voyce above all: You may hear with attention, with delight and understanding, and yet not have this gracious ear.

2.

Secondly, *This effectuall calling is opening the heart chiefly, so that it gives up it self in obedience unto God*: Where there is this calling after Gods purpose, there the heart is so mollified and softned, that the first thing it pitcheth upon, is with *Paul*, to say, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* This is so natural a consequent from spirituall hearing, that *that* hearing, is often put for obedience in the Scripture: Thus, as *Paul*, *I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision*, Acts 26. 19. so is every man when inwardly called, he doth no longer resist and refuse the gracious offers of God, he stands it out no more; yea it grieveth and troubleth him at the very heart, that he hath withstood the call of God so often: It might now be too late, God might justly refuse to hear him, as he refused to hear God. Now this obedience unto God calling, hath these properties.

First, *It is ready obedience*: When once this powerfull call manifests it self, there is no more disputing, there is no more arguings, but God that calls, I must obey: Indeed, the outward offer of grace is too often rejected, and many Antecedaneous motions to conversions are suffocated, but when God giveth this last call, then the dead come out of the grave and live; then saith *Paul*, *Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood*, Gal. 1. As Christ called from heaven to *Paul*, so *Paul* had flesh, and blood on earth calling him the clean contrary way. Carnal consultations, they invited to safety, ease, pleasure; but the holy calling of God, to self-denial, zeal, and sufferings for Gods sake, prevailed: Behold then the mighty power of God, that as soon as his word is out of his mouth, to such a soul imbracing and desiring its old lusts, immediately he throweth all away, though pleasures, profits, carnal friends, all hang upon him to be the same he was once: Thus *Matthew* the Publican, as soon as Christ called him, *Come and follow me*, immediately he leaveth his profit and imployment, going after Christ: So that this calling hath a speedy obedience.

Secondly, *It hath a cheerfull and willing obedience*: They follow this call with delight, yea they bleſſe and greatly praise God, that hath made them partakers of this *Heavenly calling*, as the Apostle calls it, *Heb.* 3. 1. Hence it is that

Calling in the Text is reckoned among those other inestimable benefits of Predestination, Justification, and Glorification. How gladly did *Zacheus* receive Christ; when Christ called to him! And the Apostles, when Christ called, how willingly did they part with all to accompany him! So then, if thou art thus effectually called, there is a willingnesse, a delight, and exceeding great joy put into thy soul: Oh, thou blessed God that ever he took notice of thee, thou art even ravished with the admiration of *Gods* love and kindnesse to thee, its no grief or trouble of heart to leave thy former lusts; yea, they are a burthen, a shame now to thee. As if a poor Peasants daughter should be called to marry a great King; how doth this transcendently affect her? it doth not trouble her to leave her old Cottage, to put off her old rags, to eat no more of her coorse food, but rather rejoyceth in the change that is made. Thus it is here, when God gives thee this call, then thou abhorrest the prophane, ignorant, and ungodly life that thou didst once live: then thou sayest, I have found Manna for those husks I fed upon; I have found gold for that noisom dung I had before.

Thirdly, *Its an universal obedience*: This effectuall calling hath divers duties to which a man is called, and it refuseth none. When God called *Abraham* out of his own Countrey, from his kindred, and from the Idolatry he lived in; What an illimited obedience did *Abraham* demonstrate? *He went*, saith the Text, *not knowing whither he did go*, Heb. 11. 8. God called him out of his Countrey, and did not tell him whither he should go, nor what he should do, yet *Abrahams* obedience is ready to all this: This then cuts off the hopes of hypocrites, who run hastily after Gods command in some particulars, and in some duties, where self-advantage, self-interest or applause may shew it self; but universally to obey in every command, in every call, that they cannot yield unto.

Lastly, *Its a pure obedience*: This calling hath a pure obedience, that is, obedience for obedience sake, because of the Authority and Soveraignty of God who commands; as you see it was in *Abraham*, in *Paul*, in *Moses*, in the Apostles: There was no reason in the world of their obedience, but meerly because God called them: And then is obedience acceptable, when it is because *God* requireth it. But

3. Thirdly, *This effectuall calling gives a spirituall understanding and abilities, to know how to perform the duties and parts of this calling*: Hence they are said to be *made lights in the Lord*, Eph. 4. *God* never called any man to a particular calling, either in Church or State, but he also gave him abilities and fitnesse for it; as *Moses*, *Aaron*, *Joshua*, yea *Saul* had Kingly, though not gracious abilities bestowed on him: Now *God* will much more do thus in a generall and more noble calling. Oh then consider, how art thou qualified with abilities to be a Christian, to be a Believer? *God* hath called thee out of darknesse, out of prophaneness, to be a Saint, to walk as a member of Christ; now, hast thou abilities for this calling? Do you not deride those that are in any calling, and have no abilities for it? do you not think such men unworthy of their place? No lesse art thou of this calling, who knowest not how to believe, to pray, to live, to worship *God* as thy calling doth require.

4. Fourthly, *This effectual calling denoteth a separation, or setting of a man apart unto that which he is called*: So that he must not live as he hath done, but he must solely busie himself in that to which he is called: Thus the Apostle speaking of his calling to be an Apostle, he saith, *He was set apart*: And in all worldly callings, you see men are set apart betimes unto it, and that they wholly give themselves to what their calling is; and its a sure forerunner of poverty, to be negligent herein: And thus it is in our spirituall calling, *God* hath set apart the godly man for himself, he calls him out of the world, and from all his former lusts, to live wholly unto him: Oh how little do men consider, that they

they are separated and set apart by their calling, unto God only, not to live to sin, or the World any more: Thus you have heard wherein the nature of this spiritual effectual Calling doth consist.

Use 1. The first use is of Instruction, That most men in the Church of God, have but an outward calling meerly, they have no inward at all; for where is the opened ear, the opened heart? where is the ready, speedy and pure universal obedience unto all that God calls upon us to do? where is the spiritual abilities for all the parts of our Christian calling? where are men separated and set apart from their lusts to holiness only? and yet no man is inwardly called, till he have all these: Oh then let thy soul make bitter lamentations in secret, let it pour out tears abundantly, saying, O Lord, this heavenly calling hath been no further then here yet, it hath not gone to the heart; How often hast thou called upon me to leave these sins, to love those duties, and yet I have wilfully been disobedient. Oh it is this inward effectual calling, that will only make thee happy; yet from this very day, from this very Sermon that calleth you at this time, how many will go to their former lusts and wickedness? what, may not God and his Ministers say, *We are weary with calling any more*, as God told *Ezekiel*, *Ezek.* 3.6. If he did send him to a people of a strange speech, & a strange language, surely they would hear, but the Hachites would not: So if God should send us to call the Heathens and Pagans, surely they would regard the call, they would entertain it; but you have lived long under this mercy, and so neglect it: *Non respondere, pro convitio est*, What dishonour is it then to God, not to answer, calling so many years together?

SERM. CI.

A further Explanation of the Nature of Effectual calling, *by shewing* from what, *and* to what *God calls us, As also, the Epithets the Scripture gives it.*

Rom. 8. 30.

whom he hath predestinated, those he hath called.

THe next thing considerable, that will further explain the nature of this Calling, is the *Terminus à quo*, and *Ad quem*: And this is manifold. Gods people are called:

1. From blindeness into light.

First therefore, *Gods calling is from a state of blindness and ignorance, into marvellous and wonderful light*: As if a man in a dark Dungeon, where there was not the least beam of light, should be called out of that to the glorious Sun: *Ye were once darkness, but now are ye light*, saith the Apostle, *Ephes.* 5.8, yea, it's called *Marvellous light*, 1 Pet. 2.9. for the wonderful glory and excellency of it; A man without this holy calling, is like hell it self, a place of utter darkness, Now the call of God brings a twofold light with it, as you heard; one external,

external, inlightning all without us; and the other internal, inlightning the mind and soul of a man.

In darkneſs there is, firſt, *Darger of ſtumbling and fall*; a man knoweth not where he goeth: Thus, while not effectually called, men are ready to fall into hell every ſtep they take; they ſee not the hell that is open to devour them, they do they know not what. And

Secondly, In darkneſs, *There is great uncomfortableneſs*. The Scripture expreſſeth miſery, and gloomy calamities, under the name of *Darkneſs*; and certainly the life of every unconverted man, is a very uncomfortable life; for though he may have carnal, tranſient pleaſures, like the blaze of thorns; yet he hath no induring joy: The very name of death, and a day of judgement, is like *Belſhazzars* hand-writing on the wall to him, it puts him into trembling and quaking: But this effectual Calling of God, hath the contrary to theſe, its directive to a mans ſteps; he knoweth how to live, how to dye; he knoweth how to abound, how to want: The word of God being his Counſellor, giveth him wiſe, ſafe, and holy counſel; and hereupon he is never confounded; he is never fallen into the pit, unleſs when he forſakes this light: And then for the ſecond effect of comfort, they are called, *To rejoyce, and again to rejoyce*, Phil. 3. 1. they are called, *To peace with God*, Phil. 4. 4. to ſerenity in their own Conſciences, like the upper Region that is not diſturbed by any Meteors; inſomuch, that it is both a ſin, and a great diſhonour unto our holy calling, for a godly man to live in diſcouragements and dejections: Its as if there were not that comfort, that happineſs, that joy in poſſeſſing of God, as the Scripture informs us.

2. From ungodly to holy lives.

Secondly, *We are called from a way of prophaneneſs and ungodlineſs, to live pure and holy lives*: Thus the Apoſtle, *God hath not called us to uncleanneſs, but unto holineſs*, 1 Theſ. 4. 7. By *Uncleanneſs*, he mean any groſs ſins; inſomuch, that none can conclude, he is partaker of this Divine Calling, that ſtill wallowеth in the filthy luſts of ſin. Oh then, what terror ſhould this ſtrike into every prophane man! If I am thus ungodly, I am not effectually called; if not called, I cannot be juſtified, I cannot be glorified: How then dare I live as I do? hath God called me to live like a Beaſt? Is it not ſaid, That we are Saints by calling, not wicked and ungodly by calling? Oh ſhame, and confound thy ſoul; ſaying, Where hath God called thee to lye, to ſwear, to be proud, covetous? it cannot be lamented enough, to ſee how Chriſtians forget the nature of their Holy Calling: Faſten and fix this meditation upon your hearts; how doth this wickedneſs and diſſolute neſs of mine conſiſt with my calling? The Apoſtle exhorts, *That they would walk worthy of their Vocation*, Epheſ. 4. 1. do actions beſeeming ſuch an holy, heavenly priviledge; therefore thou ſhouldeſt always reflect on thy ſelf, ſaying, How doth this agree with my calling? how doth this become my calling? A man grown up to years, will not ſtill uſe his childiſh tricks, he ſaith, it becomes not his gravity; how much rather mayeſt thou ſay, Such follies, luſts, do not become my Chriſtianity? This is to make my ſelf a monſter, and ſpiritually deformed.

3. From falſe worſhip to true.

Thirdly, *Gods Call is from all our former ways of Idolatry, ſuperſtition, or falſe worſhip, to the pure and commanded worſhip of God*: All men by nature are ſaid, *To walk according to the courſe of this World*, Epheſ. 2. 2. but the godly are converted from ſerving their dumb Idols: Thus *Abraham*, God calls him from his own Land, a place of Idolatry, to ſerve him. Gods people are called, *To come out of Egypt and Babylon, that they might worſhip him according to his own way*: The Churches name is *Eccleſia*, A company called together, to ſerve and worſhip God; now who ſhall preſcribe that worſhip, but God himſelf? not the ſervants, but the maſter of the houſe, muſt ſet down the orders to be kept therein; ſo that the pure and ſpiritual worſhipping of God, is one main end of our calling, for God would have a ſelect company out of the World, who

ſhould

should own him, give up themselves to him, and glorifie him; which is manifestly done by a sincere, pure worshipping of him: Its strange therefore, that people should be no more inquisitive about Gods pure worship, wherein it consists; not to dote upon, or affect customs and traditions of worship, but to look for the institution and command of God.

Fourthly, *Its a call out of the World, and all things therein, to the enjoyment of God, and applying our selves only to him*: And herein lyeth the excellency of this call. All the World lyeth in wickedness, their principles, actions and ends are all wicked; now God calls us out of this *Sodom*, out of this *Egyptian* darkness, to enjoy him. Hence pure Religion is said to be, *In keeping a man unspotted from the World*, Jam. 1. 27. that expression denotes, That the World and worldly things are like pitch, there is a readiness to defile, to pollute; and a godly man labors to keep his garments clean: So the Apostle exhorts, *That we should not be conformed to the fashion of the World, but transformed through the renewing of the mind, that we may know what is the good and acceptable will of God*, Rom. 12. 2. And thus the World and the Church are two distinct, opposite things; its therefore defined to be *Cœtus evocatorum*, A company called out of the World: Though we be men made of the Earth, yet our Christian-being is by a Divine call and power: As precious stones, though their materials are of the Earth, yet the precious nature they have, is only from the Heavens; as the Clouds, though they be vapors arising from the Earth, yet they fly up to Heaven, and follow the motions thereof; So it is here, The people of God, though consisting of flesh and blood, and living an animal life, as others, yet they have a spiritual life; insomuch, that though they live in the World, yet they are not of the World: So that our calling is not only from gross soul sins, but also from immoderate and inordinate affections, even to lawful things; called therefore, *An heavenly calling*, because its from Heaven, and lifteth up to Heaven. Hence the godly have *their conversation in Heaven*, Phil. 3. 20. Heaven, and not the World, is that Corporation and City they are of; they live by the Laws of Heaven, not the World; their comforts are heavenly comforts, not earthly; their priviledges are heavenly priviledges, not worldly. Art thou effectually called? herein it will discover it self, if thy heart and affections be set on heavenly things, where God and Christ are, who are the beloved of thy soul: Its not enough to cast off all the noisom rags and menstrous cloathes of impiety, but to throw away all burthens, and any heavy weight that may hinder thee in thy race to Heaven: The Apostle supposeth this, when he prescribes us such a spare dyet upon these things; *They that marry, must be as if they married not*, 1 Cor. 7. so they that buy, and have the World. God hath called you to look upwards; and as man cannot at the same time look with one eye up to Heaven, and another towards the Earth; so neither can a man have his heart towards God, and also towards the World: Live not then, as if thy soul were made of dust, as well as thy body; as if thou were a worm in this sense, for feeding on the Earth, as well as for contemptibleness: The Devil feeding on the dust of the Earth, is the Devil possessing earthly men. Consider, that God hath called you to enjoy himself, to be made one with Christ, and to have communion and fellowship with him: Oh how should this Sunne put out the Stars, this Manna, that Garlike.

4. Out of the world, to enjoy God.

Fifthly, *This calling is from a state of quietness and security in the World, to a state of trouble and affliction*: The very calling of a Christian, is accompanied with many oppositions and sufferings, which formerly he was not used unto; and herein our Saviour dealt very faithfully, when he invited men to come unto him. He bid them prepare for the crosse, for all evil intreating in the World: *The World loves his own*, but it will hate those that are Christs; and again, *He that will be his Disciple, must take up his cross, and follow him*; this Christ admoniseth aforehand: That as the Devil inticeth by the present pleasures, but concealeth

5. From a state of quietness, to a state of affliction.

concealeth the future miseries; Christ doth take a contrary way, he revealeth the future glory and happiness, but doth also instruct them concerning the present affliction and troubles they shall have in this World; so then, sad and grievous exercises they must look for: The Apostle *Peter* speaks excellently to this purpose, 1 *Pet.* 2. where laying down admirable directions about sufferings, that it must not be for any fault or imprudence in our selves, but meerly out of conscience to God, so that we suffer wrongfully in all we suffer; he tells them, *This is acceptable unto God*; *And hereunto we are called*; observe that, to unjust and wrongful sufferings he is called: The Scripture useth an equivalent phrase, *Hereunto you were appointed*; yea, God from all eternity did predestinate us to be conformable unto Christ in his sufferings; therefore as our Saviour saith, Let every one that sets out against the World and the Devil in Christs name, that will take up his profession, let him first consider, what he can do, Can he leave all, forsake all, deny all, and part with every dearly beloved object for Christs sake? then he may take much comfort: The Hypocrite, the temporary Believer, he proveth an unfaithful Apostate, because of this, he did not forecast what he should do, when the scorching heat of the Sun should arise, and this made our Saviour even refuse the offer, that some tendred to be Disciples, following of him, because he knew what unstedfastness and unfaithfulness was in their heart. Now as this hath some disheartning in it, that while we lived slaves to our lusts, all things were quiet, and we lived secure lives; but since we gave up our selves to God, every thing hath risen up against us, we have procured an univerial *odium*: I say, though this may discourage, yet in that the Scripture saith, we are called to it, it denoteth, That these things come by the gracious providence of a merciful Father; and that where he calls, he gives it to strength and proportionable abilities: so that the very expression, *To be called to trouble in this World*, hath much sweetness, and hopeful incouragement in it. And

6. From an estate of misery, to a state of blessedness.

Lastly, *This holy calling is from a state of danger and misery, to a state of blessedness and happiness*: God doth not only call us out of the sinfulness of the world, but also all that wrath and vengeance which is prepared for men of the world. As *Lot*, you heard, was called out of *Sodom*, or as *Noah* was called into the Ark, when the Waves of water did overwhelm other: Thus God calls his people from that fire and brimstone, and from that deluge of fury, which is to fall upon others: so some make this expression of calling to be a metaphor or allusion to one that calleth such a man to come out of an house, when the main Pillars are ready to break in pieces. Oh then, never think much to be called out of this *Egypt*, this *Babylon*; for its Gods mercy to thee, when thou shalt see the beams fall upon others, the fire and brimston burn others, and thou escape; this must needs fill thee with much astonishment and joy: Stand not then consulting, How shall I part with these pleasures, these profits? How shall I depart from the custom of evil doing? for its a mercy to be snatched from them: Oh say rather, How can I indure those everlasting burnings?

What Epithets or Properties the Scripture gives this calling.

In the next place, let us consider, what Epithets or Properties the Scripture gives this calling. And

1. First, *Its a calling according to his purpose, and his good pleasure, as here in this Chapter*: And this denoteth, That God doth not foresee any merit, or any motive in us, but its meerly of his pleasure; therefore its in the passive sense, we are called, *viz.* *By God*; its never said, We call our selves; and withall it being a calling according to Gods purpose, it supposeth the sure and powerful efficacy of it: God cannot be disappointed in his purpose, *The Counsel of the Lord will stand*; so that all this debateth man, makes him an impotent and undone man to all eternity, if God help not: Oh then let this take thee up, as it were, into the third Heavens, let it mightily rejoyce thy heart, who hath

hath had this compassion and pity on thee: Alas! God from all eternity had a purpose to be thus gracious unto thee; when thou hadst no being at all, long before the foundations of the world were laid, God had thoughts of love and kindnesse to thee, when thou couldst not desire or beg for such a mercy: Its no wonder that *Paul* doth often run out in large expressions concerning Gods Love, his Predestination for all eternity, when he hath occasion to praise God for the calling and conversion of any in time; for this is to trace the stream, till we finde the well-head: This is, as it was with *Ezekiels* waters, to go from waters that rise up to the ankle, at last to that which will cover the head: What can then be able to discourage the heart of a godly man? what can disquiet? Here is a *Catholicon* for all diseases: Art thou afflicted? God hath called thee from all eternity? Art thou despised by men? God esteemed of thee from the beginning of the world.

Secondly, *Its an holy calling.* This is a frequent adjective; so that there is nothing in this calling, but what comes from an holy God: The matter of it is holy, and the end altogether holy, insomuch, that all prophane ungodly men should blush to own this profession: Thou art called to be a Saint, to be in the world, as a bright star in a dark night; But, is to be proud, covetous, prophane, malicious? is this to be a Saint? Oh how should our bowels rowl within us, to see how God is dishonoured, his Laws are broaken, and that by those, who glory in the call of a Christian! Oh let not such grosse sinnes be any more practised or named among you! As in the Temple, every vessel was holy, so every part of thy soul and body should be holy; an holy minde, holy thoughts, holy affections, holy eyes, an holy tongue, an holy body: Thy calling being thus an holy calling, all within thee, and all that floweth from thee, should also be holy. 2.

Thirdly, *Its an heavenly calling:* Whether you do regard the efficient cause, God from heaven calls to these dry bones to live; if the matter of it, it is to be heavenly in our conversations; to go through this world as pilgrims, to be as the fowls of the heaven, which though they pitch upon the ground for their food, yet they presently fly up to heaven: The priviledges are heavenly, pardon of sin, assurance of Gods favor, increase in grace, communion with God, and enjoying of God in heaven for ever. We see how *David* prized being son in Law to a King: There are callings to great outward glory in this world; but God vouchsafeth a greater mercy to those who have this heavenly calling. 3.

Fourthly, *Its an high calling*, Phil. 3. 14. The Apostle there compareth himself in the progresse of Christianity, to one striving and running in a race; there should be no dulnes no wearisomnes in this way: now as in those races, they who judged sate in an high place, and by an Herald called out every man to run; so he saith, God from heaven calls out every man to make haste in this way of godlinesse; so that thou art to hear him from heaven, calling thee to presse forward, to think nothing is yet done, as long as so much remaineth behinde; and if they were so earnest for a corruptible crown, how much rather should we for an incorruptible? 4.

Lastly, *Its a calling dispensed in a very contrary way to humane expectations*; which makes that Doctrine of *Congrua vocatio* to fall to the ground: *You see your calling* (saith *Paul*) *not many wise, not many noble are called, but he hath called the foolish and weak things of the world, to confound the wise:* Herein God hath manifested his dreadfull power, and glorious wisdom; *It hath not been of him that runneth, or willeth, but of him that calleth*, that so there might be no glorying or boasting in the arm of flesh: If you consider who they are that God hath called in all ages, they have not been the learned men, the great men, the wise men of the world, but the poor and the contemptible; some, indeed, there have been, therefore he saith, *Not many*, which implyeth some: *Julian* 5. 1 Cor. 1. 26.

objected against the Christian Religion, That they were Maids and Nurses, and Eunuchs, and such contemptible persons that were Christians; not considering that *God* doth not call according to outward appearance.

Use of Admonition; Let all those particular terms (from which, and to which) in this calling, be so many vehement motives and strong goads to obey this call. Doth *God* call thee to thy losse? Doth he offer thee any wrong, when he invites thee? He calls thee from a Dungeon to a Palace, from Hell to Heaven, from slavery to liberty, and yet wilt thou refuse? Oh thou art a man of no reason, no consideration, no faith, else thy heart would eccho presently to *Gods* Call! Oh consider, that as *God* hath this gracious call inviting thee; so he hath dreadfull terrible calls for those that refuse him! The Scripture tells of *Gods* calling for a Famine, of his calling for a *Sword*; *God* calls for Judgements, as well as for Mercies; He that calls thee now graciously, will one day call to the Devils to torment, to the flames of Hell eternally to scorch thee.

SERMON CII.

Contains some choise Properties or Effects that accompany Effectuall Vocation, *whereby men may examine and try themselves, whether they be so called, or no.*

Rom. 8. 30.

Whom he hath predestinated, those he hath called.

I Shall conclude this Text with an instance of some choise properties of effects that do accompany this calling. For seeing to such only belong Predestination, Justification, and Glorification, Our life and eternal happiness lieth in this, to be found in the number of these called ones. Our *Saviour* told the Disciples, *That they should not rejoyce in that they wrought miracles, that the Devils were subject to them, but rather that their names were written in the book of life*, Luk. 10, 20. Much lesse then, may men rejoyce in being rich, honoured and blessed in this World, if they be not also called to grace and glory. The former are good things of this life only, the latter of the life to come.

First then, *Wouldst thou know whether thou art inwardly called, as well as outwardly, then examine thy self in thy real answer and obedience to it*; For to be called according to *Gods* purpose, is to have the event accompanying it. God no sooner calls but they hear. What *God* bids them do, they do; what *God* bids them forsake, they forsake. Oh but to how many do the Prophets stretch out their arms in vain! To what deaf men do we call? In what a *Babel* and confusion hath sin cast men, they are commanded to live holily, but oh the prophaneness! God calls them to purity, but oh the uncleanness! Thus instead of answering, there is the contrary disobedience. God looks for grapes, and behold wilde grapes. Think not then it can be well with thee, that there are

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any hopes of thy Justification or Glorification, as long as thou stoppest the ear against Gods call: if effectually called, thou wouldst cry out, Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth; when God gave *Abraham* a call and command to sacrifice his only Sonne, he riseth early in the morning, and can lay his knife to the very throat of his only Child; Even thus when God commands thee to mortifie such a sin, to crucifie such a lust, spare it not, kill it, else it will kill thee, it will damn thee; now the effectually called person, he gets up betimes, he layeth his knife to the throat of his dearest lusts, and now he hates this *Tamar* more then ever he loved her: Oh, he cryeth out, I must either part with God or sin, I must either leave Christ or this lust, I cannot keep them both together, and then with much zeal and detestation, he casts away his beloved transgressions, God then careth not for thy formalities, thy complements, thy duties, but is thy obedience ready? God calls thee to love him, to hate sin: Is this command obeyed? *Obedience is better then Sacrifice*: Didst thou obey God in giving over thy swearing, thy drunkennesse, thy lusts; This would be more acceptable then ten thousand Sacrifices, or outward duties of Religion. Even the very inanimate creatures have obeyed when called upon, as when the Prophet cryed, *O Altar, Altar, hear the word of the Lord*, and it rent in pieces; but thou continuest obstinate.

Secondly, *The effectually called, they do carefully observe and watch against all those contrary calls, that would turn them out of the way*: For you must know as God hath his voice calling; so sin and the devil they have their sweet Syrenian Songs; They have their calls also, one calls one way, the other a contrary way. *Solomon* tells us of wisdom, that is, *Godlinesse uttering her voice in the streets, crying aloud*, Prov. 1. 7. *To the simple and unwise, that they get understanding*: and then again he tells us of the whorish Woman, as diligent to call-in the simple man that passeth by, to defile himself. Our Saviour bids us, *Be wise as Serpents*, Mat. 11. 16. Now as he stoppeth his ear, that he may not hear the charmers, though charming never so wisely, because its for his destruction; so much rather ought we to close up the ear against all those sweet allurements of sin, and temptations thereunto: *Ulysses* his companions were all turned into beasts, (as they feigned) because they would drink of those inticing cups, and hearken to the Syrenian Songs. And therefore men are degenerated into all lusts and beastlinesse, because they hearken to sense, to lusts, they attend to their call and cry. As *Eve* giving ear to the Serpent, and not refusing him at first, was immediately destroyed; now then the truly called ones, they stop the ear against the World, against carnal wisdom, and hearken only what God saith, what the Scripture saith. It is many times the profession of a Christian; Oh if I could but know when *God* calls to me! If I could but understand his will, what he would have me to do, then I would run after him; now there is no such way to finde out *God* calling of thee, as to bid all carnal reasonings, all fleshly consultations stand aloof of. If a man would see the true representation of his face in a glasse, he must wipe off all the dust and filth, and so if thou wouldst discern *Gods* calling of thee from all other false calls, be sure that earthly considerations be not laid in the scale: Thus *Paul* refused that consultation which flesh and blood profered him, *Gal.* 1. 16. and so Christ bid *Peter*, *Depart, for he was a Satan to him*, Mat. 8 33. an adversary to him. 2.

Thirdly, *He that is effectually called, is careful to walk in a worthy and beseeming manner of it. I beseech you*, saith *Paul*, *that you walk worthy of your calling*, *Ephes.* 4. 1. Every man in any condition or estate, is to look to the τὸ πρέπον *quod decet*, what is fitting and becomming him. Those actions are beseeming a Child, which are not an old man, men of better breeding have a suitable deportment: And thus it is in Christianity, Thy holy and heavenly calling should raise up thy spirits, ennoble thy conversation. As *Nehemiah* argued from the office and trust that was committed to him; *Shall such a man as I flee?* Thou should then 3.

consider

conſider, Shall ſuch an one as I tumble and wallow in the mire? Shall I that have ſuch an holy and heavenly calling, live like a beaſt? There is nothing ſhould ſo confound and aſhame a man for all his ſinfull & ungodly wayes, as that they are not ſutable unto, nor worthy of his Calling. *Michal* did in a ſinfull way deſpiſe *David* in her heart, when ſhe ſaw him dancing before the Ark, *Thou haſt made thy ſelfe* (ſaith ſhe, 2 *Sam.* 6.) *like one of the vile fellows this day*; like one of the baſe ones of the world. She did this maliciouſly; but thou mayeſt truly ſay to thy ſoul, when overcome with unruly paſſions, inordinate affections; Thou haſt made thy ſelf like the vileſt of men to day. Do then things that are beſeeming your calling, that are a grace to it, that may bring an honour and a glory to it in the eyes of the world. Shall the Sunne ſend forth no more light then the dung-hill? Shall a Roſe ſmell no ſweeter then a noiſome weed? Dead Flies are not fit to fall in a box of ointment. As *Iacob* ſaid of his two ſons, when they had committed ſuch outragious wickedneſſe on the *Sichemites*, *You have made me to ſtink before the inhabitants of the Land.* Thus alſo mayeſt thou ſay to all unmortified affections, uncrucified luſts, You have made me to ſtink, to be loathſome and abominable before God. Therefore above all things look to this, that your converſation be as becometh this heavenly calling, you may not live as you liſt, walk as you pleaſe, make your luſts and your pleaſures a rule to walk by; but conſider what you are called to.

4. Fourthly, *He that is effectually called, doth alwayes deſire to go after Gods calling of him*: For as in Philoſophy, we are nouriſhed by thoſe things we at firſt conſiſt of, Thus it is here, by what meanes at firſt we come to be holy, to be godly, *viz.* by Gods calling of us, we did not harken to other calls. So it is ſtill in our progreſſe, God ſtill calleth us by his Word to every duty, to avoid every ſin, and herein we follow God. Oh it is admirable wiſdom in all things to conſider what Call we have! Thoſe ſervants are blamed for their raſhneſſe, and not commended for their forwardneſs, who come or go before they are called, before they have their errand. *Pſ.* 25. 9. *The upright he will teach and guide in his way*, Pſ. 32. 8. And ſo *David*, *Thou wilt guide me with thy eye*: As a father by his eye doth ſignifie what he would have his ſonne to do; ſo it is here, God doth by his Word either particularly or generally give him a call to every action or condition. And he that was at firſt wrought upon by *Gods* calling, doth ſtill look after this Starre to guide him. He that undertaketh any thing, doth any thing without Gods calling, doth as the devil tempted our Saviour, *Set himſelf upon a pinnacle, and throw himſelf headlong.* For this is the onely ſupport and encouragement under any aſſaults, that all is done in obedience to Gods calling us. Thus *Moſes*, *Iſaiah*, *David*, *Jeremiah* and *Paul*, with many others, could never have conflicted with all the difficulties they did, had not this calling of God ſupported them; ſo then as at the firſt our ſpirituall life came by a divine calling, thus the progreſſe alſo is by Gods calling; we do not intrude our ſelves, we go not before we have a command, we hearken to what God will ſay; and hence it is that the devil doth ſo induſtriouſly imitate the voice of God; Even as the beaſt *Hyena* imitates the voice of the Shepherd to deſtroy the ſheep; he pretends revelations from God, he brings forcible interpretations of Scripture; ſo great a matter is it eſpecially in doubtfull things, and where the Scripture hath onely generall rules, and not particular determinations, to diſtinguiſh the voice of God from the voice of Satan, or our own deſires. How many are apt to take the dictates and deſires of their own ſpirits for the voice of God! As the old Prophet counterfeited a voice and a call of God contrary to what the other Prophet had received, and thereby ſeduced him: It is then a ſure and good ſign of a called perſon, in all matters, eſpecially of great concerement, to regard Gods calling, whether it be to do or to ſuffer: whereas wicked men they never attend to *Gods* directing of them, *Gods* guiding of them, never pray about this, or ſtudy and meditate about this, but as their luſts and profits carry them, ſo they run headlong.

Fifth

Fifthly, *He that is effectually called, is greatly thankefull, even to aſtoniſhment and raviſhment, for this high mercy vouchſafed to him.* The grace of the Goſpel wherefoever it doth powerfully work, doth ſo ſoften and melt the heart, that prayſe and thankfulneſs is the great duty he ſtudies; Oh how ſhall I be thankfull? and the Lord inlarge my heart to prayſe him! What am I that God ſhould call me! Oh, Why is my Soul ſo barren, ſo ſtreightned! Why do I not run all over? Why doth not my heart boil within me? Thus a man partaker of this heavenly calling is affected; See the Apoſtles aggravation of Gods mercy herein, 2 *Tim.* 1.9. *Who hath called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpoſe and grace.* The Apoſtle melts himſelf into raviſhing thoughts about this, The God that needed me not, yea the God that was ſo greatly offended, and provoked by me, he out of his free grace calls me from ſin and danger, from all that eternal wrath I was obnoxious unto; and therefore, *Bleſſe the Lord, O my Soul, and let all within thee bleſſe his holy name.* You may obſerve the Apoſtle *Pauls* diſpoſition, when he hath occaſion to ſpeak of Gods converting, and calling him out of the former luſts of ſin he lived in, he is ſo tranſported, that he never ſatisfieth himſelf with a thankful remembrance thereof; Wherein men are affected, and what they account extraordinary mercies, there they will alwayes be ſpeaking; Their Meditations are ſweet, and burning about it. So that it is a ſure ſign, thou waſt never yet effectually called, if thy ſoul many times break not out with joy and thankſgiving herein. Shall outward mercies, ſafety, wealth, honours, ſo work upon thee, as we ſee they did on *Haman*, and ſhall it not much more prevail with thee, to be called to be Gods friend, and Gods favourite? How ſhould all the afflictions and diſcouragements in the world be eaſily ſubdued, when this conſideration prevaileth with thee? 5.

Sixthly, *He that is thus called according to Gods purpoſe, he is careful not to apoſtatize, or to go back again into that courſe of ſin and wickedneſs, out of which he was called.* As a man called out of fetters, and a dark dungeon, by all meanes takes heed, that he be not thrown in there again. The *Iſraelites* were called only bodily out of *Ægypt*, not in their affections and heart, when they ſo deſired to make themſelves a Captain, and to return thither again; yea, when they loathed that admirable Manna, and deſired their former Onyons again: Oh it is a ſign thou waſt never powerfully called! who for a time indeed, haſt given over thy beaſtly luſts, wilt commit them no more, but not long after, doſt return to the practice of them again; This makes it worſe with thee, then if thou hadſt never begun to cleanſe thy ſelf. Our Saviour hath a notable Parable to this purpoſe, of a man out of whom a Devil was caſt, but he *returned again, & brought ſeven worſe with him*, Mat. 12.45. Oh look to this then, you who formerly have given ſome hopes of being called, you heard a voice within you, ſaying, Do no more ſuch abominable things! You begun to pray, to weep, to be greatly affected, oft the conflicts that your ſouls formerly felt, but now all ſtreams are dryed up, you are as barren, as prophane as ever! Know to thy terror and trembling, thou haſt cauſe to examine whether the mighty power of God hath not yet called thee. *No man that putteth his hand to the Plough, and looketh back is fit for the Kingdom of Heaven:* Our Saviour did alwayes attend to this, to lay ſuch principles in thoſe that would be his Diſciples, that they might never revolt: Therefore he told them of the worſt aforehand, and daily inſtructed them about the danger of not perſevering: He that is truly called, doth ſtand immoveably like a Rock, *Like Mount Sion that cannot be removed*; and indeed, there is great reaſon for it, Can he be better then he is? Doth not God make up all things to him? Are his former luſts, and the pleaſures he took in them, equal to God, and the enjoyment of him? Was there not bitterneſs and gall even in the ſweeteſt honey of any of his ſins? *But at Gods right hand, there are Rivers of pleaſure for evermore.* 6.

Laſtly,

Phil. 3. Laſtly, *He that is thus called, doth keep up his heart, and comfort himſelf with that hope of eternal life, and glory to which he is called.* Hence *Paul* ſaith, *He preſſeth forward for the mark of the high calling.* As a man in a race attends not to any directions, but fixeth his eye upon the crown that he runneth for. Thus *Paul* did, No earthly or worldly temptations do hinder him; but his heart his thoughts, his affections are ſet upon that eternal glory: Therefore we are ſaid *to be called to this hope.* A man never hath true hopes till he be thus called. Alas, What becomes of wicked mens hopes? they place their hopes in outward greatneſs, in outward power, in outward glory; now theſe *periſh like the graſſe of the Field:* When Death comes, when Judgement comes, then all his hopes periſh: but the righteous hath hope in his death; and it is a lively hope, death and the grave cannot quell it. We ſay, *If it were not for hope, the heart would break*; but what hope hath thou who liveſt in thy ſins, not forſaking of them? Will the World, will thy luſts, thy carnal friends be any longer a comfort to thee? Oh it is much, that every wicked man doth not tear himſelf, and roar out with horrour, *I have no hope!* God is offended, Chriſt did not give himſelf for ſuch as I am, living in, and loving of my ſins. Till I come out of this eſtate, there is laid up no hope for me. Go then and conclude with thy ſelf, I have no hope as yet, but about worldly things: Oh miſerable man that I am! There is but a ſtep between me and death, between me and hell, and yet I look not out; but when thou art called, then thy hopes will ſurely be eſtabliſhed.

Uſe. *Uſe of Exhortation.* Are the called of God thus qualified? then what matter of Lamentation is here, to ſee ſo few ſuch among the number of thoſe that are outwardly called? Where is the man of whom we may pronounce all theſe things, that he readily obeys, that he honours this calling, that he deſireth to follow God in all things? Who is the man that doth this? Now the truth is, the temptations of ſin and the World, they call ſo violently, ſo pleaſingly the contrary way, that it is no wonder, if ſo few follow God. But, to perſwade you to refuſe theſe *Dalilahs* alwayes tempting of you;

Conſider firſt, What ſin and the World calls you to, Is it not to theſe wayes that end in death, in hell? You will ſee your folly, when you finde it too late, when the Arrows of Gods anger have darted through your Liver and Heart, then you will houl and cry out; Oh how have our ſins deceived us! Even as *Jael* called in *Siſera* to her houſe, *Come in my Lord, Come in my Lord*, but it was his death. Do then any luſts call to thee and invite thee? ſay, Whither will theſe lead me? Whither will they carry me?

2. Conſider theſe pleaſures of ſin that invite thee, they are but for a moment, they are but a blaze, though they may tickle for a while, yet the ſmart and torment will endure for ever. O Atheiſts, if we believe not theſe things! And oh fools and mad men, if, when we do believe them, we labour not to eſcape them! As *Saul* ſpake about *David, Can the Son of Jeſſe* (ſaith he) *make you great or honoured, why then do you follow him?* Oh remember, Can the Devil, can the World make you for ever bleſſed? Can they put on robes of glory? Doth not God only theſe things for them that obey him calling?

SERMON

SERM. CIII.

Stirring up to ſerious and fixed Meditations upon this Calling, in reſpect of the manner and time of it, and the perſons called.

1 Cor. 1. 26.

For ye ſee your Calling (Brethren) how that not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, &c.

THe Apoſtle at the 18. *Verſe*, begins an excellent diſcourſe about the manner and way which God taketh to convert and ſave men; for whereas the eye of reaſon doth look for ſome Wiſe, Eloquent, and Externally glorious manner; the Apoſtle ſheweth, that God taketh the clean contrary way, by that admirable poſition, *Verſe* 25. to be engraven on all our hearts, and which, is of daily uſe, both in Religious and Civil Affairs, *The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then men; and the weakneſs of God ſtronger then men*; the Apoſtle calls the fooliſhneſs and weakneſs of God, that which in humane thoughts and reſpects is ſo: Now he conſiders, that the things of God, which have this outward deſpicable appearance, yet have glorious operations; whereupon the Apoſtle amplifieth this tranſcendent method of God, as in the manner of preaching the Goſpel, ſo in the perſons that are converted thereby, in the Text read: where Firſt, we have the introduction to obſerve. Secondly, The matter to be conſidered. The Introduction, *For ye ſee your calling*; ſome read it imperatively, *See and take notice of your calling*; which way ſoever you take it, it amounts to this, That *Gods* calling of men from a ſtate of ſin, to grace, is like *Ezekiels* waters, that riſe up higher and higher; we may ſtill take notice of ſome more excellent and admirable aggravations in it: The looking upon the Creation, and conſidering of the Creatures, it may juſtly ſtir up men to glorifie the Wiſdom and power of *God*: But this much more, and that which the Apoſtle doth eſpecially take notice of in this Text, is, the perſons whom he hath called, and they are deſcribed, firſt, Negatively, then Poſitively. Negatively, *not many wiſe, not many mighty, not many noble*; where he doth not abſolutely deny, No wiſe, no mighty, no great ones; for examples in Scripture are recorded, of ſome few ſuch, but not many: This is a ſerious conſideration, to ſhame and confound all fleſh; Who does not look upon theſe things, as making men happy and glorious? but *God* over-looketh them all. Now to fix us the more upon this conſideration, he illuſtrates it on the contrary, *God hath choſen fooliſh and weak, and baſe things in the World*: The Apoſtle in this Argument, makes calling and chooſing all one, becauſe they neceſſarily agree, as the cauſe and effect together, Election and efficacious Calling follow one another. Laſtly, The Apoſtle inſtructs us about the end of *Gods* diſpenſation in all theſe things, and that is twofold. 1. *To confound the wiſe, and to bring to nought the mighty things that are.* 2. Which is a conſequent of the former, *That no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence*; that none may ſay, It was his power, wiſdom, or any humane

excellency that did thus advance him, but Gods grace only. Let us first consider the Introduction, *You*, or, *See your Calling*: And observe,

Observ. *That Gods calling of us, is worthy of many serious and fixed meditations:*

Its like Tapestry folded up, which when opened, makes a glorious shew. If the Queen of *Sheba* had her spirit faint within her, with admiration of *Solomons* wisdom, how much rather may we, in beholding of the wisdom and goodness of God herein? Our Saviour saith, *The Kingdom of Heaven comes not by observation*, Luk. 17. 20. that is, the excellent works of grace, which are the Kingdom of Heaven; and the Gospel, which is the Instrument of these; they come not as great Kings and Emperors to a place, with a great deal of pomp and ostentation, to say, Here it comes, and there it goeth; but it is after a spiritual and invisible manner; even as the wind, which seemeth to be nothing, we cannot see it with the eye, or feel it with the hand, yet it hath mighty and powerful operations: As it was with Christ himself, he was in a despicable form, a worm and no man, accounted amongst the wicked, when yet he was at the same time a glorious and infinite God; but yet because of that outward appearance, they despised him, *Is not this the Carpenters Son*; *And he was accounted of no reputation*: Even so it is with the called ones of God, they are such that the world despiseth, contemneth, the learned ones, and great ones of the World, they do none of these things; not considering what rich Jewels are in these course Cabinets: So that as our Saviour saith, *Blessed is he that is not offended at me*; so also, blessed is he that is not offended at the way and manner of Gods calling: But now let us go into this Temple, and behold the wonderful works of God. And

In respect of the invisibility of it.

1. First, The grace of God it self in calling any, though never so few, is with heart and mouth to be always acknowledged: God who had his only Son to delight in, and millions of Angels to serve him, that he should call thee so poor, so weak, so inconsiderable, this should set thee upon the very pinacle of admiration. How often do you see *Paul* gathering up this manna, and every day, like a true spiritual *Dives*, he fareth deliciously upon comfortable meditations, sometimes the grace of God, sometimes the riches of his grace, sometimes the unsearchable riches of his grace: Oh how unexcusable are the people of God for their unthankfulness, dulness, and unbeliet in this particular! They are not affected to ravishment with the grace of God calling them, they do not aggravate every meditation, they do not set home every thing that may make their souls run over, to make them say, O Lord, my heart suffers violence within me, I can hold no longer; thy love, thy grace in calling me, doth even over-whelm me.

2. Secondly, *The time and season when God calls his People, deserves meditation*: Not only mercies themselves, but the times and seasons of them, are wisely ordered by God: Some God calls in the morning, some in the noon, some in the evening of their age: And to every one, this grace of God hath its full matter of consideration; he that is called betimes, he may consider Gods goodness to him so early, that God thought on him so quickly; he might have gone on and provoked God, carrying guilt and a sadded conscience, even to the very grave: He heareth others cry out, O Lord, it troubleth me I loved thee no sooner; Oh how much time have I lost! how shall I recover and redeem those lost hours, and lost dayes? but as for thee, God instructed thee betimes to take heed of sin: He that is called at the latter end of his dayes, having the guilt of many sins upon him, he also may be quickned to glorifie God, that he would not despise him for all his rebellions, that he would not remember all his unkindnesses, that such a long and old enemy of his should be taken into favor: yea, at that very time, when they have been in full pursuit of their lusts, hath God called them, as it was with *Paul*, yea, and is to every man; When, Lord, I was thinking and working evil against thee, thou wast preparing good for me, when I, Lord, had no delight, but in my lusts, and those things that did grieve

Meditate of the time and season when God calls.

thy

thy spirit, even then thy thoughts of kindness were to me: Oh think on these things! what, is there nothing but your Children, your husbands, your wives, your temporal mercies to be delighted in? Yes, that grace of God calling thee, should possess thy whole man.

Thirdly, *The persons whom God calleth:* They afford many considerations; As 3. The persons God calls.

First, *They are the meanest in outward condition:* If you read the Evangelists, you shall finde, that the greatest part of persons called, were of no pomp, no noise or fame in the world: Though the material Temple was built of precious stone, and excellent wood, and adorned with gold, whereby it was the magnificentest wonder in the World; yet there is no such beauty in the spiritual Temple of God, in his Church and Children: This hath always been objected against the ways of Christ. *Julian* objected it, the Papists objected it against our Martyrs, that suffered by their cruel violence: Now *God* hath delighted to take such a way, not only in heavenly things, but even in the Government of the World, he hath many times shewed such remarkable passages: *Joseph*, a contemptible prisoner, hath his Irons taken off, and he is admitted to the greatest honour in the Land: *Moses*, from what contemptible originals, did he arise to be the chief Governour of the people? and thus *David* also! So that as *God*, to make himself glorious in the outward Government of the World, hath advanced men of no degree; thus he makes heirs to the incorruptible crown of glory, men accounted as dung and off-scouring of the World: Take heed then, that as the Pharisees looked for a glorious Messias, & that was their stumbling-block; so thou also look for the great, and rich, and mighty men of the World, to be as they are, to live as they do, and that prove thy spiritual undoing: Oh the wisdom and goodness of *God!* how unsearchable are his ways? those who have scarce Cloathes to cover their nakedness, shall have the Crown of glory, and the Robes of immortality upon them; those who have scarce a Cottage to live in, shall be set on Thrones of glory; those who are despised, and contemned by men, are highly prised by *God*, and loved by Angels: *This honour have all the Saints.* I. The meanest.

Secondly, Consider also, *That the persons called, are many times the worst of men, great and hainous sinners:* As they are the meanest for their external condition, so the worst for their Moralities, that all the World may be convinced, and say, It was not such a mans goodness, his ingenuity, his honest endeavours, his willing desires, but *God* spake unto him, *while wallowing in his blood, To live.* The Pharisees, who gloried in an external strictness, and knew no further then an outward godliness, did upon this consideration, labour to defame Christ and his Doctrine, that he kept company with Publicans and sinners; as the Israelites murmured, that *Moses* married a *Blackamoor*, and as the contemptible and vilest of men followed *David*; so it was a great stumbling-block, that Christ called great sinners to repentance, that he rejected the Pharisees, the seeming glory of the World. Our Saviour in many places, he discovers, that prophane and open sinners, did sooner obtain the Kingdom of Heaven, then those civil, moral men; and if you diligently eye Gods way, you shall finde it still true, *That the rich he sendeth empty away, and the hungry he fills with good things*; that none are further from being effectually called, then such who say, They are full, rich, and want nothing; their own righteousness, their own goodness, their own self-sufficiency, is that which beareth up their hearts; and being thus whole in their own apprehensions, they seek out for no Physitian: Oh its worthy of our serious consideration, to take notice of how many thousands are forsaken, and passed over by God, who are perswaded all is well with them. Despairing men are but few to presuming men, they are like the sands upon the Sea-shore; go from one man to another, and you shall finde them all contented in themselves; there are no groans for Christ, there are no pantings for a II. The worst.

Saviour; there are no restless and unquiet complaints of the soul, Oh who will save me, who will cloath my nakedness, who will satisfie my hungry soul! Oh that this truth might burn like fire; you that have the best thoughts of your selves, are, it may be, in the worst condition; you that have no trouble, deserve to have the greatest; you that eat, and drink, and live without any inward checks of Conscience, have the greatest cause to fear and tremble: Oh think, *God* doth not use to call such self-flatterers, such self-righteous men as I am: Who is further from the Kingdom of Heaven then I am?

III. The foolishest. Thirdly, *God calleth such men that have the least worldly abilities and sufficiency*, which besides their external meanness, makes them more contemptible; that the Apostle meaneth by the following phrase, *Not many wise after the flesh*; that is, not such who are indued with Political wisdom in humane affairs; those that have wisdom to rule and mannage the affairs of this World, are many times very ignorant fools about heavenly things: *The Children of this World are wiser in their Generation, then the Children of light*, said Christ, *Luke* 16. So that as the Apostle saith, about preaching of the Gospel, *We preach not the Wisdom of this World*, so neither are those who are called, the wise men of this World: So that as worldly Politicians, laugh at the plain simplicity of those who truly fear God, and dare not sin against him for the greatest advantages in the World; so on the other side, godly men may pitty and bewail such wise and conceited men, that can every way promote their own advantages in this life, but yet are wholly ignorant about faith in Christ and repentance: Take the choicest wits, and the profoundest understandings that are, about worldly matters, and propound any thing about Regeneration, the work of Grace, and life of Faith, the very babes in Christ will understand more, and give a better account then they do.

IV. The fewest. Lastly, This is no mean thing to observe in Gods effectual Calling, *That he chooseth the fewest number of mankind*: As God hath not chosen many wise, or many great ones, so not many men, comparatively to those millions of men, that he lets alone in the Dungeon of their dark lusts: And truly, this matter is full of terror, we have cause to tremble while we think of it, that such a little flock Christ should choose to himself; that the remnant of mankinde that shall be saved, should be no more then the remnant after an harvest or vintage: This our Saviour doth often presse as a truth, that hath a sharp edge to enter into every mans Conscience; if any thing in the World may startle thee out of thy security, it must be this, *That few are chosen*, God hath effectually called but a very little handful of men to eternal glory: You that make multitude an Argument for your evil ways, and think its good to say, The most do this, the greatest part go this way: Oh the Scripture tells you, what will become of most men; its not for us presumptuously to pry into the secret ways of God, neither may we impudently expostulate, Why God should leave the greater part of mankinde, in their desperate and undone estate; it is enough for us to acknowledge Gods soveraignty herein, with fear and trembling. So then, hath God called but few? how possible is it for thee to be none of that small number; but eight persons were preserved in the Ark, when all others were drowned by the over-flowing waters: Thus we have cause to behold the manner of Gods effectual calling of his people.

Use. Use therefore of Exhortation, To take notice of the ways of God herein; it hath been the Rock that many thousands have split themselves at, they have not wisely considered of this: What is the reason so many presume of their salvation, think its but putting out the hand, and they may when they will take this Crown of glory? Why do the greatest part of men eat and drink in security, blessing themselves, saying, If death comes, if sickness comes, it shall go well with them; all is from this, they consider not that, that God calls but a few, the greater part of men will be damned: This should make thy heart quake for fear;

ſor ſeat; its the *Scripture*-truth, not our ſcare-crow. You do not love to hear this ſpoken of; but Chriſt thought it fit to reveal it to the World, that the very foundations thereof may ſhake. Again, what is the reaſon ſo many are offended at the condition of godly men; that the ways of God are ſuch a ſtumbling-block? They do not rightly conſider of Gods calling, they look that Chriſts Kingdom ſhould be of this World, they expect the wiſdom of the World, the greatneſs of the World, the wealth of the World; and *God* hath determined a clean contrary way. When *John* ſent to Chriſt, to know whether he was the Meſſiah or no, he returneth this anſwer, *The blinde are made to ſee, the lame are healed, the poor receive the Goſpel, and bleſſed is he that is not offended at me.* Prejudices and carnal cavils againſt godlineſs, are the deſtruction of many thouſands. Now if we will wiſely conſider of *Gods* calling his people out of ſin, we ſhall attain to theſe notable Inſtructions:

Firſt, We ſhall never judge our ſelves happy by any externall greatneſs; and the *Summum bonum*, which humane wiſdom pitched upon will be found ſometimes *Magnum malum*, an hinderance of that which is the greateſt good indeed, yet when will the World be perſwaded otherwiſe? How contrary are *Gods* thoughts to thy thoughts? how oppoſite are thy apprehenſions, to his purpoſes? He layeth aſide the wiſe things, the great things, the glorious things of the World: Oh you, that have theſe external advantages, fear they be not ſpirituall diſadvantages! Little cauſe there is to boaſt of theſe, if thou kneweſt all; Theſe are the bunches in the *Camels* back, theſe are the ſnares to thy feet, the Milſtones about thy neck: Be then afraid, and think, If I had been poor, and were afflicted, I had been in a more hopeful condition. Diſciples muſt follow Chriſt, and they can beſt follow, who have the leaſt burthens: Oh judge nothing great outwardly, that may make thee little ſpiritually; count thoſe things curſed, that may hinder thee from being bleſſed.

Secondly, Give *God* the glory of all the grace and ſpiritual mercies that he vouchſafeth to thee; For who art thou, and in what to be accounted of, that art called by *God*? did thy greatneſs procure it? thy goodneſs deſerve it? doth not *God* all things, to ſtop the mouthes of men, that there may be no boaſting, *That none ſhould glory in his preſence*? Humility and thankfulneſs is beſeeming a Chriſtian called, nothing doth ſo become him; For what hath he, that he hath not received? who hath made him to differ from others, that haply had not ſinned againſt *God*, ſo much as he hath done? And therefore ſhould *God* be exalted, becauſe this is his very end why he layeth aſide all humane glory, that he himſelf may be magnified. *Uſe.*

Thirdly, From hence learn, never to deſpiſe things, becauſe outwardly weak and vile, nor to be too confident, becauſe they are great and potent; for you ſee its *Gods* way, *To make things that are not, to confound things that are*; dead things live, and live things die; as *God* put back many of the Iſraelites, when they went to War, they were too many. *God* in all his mercies, whether of grace or civil things, delights to make himſelf only known, he will not have his glory taken from him, and given to another: This gives hope in low things, and fear in lofty things. *Uſe.*

SERMON

SERMON CIV.

Of true ſpiritual Wiſdom, the Nature and Properties of it, diſcovering who are the real wiſe men in the World.

1 Cor. 1. 26.

Not many wiſe according to the fleſh.

THe paſſage introductory of the matter contained in the Text, hath been diſpatched. Let us obſerve the particulars of the diſtribution, which the Apoſtle here intendeth: And

Firſt, There is that which is a Goddeſs, as it were, in the World, admired by all; *Not many wiſe men.* Several Countries have heretofore ſtriven about the appropriating of the famous ſeven wiſe men to themſelves; ſome ſtriving to make this man their Countrey man, others to make that: But here you ſee God paſſing over ſuch, and chooſing the Babes and fooliſh ones of the world: So that you have the perſons paſſed by, deſcribed, firſt, By their abſolute quality, *Not many wiſe*, 2. By a reſtriction or limitation of this wiſdom, *Not many wiſe men after the fleſh.* Now wiſdom after the fleſh, may have a twofold ſenſe, as fleſh hath. 1. That which is earthly, corrupt, and ſinful craftineſs, which the Scripture in many places ſpeaks againſt. 2. For humane civil prudence; as fleſh is ſometimes uſed for man, denoting indeed weakneſs, becauſe not God or Angel, but not ſinfulneſs: And this political civil prudence, is a natural perfection, and a good gift of God; yea, its a duty, to which the People of God are exhorted; but even of ſuch political wiſe men, God doth not chooſe many, though ſome he doth: Thus *Solomon* had ſuch wiſdom to admiration: and *Daniel* is noted for a wiſe man, becauſe *Tyre* is reproved for her fooliſh confidence, thinking her ſelf wiſer then *Daniel*, *Ezek.* 28. 3. and *Heman*, that made the famous Pſalm of one troubled and afflicted in Conſcience, diſtracted with the terrors of the Lord daily, 1 *King.* 4. 31. yet the Scripture ſpeaks of him, as one of the great wiſe men in his time. We read of *Achitophel*, a man ſo politically wiſe, that his Counſel was accounted as the Oracle of God, yet he was rejected by God, and his wiſdom proved fatal to him; but of this, more in time. For the preſent conſider, how the Apoſtle doth imply a diſtinction of neceſſary uſe, about wiſdom, only he names one part of the diſtribution, *A wiſdom after the fleſh*, the compleat ſenſe is this, There is an heavenly wiſdom, a wiſdom after the ſpirit, highly eſteemed by *God*, which all that are called, do partake of: And there is *a wiſdom after the fleſh*, in an earthly, carnal, and worldly manner, when men ſavor not the things of God, but what makes for their own advantages; inſomuch, that the Scripture ſometimes deſcribes them by this, *That they are wiſe to do evil*, Jer. 4. 22. I purpoſe to ſpeak ſomething largely to this head; for godlineſs is reputed of, as folly, madneſs, & ſimplicity; & fleſhly or crafty practices, or ſublime and high reaches, theſe are judged the only wiſdom in the world. Let a man ſet upon the powerful way of godlineſs, let him endeavor to walk upright-

God chooſeth ſome wiſe men.

Of the wiſdom of the fleſh, and wiſdom of the ſpirit.

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ly, not conforming himself to the present course of the World, he is presently branded for an unwise man; he immediately loseth all his reputation: As *Tertullian* said in his dayes, when a wise considerable man turned Christian, they would say, *Miror quod Cajus vir bonus & sapiens fit Christianus*, I wonder such a wise and prudent man will turn Christian.

Observation is that which is an implyed Doctrine by the Apostle; *Observ.*

That there is an excellent, heavenly, and spiritual wisdom.

He that speaks of a wisdom after the flesh, necessarily supposeth a wisdom of a more excellent and admirable nature, even that which is after the spirit: Though you call a man able to transact matters of great importance, who is apprehensive of the times and seasons for all things to be done, a great wise man; yet there is a wisdom far transcending all this; and that is, in heavenly matters, to know how to walk in a pleasing way to God, and at last, to partake of everlasting happiness by him: The Theam of wisdom hath been often treated on by the Heathen, but their eyes were upon this glorious subject, like those of the Bats, or the Owls to the resplendent Sun-beams. *Aristotle* when he speaks more strictly, makes wisdom to be the knowledge of more excellent and heavenly things, with the causes of them; but at other times, he makes wisdom to be the knowledge of any Arts or Sciences. But I shall speak of wisdom, as the Scripture useth it: And

First, It is taken for original and substantial wisdom; and thus God is said, *To be the only wise God*, Rom. 16. 27. Why art thou repining and discontented at the hand of God, though never so heavy on thee? God is the only wise God; none hath wisdom but he? And thus Christ is often in the Parables called Wisdom, he is the increated wisdom; and as he was the Mediator, the treasures of wisdom were hid in him.

Further, in the Scripture, wisdom is sometimes used, for those abilities men have to discharge their callings and relations; so *Aholiab* and *Bezaleel* are said, *To be filled with wisdom by God for that work of the Tabernacle*; and *Solomon* had wisdom given him, to be a skilful Pilot, to govern the ship of the Commonwealth committed to his trust.

Sometimes wisdom is taken for the worldly crafty shifts and abilities men have to contrive mischievous designs, or save themselves from danger.

Sometimes for an opinion or conceit that men have of themselves, as wise, when indeed they are but empty shadows. And

Lastly, For true godliness, in which sense the Scripture often useth it, making *the fear of God the beginning of wisdom*; and condemning all wicked men for fools, *Deut.* 4. 6.

In the next place, let us observe in what this wisdom is discovered: And

1. Wherein spirituall wisdom is discovered.

First, *Its not acquired by study*, and experience, and a prompt quick nature much working with these, as humane prudence is; humane wise men are both born and made so: born, because all the book-knowledge and consulting with those dead counsellors, cannot produce wisdom, if a man have not a dextrous inclination thereunto, yet an apprehensive nature without those helps, proveth also very insufficient: Now this heavenly wisdom, it was neither bred in our bones, or acquired by our endeavours, but it comes from God only: *If any man want wisdom*, (saith *James*) *let him ask it of God, who giveth to all men liberally*, Jam. 1. 5. and therefore its called, *Wisdom from above*, Jam. 3. 17. both originally, because it comes from above; and finally, because it carrieth a man up to God: Hence also its called, *The Spirit of wisdom*, Ephes. 1. and *Paul* prayeth *God* would bestow it upon the *Ephesians*: So then, those that are partakers of this heavenly Jewel, they are wrought upon by God; they were fooliſh, and even like Beasts that understand nothing, till *God* makes them spiritually wise.

2.

Secondly, *The rule of this wisdom is the word of God*: *The Scriptures are able to make even a Timothy wise to salvation*, 1 Tim. 3. 15. Though *Tacitus* and *Machivel*, are the Politicians Bible, and they follow the instructions delivered by

by these Authours; yet the Child of *God* deriveth all his wisdom from the Scripture: Those Proverbs of *Solomon*, may be called a Treasury of wisdom; What hath a man to do as a man, as a Christian, as in any Office, Relation or Condition, for which he may not fetch Divine rules from thence? Thus in *Deut.* 4. 6. a place alledged before; all Nations would wonder, and say, What a wise and great people were the Jews, who had these wise & holy Commandments to walk by? and needs must the word of *God* be the rule of all wisdom, because its the word of a wise *God*, he knoweth all things better then we can: Oh then take heed of leaning to thy own understanding, of hearkning to carnal counsel, against the word of *God*; for, what that bids thee do, and what that bids thee forbear, thou wilt finde to be the wisest counsel that may be. Our Saviour saith, *What will it profit a man, to win the whole World, and lose his own soul?* yet thou despisest this counsel; if thou hadst many souls, thou wouldst damn them, to get a little part of the World; now thou thinkest thy self so wise in this, thou blessest thy self, and applaudest thy own wisdom: Oh remember, *Gods* word is wisdom, he is a wise man, that thinketh and believeth, and practiseth accordingly.

3. Thirdly, *Wisdom from above, is seen in the discerning and judging of what are the most excellent things:* What is true, and what is false, what is good, and what is evil; what is to be imbraced, and what is to be shunned, *Sapiens est cui res sapiunt prout sunt*, He is a wise man, to whom things are represented and perceived as they are. That is a distempered palate, which judgeth the most soveraign and excellent meat, bitter and loathsom: Its a great glory attributed to the spiritual man, *The spiritual man judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. A spiritual man, so far as he is spiritual, is indowed with that admirable knowledge, as that he can judge between good and evil; they have their senses exercised to make this difference: And herein lieth a great part of heavenly wisdom, it quickly discovereth what are the sins that will prove deceitful or dangerous to him: If the very beasts have a natural instinct to difference that which is good to them, from that which is hurtful; how much more doth *God* give such necessary wisdom to his own Children: To every wicked man we may say, Thou fool, who swalloweſt down thy poyson, who desperately woundest and damnest thy own soul, yet takest no notice of it; when wilt thou be wise? when wilt thou seek out for understanding? We say of the bodily health, every man is either a fool, or a Physician; its certain, every ungodly man is a fool, and no Physician about his soul; he knoweth not what is good for him, he doth not wisely consider what is for his advantage, and spiritual welfare: Give me (saith he) that which is pleasant or profitable, though it damn me.

4. Fourthly, *True wisdom lieth in propounding a good and happy end to a mans self, the enjoyment whereof will make a man indeed happy:* The ultimate end of a man, is that wherein his happiness doth consist; now we read, even among wise men, how much this hath been disputed; some placed it in riches, some in honours, some in pleasures; and certainly, there are many men, who propound the same happiness with Beasts, even an earthly, sensual pleasure: The Apostle describeth such, *Whose belly is their God, who minde earthly things*, Phil. 3. 19. and *David* on the other side, describeth his utmost end, when he saith, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and whom in Earth in comparison of thee?* And often he makes God his Portion, his Shepherd, his all in all: So then, consider with thy self, its the great part of wisdom, to propound some end to our selves, in all our actions, otherwise we act irrationally: Its the first question in good Catechisms, What ought to be the chiefest and highest end of every man in this life? Hence, as *Aristotle* in his Moral Philosophy, doth first treat of the end of all humane actions, as the chiefest thing, and if that be not first determined, we shoot at rovers: So some Divines say, because Divinity is wholly practical, we must first inform, what is the chief end of all our duties, why we live and move, why we eat and drink, why we have a being in this World, and at what mark we

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are to shoot: Is it then the glory of *God*, the enjoyment of him, and salvation of thy own soul, that thou aimest at? If from morning to evening; and again, from evening to morning, thou art set upon this, then art thou a wise man: But O the folly and simplicity of most men, who have no greater ends; then to be happy and glorious in this World! and although experience teacheth them the vanity of riches, the uncertainty of honors, and the Tragical ends of all earthly greatness, yet they are resolved for no other course: Oh that you who read the Bible, profess your selves Christians, acknowledge a day of judgement, believe a resurrection of the dead, should yet be bowed down to these earthly things! O boast not any longer, in that thou art wise for to get great things in this World: for that should not be the utmost end; and nothing is happy, but in proportion to its ultimate felicity: Shew thy self a rational man; To what end do I labor and weary my self all day? What is it that my soul would have? what doth it desire? Can any thing but *God* satisfie it? can I have any rest or quietness in my spirit, till the light of his countenance shine upon me? Canst thou sit down with *Jonah*, though not with such impatiency, and seeing a worm devouring thy gourd, something or other consuming thy outward hopes, cry out, *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity*; the Lord only satisfieth and sufficeth my soul.

Fifthly, *True wisdom lieth in the election or choyce, and full execution of all those meanes which conduce to that end:* Election is a great part of wisdom concerning meanes, as well as intention about the end: Now as *God*, and the seeing of him, is the only end, thus godliness and holiness is the only way: See you a man studious of godliness, careful not to sin, or to offend *God*; this man is a wise man, because he keepeth in the direct way to his end: The paths of godliness end at last in happiness; and therefore godliness is so often called *wisdom*, and *The fear of the Lord*, by which men depart from sin, and dare not offend him: though accounted a foolish precise thing, yet its the beginning of all wisdom; Who then is a wise man, and a prudent? even such an one who chooseth those wayes, and is diligent in those actions that make for eternal happiness: Oh if thou couldst leave off those courses of sin, if thou couldst pray more frequently, reform more studiously, thou wouldst finde this the sum of all wisdom.

6. Sixthly, *True heavenly wisdom lieth in circumspection, and a diligent caution,* and that two wayes: First, To let go no opportunity that may advance grace or happiness: *Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise*, Ephes. 5. 15. and wherein is that seen? *By redeeming the time, because the dayes are evil:* Oh thou art then wise, when thou considerest, My dayes are short, the opportunities of grace are few, I have been too long already a servant to sin, I will therefore take all occasions to further godliness; What hurt and hindrance is thy spiritual folly and imprudence to thee? He is accounted the wise Merchant, that takes the seasons & opportunities for his traffiquing: And thus it is for heavenly things; there is a season and opportunity, which if thou neglect, which if thou let passe, it may never be recovered again: This is called wise to do good. Secondly, This circumspection, lieth in the avoiding of all the temptations of sin and Satan, which are very subtill; and unless a Christian be an *Argus*, all over eyes, he cannot escape destruction by them. The little Horn in *Daniel*, was said to be full of eyes: Some Interpreters make that the *Turkish* power and government, which was base and contemptible at first, but by their care and industry, and diligent watchfulness, signified by those eyes, did presently biggen into a great Dominion: Thus even a godly man is to be full of eyes; for the deceits of lusts are many, and the methods of Satan are wilely and crafty; therefore its an high degree of wisdom, to escape all these, whereas the fool goeth on blindefold. Every sin, every temptation of Satan, is a pit and snare to entrap him

7. Seventhly, *Wisdom consists in foresight and providence:* To look to present pleasures, or present advantages, not considering the future, is a part of a fool: *He is blinde, not able to see afar off*, saith the Apostle, 1 *Pet.* 1. Hence the life of a

Christian is compared to watching. A Watchman on the Tower, is able to discern the Enemy a far off approaching: Now this foresight consists in two things.

1. First, To prevent after-repentings, that will be full of horror and perplexity, but wholly vain: Thus the damned in Hell are brought in, calling upon the hills and mountains to cover them, that they may avoid the wrath of the Lamb: *Insipientis est dicere, Non putabam:* Fools use to say, I did not think this, I never thought the miseries and guilt of sin, the flames of hell, the horror of conscience would have been thus horrible: He then that is wise, looks upon sin and the World, as one in hell would look on them, with amazement and astonishment, endeavouring to fly from it.

2. Secondly, Foresight lieth in attending to our latter end, that the present time quickly flieth away: *Oh that my people were wise,* saith God, *that they would remember their latter end,* Deut. 32. 29. This is heavenly wisdom, to consider, that the present pleasures and advantages will immediately dye: The time is coming, when thou wilt lie languishing on thy deaths-bed, that all friends and worldly comforts will take their leave of thee: This consideration would be a special preservative against sin; though the thoughts of death, and making up thy accompt, are for the time bitter, yet they will make for thy future good: O then how foolish and brutish are the greatest part of men! they never consider what will become of them, when dying, when standing at Gods Tribunal: Oh they think not what confusion will be on their faces, to see themselves cast into utter darkness, when others are received, to be commanded to depart, as those that are cursed, into everlasting fire.

3. Thirdly, Herein lieth provident wisdom, to forecast for eternity, that we may be happy for ever: Alas! no mans happiness consists in enjoying the great and glorious things of this life; no more then the Malefactor in the prison, that fareth deliciously, may be called an happy man, when he is immediately to be called out to the place of execution: Yet who can ever perswade the World, that there is any other wisdom, then to get the good things of this life? Give me to day (saith the prophane man) take thou to morrow; give me this life, take thou eternity. O beasts, rather then men! yet such worms are we, and no men: The Scripture doth represent eternity so distinctly, whether of happiness or misery, that its a wonder men should no more meditate about it, that they cry not out, O eternity, eternity, to be with the Lord for ever, or the Devils and damned for ever: Oh this *for ever,* what an overwhelming word is it!

Use. *Use of Instruction:* Who is the true wise man? not a man of the greatest parts, of the greatest reach and craft; but one who is made wise by God, hath the Scripture the rule of his wisdom, and performs all those forementioned acts. This man is more wise then *Solomon,* in some respects; yea, if all the learning and prudence of all the men in the World were put into one mans head, yet without grace, he hath not so much knowledge and wisdom as the weakest babe in Christ: Oh when all accompts are cast up, and there will come to be a final decision of all things, then all the world will see, who is a wise man, and who is a fool: Thou mayest lay thy ear to hell, and hearken how the damned roar out, Oh their folly, their madness! they did not believe these things, which now bitter experience makes them feel: Now, indeed, the godly seem fools, are judged so by the World, but when you see them set on the Thrones of glory, and crowns of immortality put on their heads, then their wisdom will be published to all the World.

SERMON

SERMON CV.

Wise men after the flesh characteriz'd, *and* (*by God for the most part*) rejected.

1 COR. 1. 26.

Not many wise men after the flesh, &c.

YOu have heard of a wisdome secretly implied by this distinctive expression of the Apostle, *Wise men after the flesh*, viz. That there is an excellent heavenly wisdome, which is a wisdome after the Spirit. And this is indeed the true proper wisdome. Humane wisdome, like the Glow-worm, may cause some lustre in the night; but heavenly wisdom is like the Sunne, glorious at noon-day. Now concerning these earthly and carnally wise men, see the dreadfull dispensation of *Gods* providence; *Not many wise men after the flesh hath God called.* Those that by their crafty wisdom are able to get the good things of this world, are denied the good things of the world to come. Those that we use to say of, *Let them alone, they will save one*; do commonly hereafter lose two, *viz.* their soul and body. The worlds wise-man at the day of Judgement will be *Gods* fool. Observe then,

That wise men after the flesh, though of great repute in the world, are for the most part rejected by God in respect of eternall glory. *Observ.*

The Devil at first made use of the Serpent to deceive mankinde, as being more subtil than any beast of the field; but *God* he takes *the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.* That as our Saviour in another case said, *That which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abominable before God*; So it is here, That which the world Magnifieth, which it adoreth, is cast away as refuse and drosse by *God*, Those things which the world reverenceth as Idols of gold, *God* many times makes fire-brands in hell: So greatly do *Gods* thoughts and mans differ.

To open this let us consider, What are the Characters and Properties of wise men after the flesh. And

The characters and properties of wise men after the flesh.

1. They reliſh only wordly things.

First, *They are such who have a deep judgment, and savory taste about worldly things; the pleasures and profits of sinne, but no apprehension or reliſh at all about heavenly things. Sapiens a sapore*, because he findes a taste and expetimental sweetnesse in the object he is conversant about. Now as the heavenly wise man he findes a sweet reliſh in heavenly things, as you see by *Davids* many expressions about the word of *God*, and the enjoyment of *God*; So the earthly wise man he hath a savoury pleasing taste in these inferiour comforts: As *David* saith, *Thou hast put more gladnesse in my heart, then they have had when their wine and oyl increaseth*, Psa. 4. So these have more joy in the increase of their profits and pleasures, then in any Ordinances of religious Worship of God: As *David* saith, *His soul breaketh for the longing it hath always to the Commandements of God*: So his soul even breaks for the longing it hath to the accomplishment of all its lusts and desires. If you then would have a true description of the worldly wise man, it is emphatically in this, He hath a delight and sweet savour in the enjoying of all

fleshly lusts. He findes no delight in God, no sweetnesse in Ordinances, no joy in the holy Ghost. His affections are set upon earthly things and not heavenly. As the Swine delights not in pleasant gardens and medows, but in dirty and miery places; so neither doth the fleshly wise man take any joy in the acts of Religion, he knoweth not the meaning of the sweetnesse and excellency of any grace, but is carried out in all the delight of his soul upon these earthly objects. His thoughts are there, his affections there, his discourse and words there; and herein you may even admire to see what parts, skill and discerning many men have in the matters of the world, but in matters of Religion meer Ideots and very fools. Oh they will one day see their madnesse! Could I tell the way to grow rich, and not the way to Heaven? Could I tell how to save my self here, and not to save my self hereafter? Oh then be ashamed all you who have knowledge and parts about worldly things, but stark ignorant men in matters of godlinesse.

2. They have an incurable enmity to the things of God.

Secondly, *Wise men after the flesh as they savour onely the things of the flesh, so they have an irreconcilable enmity to the things of God.* The more fleshly wisdom and humane craft a man hath, the more wretched enemy and adversary he is alwayes to what is good; they are the great politick wise men that do most abhor and scorn Religion. Thus the Apostle *Rom.* 8. *The wisdome of the flesh is enmity against God*; what a brand and black infamy doth this Text cast upon all worldly wise men; Their wisdom (that which they boast of, they glory in, the best they have, which the world admireth them for) this is enmity, not dislike, not distaste or averseness, but enmity the highest degree of opposition; and enmity in the abstract; nothing but enmity: There is not a crum or a drop of any love or compliance with the things of God. That as the Serpent, though a wise creature, yet is full of poison and venom; such are all men of parts and wit, and quick abilities, if not sanctified; They have wisdom but against God; they have wit but against godlinesse; they have craft but to oppose godlinesse: So that many men would have had easier condemnation at the day of Judgment, if they had been fools and mad men, rather then such wise men; better thou wert a man driven out of thy wits, raving and talking thou dost not know what, then to be so advisedly and deliberatly opposing of the waies of God: O then consider, whether the more wisdom and the more parts thou hast, thou art not the more atheistical, the more crafty adversary to what is holy. Whether that be not the onely obstacle why thou dost not submit to the waies of God; Thy lusts do not hinder thee, thy prophanenesse doth not hinder thee, but thy carnall policy, and thy fleshly wisdom, because godlinesse is a way of self-deniall, of danger and opposition in this world; therefore thy heart cannot comply with it.

3. Subtil to cover sinne.

Thirdly, *The wise men after the flesh they are subtil to invent distinctions and excuses to palliate and cover their sins.* God tells the *Israelites* by the Prophet, *That they dug deep, and did hide their counsels low, covering themselves, but not with the covering of Gods Spirit*, Isa. 30. 1. This wisdom after the flesh, *Adam* immediately upon his fall gave a testimony of, when he put off his sinne from himself to *Eve*, and *Eve* again upon the Serpent. It was *Sauls* wisdom after the flesh that made him disobey Gods Commandement, making fair pretences. And the Prophet *Hosea* bringeth in the *Israelites*, who by unjust and unlawfull waies did heap up treasure, comforting himself with this, *There should no iniquity be found in him*, Hos. 12. 8. And those false teachers who brought in the worshipping of Angels, *They had fleshly wisdom*, as the Apostle calls it, *Col.* 2. 23. All the evasions, distinctions and palliations that men have either to cover their sins, or to extenuate them, or make them no sins, are the sole issue of fleshly wisdome; Therefore you are exceedingly deceived, if you think drunkennesse, fornication and such sins of the flesh are only damnable, no there is the wisdom of the flesh; There is a fleshly minde, a corrupt minde, which the Scripture makes damnable as well as these. Those many distinctions in Popery about worshipping of Images, which

which are so subtil that a Papist himself saith, A man must have *Ingenium valde metaphysicum* that can tell how to understand them, are nothing but wisdom after the flesh. All superstitious worship is a wisdome after the flesh. And as in matters of Religion, so in matters of morality, all subtill pretences, all specious evasions that men have, when they commit any sinne, or do any unlawfull actions, these are poysoned streams from that poisoned fountain of fleshly wisdome. Oh then take heed of pleading for thy sins, of cavillations in sinning, of endeavouring to make that lawful which thy conscience tels thee is unlawfull! This seeming carnall wisdome will turn at last to horrour and despair of soul. Thou wilt then see thou dist but mock God, and delude thy own conscience.

Fourthly, *Wise men after the flesh they are subtil, crafty and industrious to accomplish all their evil designes, and effect all their wicked purposes that they have contrived within themselves.* Thus they are said to be *wise to do evil*; and they are laid to *study and contrive mischief*, and that they cannot sleep till they have wrought it. Their hearts are compared to the Bakers Oven, (*Hos.*7.6,7.) that is heated, wherein all their mischievous intents are perfected: *David* often complaineth of such crafty deceitfull men, whose tongues were sharper then swords, when their words were smoother then butter. The Apostle calls it *πανουργια* and *πανουργια*, *Men that can deceive*; they make it their work and businesse, and they do it with much easinesse, because corruption doth prompt them, and the Devil is at hand ready to assist them. Glory not then in being crafty and politick to bring about the sinfull lusts of thy heart. Thou canst over-reach, cousen, deceive others: Oh remember, Christ hath called us to be sheep and not foxes! Remember this, thy wisdom will prove folly; for doth not God say, *He will destroy the wisdome of the wise.* 1 Cor.3. And doth not the Lord *take the wise in their own craft?* Do they not dig their own graves? Do they not fall in the pit they make for others? 4. Crafty to accomplish their wickedness.

Fifthly, *Wise men after the flesh they are conceited and puffed up with this wisdom*, They are swoln-bladders puffed up with the empty winde that is in them. *He that thinketh he knoweth anything, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.* 1 Cor. 8. Oh it is a great matter to know as we ought to know; now the carnal wise man knoweth nothing as he ought to know; He knoweth not the matter as he ought to know, nor the manner; Not the matter; for *Paul* desired to *know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified*, 1 Cor. 2. And again, *He accounted all things dung and drosse, for the Excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ.* Phil. 3. And the Apostle would not have men glory in their riches, or in their might and power, but in this, that they know God; Now the wisdome of the flesh doth not inable us to know God or Christ; not God as revealed in his Word, therefore such wise men do so often dishonour him and break his Commandments, and are refractory under his judgments; not Christ, for none can know him, but such as *Paul* that account their own righteousnesse dung, that go out of themselves, as poor, naked, and miserable: But alas, wise men after the flesh cannot do any of these. And then for the manner, they ought to know all things two wayes: First, Humbly, with sense of their great ignorance, as *Agur* though so wise, saith; *He had not the knowledge of a man*, Prov. 30.2. *that is no man at all and no man*; Now the carnall wise are proud and arrogant, deserving that Motto which the *Romans* gave to their god *Terminus* that bounded their goods; *Nihil ede*, I give place to none. And secondly, we must know unto practicalness, to do them, to finde the power of them upon our hearts: *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them*; and without this, knowledge and wisdome is but oil to make the flames of hell hotter. The Apostle speakes of knowing *Truth as it is in Jesus*, Ephes. 4. 1. and that is, when they make us put off the old man, and put on the new; And again, there is the *acknowledging of truth after godlinesse*, Tit. 1. 1. Now of all men in the world none are so hopelesse, 5. Proud.

leſſe and remote from grace, and in ſuch oppoſition to Chriſt, as carnally wiſe men, becauſe the firſt foundation that is to be laid in Chriſtianity, is to caſt off all our own wiſdome, our own knowledge, *He muſt become a fool that he may be wiſe*, ſo the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 3. 18. Now to become a fool by way of conception in the worlds account, and by our ſenſe and feeling, is, when we ſee our ſins, the aggravations of them, the eternall miſery accompanying them, and that all this is done by our own madneſſe and folly: Oh what a fool, what a Beaſt is ſuch an one become in his own thoughts! He could even with *Nebuchadnezzar* forſake the company of men, and hide himſelf with beaſts, becauſe he hath ſo greatly ſinned againſt God; ſuch a fool muſt a man become ere he is ſpiritually wiſe: and further, he is to become a fool, becauſe all the way of believing, of comfort, of duty, of obedience, he muſt fetch onely from directions out of the Scripture. He is ſuch a fool that he knoweth not how to believe, how to go to Chriſt, what way to take to be juſtified: Thus every man is to become a fool: But oh what indignation and ſcorn is in a wiſe mans breaſt to become thus annihilated, as it were! yet our Saviour alſo doth pregnantly confirm this, when he ſaith, *Unleſſe a man become as a little childe* (Luk. 9. 47.) *he cannot enter into the kingdome of Heaven.* You ſee then, that of all men in the world, thoſe who have great parts, abilities, and deep reaches, have the greateſt cauſe to tremble. Thou art too wiſe to be godly; Thou art too wiſe to be a babe of Chriſts; Thou art too wiſe to deny thy ſelf, and take up thy croſſe and follow him. Take heed the devil hath not got thee on a pinacle, and he will not leave till he hath thrown thee down headlong into hell: Oh then take heed of ſelf-conceit, of boaſting in thy own parts, or leaning to thy underſtanding. There is more hope of the prophaneſt beaſt and moſt ungodly wretch that is, then of ſuch an one. Such the Phariſees were, and very few of them ever got any ſpirituall good by Chriſt.

6. They meaſure all duties by ſafety.

Sixthly, *The wiſe man after the fleſh he uſeth to meaſure all duty by ſafety, himſelf and his own ſafety and advantages, are of his privy councel.* Thus becauſe *Peter* perſwaded Chriſt to avoid the croſſe, Chriſt ſharply reproved him, telling him, *He ſavoured not the things of God, but of men*, Mat. 16. 23. *Peter* ſpeaks as a wiſe man, but not as a godly Chriſtian. *Paul* denied this craftie wiſdom, when he would not conſult with fleſh and bloud: And *David* when he made the word of God his counſellour: Our Saviour in many directions would break down this wiſdom after the fleſh, as when he ſaid, *What will it profit a man to win the whole world and loſe his own ſoul?* And *He that will ſave his life, ſhall loſe it.* Here you ſee that he dehorts from this wiſdome, becauſe it is indeed folly, and it will prove the greateſt undoing of a man: So our Saviour at another time tells them, His Diſciple muſt deny himſelf, muſt take up his croſſe, muſt look for nothing of comfort or advantage in this life, *That the ſervant cannot expect to be above the Maſter*: Now the very Birds of the Air, and beaſts of the field had better proviſion then he had; What harſh Doctrine then is this to wiſdome after the fleſh? Will they be perſwaded to cut off their right-hand, to pull out their right-eyes? No, they are wiſer then ſo: Oh then take heed of this devil in thee! for ſo our Saviour called that carnall wiſdome in *Peter*, run from it, as *Joſeph* did from his miſtreſſe: Say of it, as *Jacob* of his wicked ſons, *Oh my ſoul, enter not into this counſel!* Bid carnall wiſdom be gone, before thou wilt conſider what *God* requireth of thee.

7. They will chooſe ſin rather then afflictions.

Seventhly, *Wiſe men after the fleſh they will chooſe ſinne rather then affliction*: Whereas the Scripture makes the evil of ſinne infinitely greater then any outward evil; carnall wiſdome aſſerts the clean contrary. Oh beloved, we ſhould fear nothing but ſinne! not to be outwardly miſerable and undone, but to ſin; we ſhould cry out with *Joſeph*, *How can we do ſuch things and ſinne againſt God?* We ſhould pray, Lord, Whatſoever thou wilt keep me from, keep me from ſinning: But alas, ſinne is but a mock, a nothing to a carnall wiſe man. Tell him of

pro-

provoking God, of sinning against his conscience, of eternal damning in hell. He makes but a bold derision of such things. Oh the patience of God that causeth not the Thunderbolts of his vengeance to strike such immediately into hell: Oh then take heed of this fleshly wisdom, whereby thou wilt choose to commit a thousand sins, rather then lose the least earthly advantage! This will prove gall and wormwood at the latter end. This will roar like a Lion in thy conscience hereafter. We shall one day hear thee cry out with *Judas*: Oh I have sinned in betraying my soul, in betraying my conscience, in betraying the truth of *God*, unless Faith and Repentance prevent such wounds and blows?

8. Lives as if God did not rule.

Lastly, *The wise man after the flesh so lives, and orders all his affairs, as if God did not rule and govern in the World*; as if it were of man to order all his own affairs; as if God kept himself within the circle of the Heavens, and let the sons of men do what they pleased; and from this it is, that meer carnal wisdom discovers it self remarkably in two things:

1. It trusteth only to outward helps, and humane refuges, as for faith in *God*, and trust in the promises, they regard it not, but as so much breath out of the Ministers mouths. You have the Prophet *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*, debating this case with the *Israelites*, They would not trust in God, They would have the Arm of *Assyria*, They would go into *Egypt*, and they thought this was the only wisdom; in how many places doth God perstringe this? and the Prophet by way of a sharp irrision tells them, Yet God is also wise; They regard no wisdom but of man, yet God is also wise, *Isa.* 31.2.

2. Under the judgements of God in the World not to be humbled, not to look on them as the stroaks of God, but to be like senseless beasts under Gods anger.

Use of Instruction. Learn what censure to passe upon all worldly wisdom. Never call that saving of thy self, which is indeed such infinite losing of thee: Oh pray that God would give thee the true heavenly wisdom which is from above. We may say, This fleshly wisdom is that which sets hell on fire; Take that away, and there would be no hell; as he said of self-love, Oh kill this Serpent that crawls in thy brest, Thou hadst been godly long before this time, but for carnal wisdom. Thou hadst been as forward as any other in the way to Heaven, but for this fleshly wisdom. Thou wouldst not have defiled thy conscience, and gone against it, but for fleshly wisdom: Oh how is it, that after so much hearing and reading, thy sins are not cast away; thy conscience is convinced, thy heart many times trembleth; Oh it is this carnal wisdom hinders thee.

Use.

SERMON

SERM. CVI.

Reasons why God passeth by Humane Wisdom, *with the difference between it and true spiritual Wisdom; Also the Commendation of* Humane Learning, *and how necessary it is for a Minister.*

1 Cor. 1. 26.

Not many wise men after the flesh.

THis Text hath discovered two sorts of wise men, *The wise man after the Spirit*, and *The wise man after the flesh*; as also, Gods determination about the latter, which is full of admiration and terror. He hath not *chosen many wise men after the flesh*. The characters of carnal wise men, you heard the last day. I shall conclude the first subject here enumerated at this time, and that which remaineth to be considered in the first place is, What are the Reasons why *God* passeth by this humane wisdom, and makes no account of it, Would it not have made much for the honour of the Gospel? Would it not have been a greater credit and ornament to Religion, to see all the great wise men of the World, to have done like the wise men of the *East*, that came to adore Christ, though lying in a stable? Is not this History famous, that wise men should come so farre, and bring their external oblations, and testimonies of high respect to Christ, in that mean and contemptible way, and that in danger of their lives by *Herod*? In outward judgement these might have been called, The fools of the *East*, rather then the wise men. This did wonderfully celebrate the name of Christ; and may not a man say, If God would thus affect all the wise men in the World, would not godliness and Religion be freed from those blemishes and scandals that have been, and still are upon it? They are the simple and more foolish sort of people, that set themselves to the power of Religion: None of the subtil, profound, and wise men of the World, will venture too farr this way. This I confess, is a very plausible pretence, and might have deceived many, did not one example of our Saviour, wonderfully confound such objections, where you may see him wonderfully affected with this divine dispensation, his heart is greatly moved with it; *I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise, and hast revealed them to babes*, Mat. 11. 25. The Text saith, he made this confession in a publike and solemn manner by way of thanksgiving unto *God*. So then, if this riddle of *Gods* dispensation be unfolded by Scripture-direction, we shall see matter of great prayse and joy, not muttering or repining at *Gods* providence. And in this way of *God*, there may be reason on *Gods* part, why he rejects such; and reasons on the carnal wise mans part, why he is refused.

And

And for the first, *One eminent and visible reason, why God lets not the destroying Sword, as to the Israelites, but the Scepter of Grace passe over this wise man, is, to teach us that humane wisdome hath no merit or causality, yea hath no disposition or preparation to the enjoyment of Christ.* For when we see God to ordering it, That not many wise, not many prudent and subtil men are advanced to this crown of glory, all the world seeth it, That it is not humane wisdome or prudence, but the meer grace of God that makes the difference. The Apostle doth often inform those that were converted, That it was not for any works they had done, but by grace onely: So then, God who aimeth at his glory in all things, that every mouth might be stopped, that no man might say, I had a better understanding, I had a quicker insight then others, therefore God chose me, he takes such as are Babes and foolish comparatively, and bestows immortality and glory on them. Had the wise men of the world been called, then *Achitophel, Whose counsels were as the oracles of God*, had not been refused. The Heathens many of them gave a large testimony of their great wisdome; yet none of the *Platoes*, the *Aristotles*, the *Tullies* of the world did God make use of; but *Piscatoria simplicitas*, the mean things of the world were the fittest way for God to make his own greatnesse known; and hence it is, that by sad experience we see men of the quickest parts, the nimblest wits, the most constant memories, yet to be the furthest off from the Kingdome of heaven. Its Gods way, he alone will have the glory, and to him onely it doth appertain, and therefore he takes not those who may plead any internall worth in themselves. 1.

Secondly, *God will hereby teach us, that he doth more regard the least degree of a true humble and saving knowledge of him, then he doth all the humane wisdom in the world.* That as the Scripture calls that tongue, *Isa.* 50.4. *The tongue of the learned* in the Preacher, who is able to speak a word of comfort in due season to a contrite broken heart for sinne; So that man is a wise knowing man, who hath the fear of *God* in his heart, and thereby departs from all evil; and indeed as in beasts, that is their proper wise instinct they have, whereby they are able to avoid that which is evil and hurtfull to them; so in man, that is his proper wisdome to avoid that which is his greatest evil. Now the greatest evil of a man, as a man, is sinne. For he being made rationall and after the image of *God*, and for that glorious end of eternall happinesse, that is his proper evil which depriveth him of this, and onely sinne doth that: Oh consider then thou art wise, when thou canst refuse all those sins that do so easily beset thee! Thou canst cry out, as they did of the deadly herb in the pot; This is death, yea this is damnation. Observe what is that which makes a man approved of by *God*, it is not his great wisdome, his great learning, but a practicall knowledge of himself and of Christ. *Aristotle* said concerning the naturall knowledge of the heavens in their nature and motions, that a little knowlede that way is greater then much knowledge of the sublunary things: but certainly the practicall knowledge of heavenly things is farre more necessary then the speculative knowledge of all Arts and Sciences. *Let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he knoweth God.* Do not then boast thy self either of outward greatnesse or inward excellencies of the minde, for thou art not to be compared to the meanest person in the world, how contemptible soever, that doth in a saving manner know *God: This is eternall life to know God*, Joh. 17.3. You cannot say, wisdom, honour, riches, are eternall life. 2.

Well, as these may be reasons on *Gods* part, so if you consider the earthly wise man, *There is more hope of a fool then of him*; His wisdom is like a Sword in a mad mans hand, his wisdom is the continuall offensive weapon that he lifts up against *God*. For Reasons on mans part.

First, *A man of carnall wisdome is depraved and defiled there, where the first motions of conversion should shew themselves, and that is in the understanding.* Light is first made by *God* in the new Creature, as it was in the old creature of the world: 1.

Now, ſaith our Saviour, *If a mans eye be dark, the whole body is darkneſſe*. Mar. 6. 23. Were it not then that thou art ſo wounded in thy minde, that it is ſo fleſhly and ſo corrupt, there were greater hopes of thy Salvation. So then, how neceſſarily muſt this wiſe man periſh, whole whole wiſdome and underſtanding is onely to damn himſelf! His wiſdome is againſt God, all his arguments, all his reaſonings they are againſt his own ſoul, againſt that way of godlineſſe, in which onely he can be happy. *Aquinas* obſerveth, That faith is more difficult in a learned man then in another that is more ignorant, becauſe the learned man knoweth more objections againſt the truth, is able to raiſe ſuch arguments, he doth not wel know to ſolve again; and this is much more true in a carnal wiſe man: Oh the many cavils, froward objections, ſubtrill reaſonings that he hath to put off the commands of God! This right eye then muſt be pulled out ere thou wilt walk in Gods way.

2. *No marvel if God refuſe ſuch, for they are his greateſt enemies.* They oppoſe his glory, the kingdom of Chriſt, & his people; and howſoever God indeed doth ſometimes *lead Captivity captive, and triumph over his enemies*, by changing their hearts; yet there are others whom he doth oppoſe, and cruſh into pieces; and thus commonly God doth with wiſe men of the world, *The Lord knoweth that their thoughts are but vain: He catcheth the crafty in their own thoughts: He will deſtroy the wiſdome of the wiſe*, 1 Cor. 3. So then no wonder if God paſſe-by ſuch men, for there are no greater enemies in the world to him then ſuch. The Apoſtle *Jam.* 3. giveth three properties of this carnal wiſdom, *Its earthly, ſenſuall deviliſh*, it hath all the wickedneſſe of men and devils in it. Its earthly, that is, wholly intent to get all earthly advantages, whatſoever is profitable and great in this world, that this wiſdom reacheth after. Then its ſenſual, deſtitute of the Spirit of God, as *Jude* argues, it being wholly fixed upon the luſts and pleaſures of ſin.

3. Laſtly, *Its deviliſh*; As godly wiſdom is a beam of the divine Light; ſo this carnall wiſdom is part of that deviliſh wiſdom that is in the Devil. The devil he is called *Satan*, becauſe of his knowledge. So that you ſee, the more knowledge, the more underſtanding a man hath; if not ſanctified, the more deviliſh he is, the nearer he comes to a devil. So that as the devill is called the *red Dragon* for his ſubtilty and cruelty againſt the ſheep of Chriſt, So you have many carnall wiſe men, Dragons rather then men; Thus violent and bitter are they againſt all the wayes of holineſſe.

Object. In the next place let us conſider an Objection: For this Doubt may ariſe; *If God reject wiſe men after the fleſh, Doth not this condemn all humane wiſdome?* How can any man in any prudent and diſcreet way manage his affairs, eſpecially in evil and dangerous dayes, if no prudence be allowed? Yea, doth not our Saviour, though he command all ſpirituall fortitude and courage, all ſelf-denial and readineſſe to take up the croſſe, all integrity of aims and ends, yet withall he bids us, *Be wiſe as Serpents*, Mat 10. 16. and commands us to beware of men, *Mat.* 10. 7. Did not Chriſt himſelf when his adverſaries came with captious queſtions, as in that about paying tribute to *Ceſar*, Mat. 22. wiſely prevent their enſnaring of him; and ſo *Paul*, though as ready to lay down his life for Chriſt, as men are their cloaths when they go to reſt, yet in thoſe troubles he had about his enemies, he diſcovered much civill prudence, did by his wiſe carriage put his adverſaries to it, that they were often fruſtrated, and *Paul* both kept his innocency, and yet ſaved himſelf.

Anſw. To anſwer this, It cannot be denied but that diſcretion and civill prudence is an excellent gift of God; and to have zeal but not knowledge and wiſdom is to have ſtrong legs, or body, as *Samſon* had, but no eyes. The men of *Iſſachar* had this great commendation, *That they were wiſe men, and knew the times and ſeaſons, and what was fit to be done.* And certainly prudence (though there be a danger of it, leſt it ſhould degenerate into craft and carnall policy) yet of it ſelf it is an excellent grace and ornament to Religion; It preſerveth godlineſſe from that con-

contempt and ſcorn it is apt to receive in the world; In a mans ſufferings its, the great comfort, that its not for my raſhneſſe, for my unadviſedneſſe, my buſie ſinfull medling, but for a juſt and neceſſary duty I ſuffer. How then may the wiſdome of the fleſh that is ſinfull, be diſtinguiſhed from lawfull and commendable prudence?

The difference between carnal Chriſtian prudence.

And the firſt palpable difference is this, *Lawfull prudence is always accompanied with integrity and innocency; but carnall policy hath hypocriſie, guile, and guilt with it.* Let a man be as wiſe as he can be, only let him commit no ſinne, let him not play the hypocrite, let him not violate his conſcience. Thus our Saviour giveth that excellent rule, *Be wiſe as Serpents, be innocent as Doves*, Mat. 10. 16. If thou haſt much of the Serpent in thee, but none of the Dove, thou haſt none of this commendable wiſdome; Let not the Serpent eat up the Dove: Oh but where is this happy bounding of prudence and integrity! Many men have not only the prudence of the Serpent, but the poiſon of the Serpent alſo. Never then think that is any lawful wiſdom which runneth thee into a ſin. Its as if a man, to prevent a diſeaſe, ſhould eat a great deal of poiſon. The loſing of thy integrity, thy innocency or peace of conſcience, is a greater folly then any acts of thy prudence will commend thee for wiſdom. So tarre therefore as prudence can finde out a way to eſcape, and yet keep integrity, this man doth hit the mark, and is like thoſe skilful *Benjamites* that could ſhoot to hit a very hair. 1.

2. *Lawfull true prudence hath for its end the glory of God, the promoting of his truth, the advancing of Chriſt; but now fleſhly wiſdome hath no other end, but ſelf-preſervation, ſelf-advancing.* We read of *Paul*, who did ſo wiſely carry himſelf that he could without any ſin or hypocriſie become all things to all men; But what was his great end? it was to gain ſome: It was not to make his advantages of them, but Chriſt's. And thus in another place he ſaith, *He had caught them by guile*, 2 Cor. 12. 16. But how? Not for himſelf but for Chriſt. So that all the prudence *Paul* uſed in the preaching of the Miniſtery to preſerve his liberty, and to ſave his own life, was only to further the Goſpel, and to propagate the truths of Chriſt, That the Church of God might receive no detriment, thy ends will abundantly diſtinguiſh what kinde of wiſdome it is thou haſt. If a carnal earthly wiſdome, thou mattereſt not Gods glory, not his truth, not his worſhip, but thy own ſafety; whereas godly prudence regards this moſt, and ſaith of the truth of God and his glory as they did to *David, Thou art better then ten thouſand of us. Thou ſhalt not go into danger*; and by this it appeareth, that onely a godly man is wiſe, for he only can propound ſuch divine and publick ends to himſelf. 2.

3. *Carnall wiſdome is onely the ability and enlarging of the intellective parts of a man.* His judgement, his invention, his memory; but then for the heart, the will and affections, they remain wholly in ſin, ſo that ſuch men have no inclination, no delight in any thing but what is evil. But now godly prudence is accompanied with the ſanctification of the heart and affections, they are made obedient and flexible to God, they are ſet upon no earthly thing beyond the bounds God hath preſcribed, and this is a main difference; for according to ſome Philoſophers opinion, and the Scripture ſeemeth to incline that way, The heart is the ſeat of all wiſdom, *Cor ſapit, pulmo loquitur*, is the old ſaying. So that if the heart be carnall and polluted, then the wiſdom thereof is ſo; and commonly the corrupt will and affections bribe and defile the underſtanding; ſo that we may ſay to fleſhly wiſdome the heart and affections they are corrupted, and then they corrupt the underſtanding, that whereas the underſtanding ſhould go before them, they go before the underſtanding, and it is with ſuch a man, as *Copernicus* ſaith it is in the great world, the earth moveth, and the Sun ſtands ſtill; ſo their earthly affections they move, they work, they do all, and their reaſon or wiſdom ſtands ſtill, not directing at all; but godly prudence that ſanctifieth a mans will and affections, it beginneth in the head, and ſo deſcends to the heart, I pray God ye be ſanctified in ſpirit, ſoul and body; It beginneth firſt in that which is moſt 3.

ſubſiſtence and intellectuall in a man. So then fleſhly wiſdome is like a Glow-worm upon a dunghil, there is ſome luſtre, but on a noiſome dunghil; they have parts, abilities, but like a jewel in a Swines ſnout whereas this wiſdom is ſaid to be *firſt pure*, Jam. 3. 17. and then follow the other properties: its *firſt pure*.

4. 4. *This godly prudence, as its very active in doing, ſo its as patient and admirable in ſuffering.* Holy prudence walketh by lawfull rules to avoid danger; but if God will exerciſe them, then its as wiſe to bear them with the flourishing exercise of all graces. Now fleſhly wiſdom is ſubtill to eſcape miſeries, but if fallen into them, then toileth and vexeth a man like a wilde bull in a net. He hath no skill, no underſtanding to lay himſelf low before God: Now wiſdome is as much, if not more ſeen in ſuffering then in doing. Therefore *Jam.* 1. ſpeaking of the afflictions Gods people would be plunged into, he addeth, *If any man lack wiſdome, let him ask it of God*, that is, wiſdome to bear afflictions, *to account it all joy when they are beſet with them.* Howſoever Chriſt hath commanded his Diſciples prudence, *that they may eſcape all dangers*, yet he hath withall told them, That all their wiſdom, and all their godlineſſe ſhall not preſerve them from perſecution, but they muſt go many of them at leaſt through the red Sea of their own bloud into the Land of *Canaan*; now when all this doth befall them, they take it thankfully, they *rejoyce they are accounted worthy to ſuffer for Chriſt*; they are not weary of Chriſt and his wayes, though they coſt them ſo dear; but now the carnall wiſdom of man, if after all the ſhifts and ſubtill plots he hath uſed, he fall into danger, then he is confounded, then he cryeth out, then he roareth and curſeth, and is like a Sea foaming out its froath. And thus for the firſt Objection: I ſhall a little touch upon another, and that is, Some may think from hence may be gathered *a very popular Argument againſt humane learning: for if they are not many wiſe men after the fleſh that God takes, then this humane learning is not at all to be regarded; Thoſe that have the wiſdom of the Spirit, they ought to be exalted only.*

Object.

Anſw. Briefly to anſwer this, That although humane learning without the Spirit of God, and the power of Sanctification, be nothing but a tinkling cymball, and is the greateſt enemy Chriſt hath, and the onely pillar of the devils kingdome, yet in it ſelf its a neceſſary qualification, eſpecially to thoſe that are in the Miniſtery: and although God choſe fiſhermen, who at firſt were rude and illiterate, yet he afterwards endowed them with the knowledge of the tongues, and miraculous abilities of wiſdome and utterance; and *Paul* had all that kinde of learning the Jews uſed to have, and beſides was converſant in humane Authors, as appeareth by his quotations out of humane Poets; and *Moſes* he was skilfull in the learning of *Egypt*, which was then the onely famous place of learning. Now that learning of it ſelf is a neceſſary qualification to the Miniſters of the Gospel, appeareth by theſe Arguments;

Learning neceſſary in a Miniſter, why 1. First, *The knowledge of the originall tongues is a great part of humane learning*; yet how neceſſary that is, all the world ſeeth; for without that, the Scriptures could not be tranſlated into a known tongue and interpreted. The Bible would have been a ſealed Book; how could men, and women, and children be able to read the Scriptures, had there not been learned men, who by great pains and ſtudy obtained the knowledge of originals?

2. Secondly, *Its requiſite, becauſe a Miniſter is to divide the Word aright, 2 Tim.* which cannot be without the help of thoſe arts, Logick and Rhetorick, which are properly ſubſervient to that end; for although it be the Spirit of God that helpeth us to the ſenſe of the Scripture in a ſpirituall ſaving way, we are not by our wit able to believe it, to apply it, to conform to it; yet as its a Text conſiſting of words, and a coherence to make up the ſenſe; ſo the inſtrumentall way to diſcover that, is by the help of the arts, and therefore thoſe that are unlearned they are ſaid to *wreſt the Scriptures*, 2 Pet. 3. 18. to mangle and torture them to their own deſtruction.

3. Thirdly, *The adverſaries are learned, and every Miniſter ought to be able to gainſay them.*

Laſt-

Lastly, *Experience teacheth us, That when the arts and humane learning revived, then truths were discerned from falshood*: Which made the Pope hate learning, and account it Hereticall to understand Greek; yea, one Pope would not suffer a man to name the word *Academia, University*; but this, by the way. 4.

Use of Instruction: How happy and excellent a thing is it to have godly prudence and integrity to imbrace each other; and not to let thy wisdom degenerate into earthly, carnall wisdome: Oh be afraid, when you are wise for earthly things, and have no understanding for heavenly! Oh! at the day of Judgment this will be thy folly, thy madnesse: Thou hast been wise to heap up riches, but hast not been rich in faith or godlinesse; thou hast been wise to get the favor and love of the great ones in the world, but hast not been wise to obtain the favor of the great God: *Sapiens non est, qui sibi non sapit*: Now thou hast no wisdome for thy immortal soul, thy eternall happinesse, for that which is of the greatest consequence: Therefore thou art not truly wise. *Use.*

SERMON CVII.

Of the Consistency of Earthly Greatnesse and Nobility with Godliness; And yet notwithstanding, how rare it is for such Men to be called and saved.

1 Cor. 1. 26.

Not many Mighty, not many Noble are called.

THe first subject enumerated by *Paul*, whom God is pleased to reject, and to say, *They shall not be mine, in the day I make up my jewels*, hath been dispatched. We proceed to the other two remaining; and because they agree in one common consideration, I shall handle them together. The first part, of those who for the most part are overlooked by God, *Are wise men after the flesh*, such as are eminent and admirable for internall excellencies. In the next place, the Apostle instanceth in those that are exalted for externall greatnesse: And that is twofold, either such which is acquired by humane industry in the word (*Mighty*); or such which is naturall, that we have by our birth, in the other word (*Noble.*)

The first sort of persons are called δυνατοὶ, and in the next verse, ἰσχυροὶ, answering the Hebrew *Gnorim*; and doth signifie any that are mighty and strong in this world, either by their power, or their wealth, or their honour, that are tall cedars, when others are but shrubs.

Secondly, The other are εὐγενεῖς, which word, though sometimes applied to the gracious disposition of the godly, as the *Bereans* are said to *be more noble*, because they did search the Scripture (observe that, Its true nobility, and true honour to be diligent in searching the Scripture) yet here its applyed unto that humane excellency and preogative some have above others by their birth, although there is none so nobly descended, but he is born a childe of wrath, and

and ſo hath no more priviledge from hell, then the childe of the meaneſt Beggar, yet in a politicall and civill conſideration, they differ far from others: Now when you ſee God in the diſpoſing of eternall glory, not much mattering theſe perſons, it ſhould be like a thunder bolt in the very heart of all thoſe who boaſt themſelves in their wealth, power and nobility, for they are the leſs likely to be made glorious hereafter: So that as God when he choſe *David* to the Temporall Kingdome of *Iſrael*, commanded *Samuel* to call all *Jeſſes* Sons together, and choſe clean contrary to *Samuels* expectation; for when he ſaw *Eliab* the firſt Son, he ſaid, *Surely the Lords anointed is before me*; but God ſaid, *Look not upon his countenance, or the height of his ſtature, for God ſeeth not as man ſeeth*: So it is here in Divine Election, he chooſeth not, he approveth not, as man by worldly reſpects doth: Obſerve;

Obſerv. *Although men temporally great in this world, are greatly exalted by men, yet God chooſeth not many ſuch to eternal glory.*

The Phariſees made it a great argument againſt Chriſt and his way, *John 7. Do any of the Rulers believe in him, but the people that do not know the Law?* Here you ſee, they triumph; What! believe in Chriſt? ſee who they are that do it, the multitude, many of the poorer and contemptible ſort; Do any of the Rulers, any of the great men, and rich men, do they believe in him? The Apoſtle *James*, *Cap.* 2. 11. ſpeaks excellently to this purpoſe, reproving their ſinfull partiality in exalting a rich man for his gold ring, and goodly apparel, but deſpiſing thoſe that were truly good, becauſe poor; *Hearken* (ſaith he) *i.e. Conſider what I ſay, Hath not God choſen the poor of this world, rich in faith?* Oh conſider, thy wealth, thy greatneſſe doth not make thee happy, unleſſe rich in faith and grace alſo, unleſſe we may ſay, O man, O woman, great is thy faith, as well as Great are thy earthly advantages.

To open this; Conſider.

I. The four great things of the world. First, That there are four things eſpecially, which are the great things of the world, and if the Devil ſhew the glory of any of them, its an hard thing not to fall down and worſhip him, if they may behad thereby.

1. The firſt is, *Earthly Power and Dominion: Eſt natura hominum avida imperii*, ſaid *Tully*, The nature of man being ambitious, is greedy of power; and its *Omnibus affectibus flagrantius*, more hot and burning then any other luſt, unleſſe the heart be ſo ſanctified, as to accompt nothing great but God; Though Hiſtories do abound with the Tragicall ends of many, who were in their time great and terrible in power; yet few are of that mans minde, that would not vouchſafe to take up a Crown from the earth, if he ſhould finde it; becauſe of the cares accompanying of it, Every Crown of gold, being alſo a Crown of thorns.

2. Secondly, Another admired thing in the world is *Glory and Honor*: For this many Civil, and many Religious artempts have been undertaken: A poor empty reward! yet the Heathens have buſily diſputed, whether this very nothing be not the chiefeſt good.

3. The third thing admired is, *Riches and wealth*: *Dives* fared deliciouſly every day: The Pſalmiſt ſpeakes, how the world bleſſeth ſuch, that heap up to themſelves innumerable riches, even like the ſands of the ſea-ſhore: And although ſome ſay, they are called *Divitiæ à dividendo*, becauſe they do ſo divide and diſtract the heart with tormenting cares; yet they find nothing but happineſs in them.

4. Temporall greatneſs not in it ſelf inconſiſtent with godlineſs and ſalvation. Laſtly, There is *Nobility*, which is by bloud and birth: This temporall excellency is ape to make men ſwell, as being ſtars of the firſt Magnitude. Hereby ready to forget, that they are but duſt and aſhes, as other men are. Now the Apoſtle by theſe two words, doth intend all theſe, and if there be any other thing that hath temporall glory in the world.

Secondly, Conſider, That this temporall greatneſs, is not of it ſelf inconſiſtent with

with godlineſſe and ſalvation. *Julian* objected againſt Chriſtians, That the precepts of Chriſtianity, and of Civill Government, were clean oppoſite to one another: No ſuch matter; none of thoſe enumerated excellencies are of themſelves contrary to godlineſſe.

Firſt therefore, We read of godly Governors, godly rich men, godly noble men, not onely in the Old Teſtament, for that is very evident, but in the New, as *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, *Nicodemus*, the two Centurions, *Paulus* a Proconſul, *Theophilus* a noble man, to whom *Luke* dedicated his Hiſtory, as moſt judge, and *John* writes to the elect Lady: ſo that the Apoſtle doth not ſay, None of theſe, *But not many*, viz. Comparatively to thoſe of the meaner ſort that are called: Indeed, of the twelve Apoſtles, there was not one of them wiſe after the fleſh, or mighty and noble; for that is a Fabulous tradition concerning *Bartholomew*, that he was born of Royal blood, and went in his purple and jewels every day; the Evangeliſts imply the contrary. 1.

Secondly, It muſt alſo be confeſſed, *That the outward good things of this life, are ſo far from being contradictory to godlineſſe, that godlineſſe onely hath the promiſe of them:* How often did God promiſe *Iſrael*, *That if they would diligently keep his Commandements, They ſhould conquer their enemies, One ſhould chaſe a thouſand, They ſhould be the head, and not the tail*; and *Abraham*; in that great promiſe God made to him, there was not onely promiſed a numerous poſterity, like the ſands of the Sea-ſhore; but alſo, that Kings and Princes ſhould come out of his loyns; and thus it holds for other worldly comforts. *Godlineſſe hath the promiſe of this life*; and the Apoſtle makes an unanſwerable argument, *If he hath given us Chriſt, how ſhall he not with him give us all things elſe*: Thus we cannot inſtance in any temporall good thing, but in one place or other there is a promiſe made of it to the godly. And if you ſay, 2.

Why then are not the godly poſſeſſed of theſe things? why have not the godly all the greatneſſe and glory of the world, ſeeing they are heirs to it by the promiſe? *Queſt.*

I Anſwer, We muſt not take thoſe promiſes ſingle, but compare them with other Texts, that do alſo tell us of the miſery and trouble that the godly ſhall have: Now theſe places are not contrary one to another, one promiſeth all good, the other doth foretell of much evill; for theſe things are not to be underſtood abſolutely, but conditionally: So far as theſe things are furthering of their main good, and are not hindring of their everlaſting wellfare, ſo far they are ſure to be made partakers of them; but when they cannot have theſe and Chriſt alſo, when they muſt either loſe theſe or heaven, then no wonder if God, out of his love, give them not thoſe things which prove hurtfull unto them. A father will promiſe to give his child meat and drink, but if his childe fall into a diſeaſe, that theſe things will increaſe his diſeaſe, then out of his love he keeps theſe things from him. *Anſw.*

Thirdly, When God doth call any of the wiſe men, and great men, and noble men of the world, *They become eminent inſtruments of his glory*; they are worth ten thouſand of thoſe that are in an inferior way; for they do not onely credit the Goſpell, as the Goſpell doth them, and as they honor God, ſo God honors them; they loſe nothing of their greatneſſe, by having goodneſſe: but they by their power, by their wealth and intereſt they have in the world, may greatly advance the wayes of God. What Reformations did the godly Kings and Magiſtrates bring about in the Kingdome of *Judah*? How did *Conſtantine* by his power and greatneſſe, ariſe like a Sun, that diſpelled the dark night of Idolatry and Paganiſm? and therefore ſuch are compared to *Nurſing fathers, and nurſing mothers*. Temporall power, when ſanctified for the uſe of the Church, is like the Elm that beareth up the vine: Oh then, its an happy time, when great men, are good men; when men of power, are men of godlineſſe. And thus alſo men of wealth and eſtates, how many wayes may they be 3.

ſerviceable

ſerviceable to God, wherein others cannot be? Rich men are the greateſt men in debt, for they owe more duties to God then others; and as ſuch have wherewith to be more inſtrumentall to Gods glory then others, ſo by their example they may bring on others. If the chief and great men in a place, do earneſtly ſeek the Kingdome of Heaven, and promote that, this makes all inferior perſons to do the ſame: They are like the ſprings, if the ſprings be poyſoned, then all the ſtreams will be, but if they be ſweet, then the ſtreames will be. When *Eliſha* was to cure the bitter waters, he takes ſalt, and throweth it, not into the ſtreames, but into the ſprings, becauſe that was the way to cure the ſtreams: And thus, if the great ones, and the chief ones in a Pariſh, if they love God, and good men, and good things, their example will even compell others to do the like; and certainly, you that have more greatneſſe and wealth then others, be afraid, leſt you have not other mens ſins to anſwer for; other men have been incouraged to be prophane, becauſe they have either ſeen you ſo, or at leaſt, you have not ſhewed your ſelf an enemy to ſuch wayes. Seeing then God takes this way, few rich men, great men, honored men, comparatively to others; let us conſider,

Reaſons why God leaves great men. On Gods part.

The Reaſons why, as they be either on Gods part, or on their part who are refuſed: And

1. Firſt, On Gods part; *Therefore God may reject theſe, to declare his abſolute Soveraignity and Sufficiency*; that he deeds no men, that he is God, and able to carry on the great things of his Counſell, without the wiſdome of wiſe men, the ſtrength of great men, the repute of noble men in the world; that is the reaſon why great men in Authority, need wiſe men for counſel, and mighty men for execution thereof, becauſe they know not how to do without other mens eyes, and other mens hands; but God, he is the onely great and mighty God, none is his Counſellor, neither doth he need any help: Therefore that God might demonſtrate this Sufficiency and Independency of his nature, he chooſeth thoſe that all the world ſeeth he doth not want; for if God had wanted the gifts, and parts, and power of men, he would have choſen other men: Oh then behold the wiſdome and power of God in calling of men, he calleth the fooliſh, the weak, the nothings of this world, that ſo all may be convinced and ſee, God needs not the creatures, but the creatures him; and no wonder of this, for the world is not enough ſenſible of *Gods* greatneſſe, its ready to count every thing great but him, to fear every thing but him; but God by this will teach us, that we are but clay in the hands of the Potter; as the Apoſtle preſſeth it at large in the Diſcriminating act of God, and therefore will not ſuffer a man to be ſo preſumptuous, as in thoſe things to ſay, *Why doth God ſo?*

2. Secondly, *God* therefore doth not take many great and noble in this world, that ſo men may ſee *the falſeneſſe of that poſition and concluſion*, which men do ſo often make to themſelves; *viz. That God giveth them this wealth, this greatneſſe, this honor above others, becauſe he loveth them more then others*: This is the ſweet poyſon that many drink down, *God* hath given me this ſucceſſe, this wealth, this proſperity, this outward happineſſe; and certainly, if *God* would deſtroy me, he would never have done ſo much for me: *God* foreſaw ſuch a Self-flattery in the people of *Iſrael*, and therefore he doth again and again bid them take heed of ſo much as thinking in their heart, that they had conquered their enemies, and poſſeſſed themſelves of *Canaan*, for their own righteouſneſſe, as if there were more in them then in others: Nay thou ſeeſt this Text and the like, may be like the Hand-writing on the wall, to make all thy joynts tremble. Thy greatneſſe, thy plenty, thy abundance, is no ſign of *Gods* gracious and ſpeciall love to thee, if while he beſtoweth theſe things on thee, thou mayeſt be one ordained to eternall deſtruction; therefore ſee what the Wiſe man obſerveth, *No man knoweth love or hatred by theſe things*, Eccleſ. 9. 1. We cannot conclude of

of Gods Electing love, or his Reprobating hatred, by these outward mercies. *David* once began to make such conclusions, but he called himself a beast for it, and said, *Thereby he condemned the generation of the just.*

Thirdly, *Therefore God may not choose many of these, because he would not leave those who are exterually miserable and contemptible, in despair and total despondency of mind:* For if God had dealt the contrary, and had not chosen many of the inferior, and the more despicable condition in this world, they had then been in a double misery; miserable here, and miserable hereafter: Indeed if you do regard the poor men of this world, that are in extremity, you will find God hath chosen few of them neither, none being more prophane, atheisticall, and like brutes then they, but they are of the middle rank that God commonly makes his choice of: And hereby *God* would teach us, that the meanness and lowness of a mans condition, should not be matter of grief and discontent to him: Oh how hard is it to rebuke these waves and winds of discontent, that are apt to rise up in thee, because *God* hath not done as much for thee as for others! others they are richer, they have their hearts ease and desire; this is apt to make all on fire within thee: Oh! but what a good temperament may this put thee into, to consider, that the lower in the world, doth not hinder thee from being the higher with *God*: Heaven will receive more of a mean condition, then of a glorious: God doth not judge as the world judgeth: Oh the great alteration that the day of judgement will make! *Lazarus* received into eternall glory, and *Dives*, who fared deliciously, tormented in hell: If then thy poverty, thy meanness, were a stop to Salvation, then it were to be lamented; If Election and Salvation were to be had, as the Popes Indulgence, for money; then, as *Albertus* saith about Purgatory, Its better with a rich man, then with a poor man, for he can give enough to redeem his soul; but its not so, thy cottage may be as near heaven, as a palace. 3.

Fourthly, Another Reason why *God* passeth by temporall greatness, may be that in the verse following, *To confound the great and mighty things of the world*; for so saith the Apostle, *He hath chosen the weak things, to confound the mighty*: How are wise men and great men confounded, when they see that their temporall glory and greatness cannot do that, which the grace and godliness of meaner men doth! Every great man in the world, he thinks to ruffle it out, scorneth that those who are inferiors, should compare with him; but O the terrible confusion that will cover such mens faces, when at the day of judgement God shall say, Lo, thy wisdome, thy power, thy great revenues, have not brought thee to that glory and happiness, which the prayers and tears of meaner men have done. Our Saviour told the Jews, it would be their confusion, when men should come from far, and sit down in the Kingdom of heaven, and they themselves shut out: Oh what heart can conceive the rage and madness thou wilt be in! when thou shalt see such neighbors whom thou hatedst, mockedst for their strictness and forwardness in Religion, sit upon Thrones of glory, and thou with all thy earthly pomp cast out! As *Austin* cryed out, by way of blushing, *Surgunt indocti & rapiunt cœlum, &c.* Illiterate men they rise and take the Kingdome of heaven by violence, when learned men with all their books and learning are shut out: So the meaner sort of men, they rise, and by strictness, forwardness, get the Kingdom of Heaven, when others find their outward greatness, like a millstone about their neck, pressing them into the bottom of the sea. 4.

Fifthly, The last Reason on *Gods* part may be, *to make all the rich and great men of the world to walk humbly, with fear and trembling, lest God give them all the good things they shall ever have, in this life onely*: Thy heart is apt to swell with pride, when thou considerest thy prosperity, and thy abundance: Oh but it should rather tremble within thee, lest *God* put thee off with this onely; 5.

as *Abraham* told *Dives*, when he begged that *Lazarus* might come and cool his tongue with a drop of water, *Remember thou hadst thy good things in this life, and Lazarus evil*: So *God* may say to thee, Thou hadst thy pleasure, thy ease, thy jollity in this life; now thy torments and thy miseries they begin: There is such a change made between *Dives* and *Lazarus*, as in *Gideons* fleece, one time that was wet and the floor dry; then the floor was dry and the fleece wet; thus one while *Dives*, he is in prosperity, and *Lazarus* is a begging for crums; and afterwards *Lazarus* he is in glory, and *Dives* is begging for a drop of water. Take heed then, lest *God* do, as *Abraham* did with *Ismael*, he gave him many gifts, but the inheritance was bestowed onely on *Isaac*: So *God*, he gives thee wealth, greatnesse, and such gifts, but the inheritance of heaven, that he bestoweth upon others.

Reasons on mans part.

In the next place, *I shall briefly instance in the Reasons on their part who are rejected*; And they are evident.

1. First, *All earthly greatnesse and advantages they are apt to fill the heart with pride and loftinesse*: *Charge the rich, that they be not high-minded*, 1 Tim. 6. 17. Now there is no disposition doth so immediately offend *God* as this; *God resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace to the humble*: *God* doth not give grace to proud men, as your high mountaines are often barren.

2. Secondly, All these earthly advantages, when possest, *They do take off the heart from God many ways*:

First, Inordinate affections towards them, make us refuse *God*; *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*; the hand full of earth, cannot receive gold, though offered.

Secondly, There is the deceiveablenesse of their pleasure, they dead the heart to good things; men find not that sweetnesse and delight in heavenly things, as otherwise they would.

Thirdly, Solicitude and distracting cares about them, they make the soul full of fears, full of diversions, they are Tares among the good Corn.

Fourthly, The seeming profitableness and necessity of them: They cannot live, or be without them; and thereupon they venture the loss of *God* to enjoy these.

Use. *Use of Admonition*, To men of great place, and great wealth: Oh! know how hard it is for such to be saved; there is a Camels bunch to go through the eye of a needles: Let not these great things become a snare to you; consider, there is better Greatnesse, and that is, *To be strong in the Lord*; better Riches, *To be rich in faith*; better power, To be able to prevail with God in prayer: Canst thou say? The Bible makes me see better things, makes me loose from all things to serve *God*.

SERMON

SERMON CVIII.

The Gospel Feast; and who are welcome Guests, and who not.

MAT. 22. 14.

For many are called, but few are chosen.

THis Text though short in words, is vast in sense, and hath this ground for its special observation, that our Saviour used it twice, *Chap.* 20. 16. and in this place: *Pulchra sunt bis dicenda.* The first word in the front, *For*, sheweth its connexion with what was precedent, and is a Parable largely propounded by our Saviour for this end, to shew the goodness of God in offering the word of grace to a people, and the different event of this in the hearers, some rejecting it, and that with great malice; others receiving it, but not in the full power and efficacy of it, which makes our Saviour inser this dreadfull conclusion, that may make our ears to tingle, when we hear it, *Many are called, but few chosen.* Think not, it was a speech directed only to the Jews, or those that lived in that time. No, its of perpetuall truth; and we see it daily experimentally confirmed, that of those who are called few are chosen. My intent is to speak of externall calling, as I have spoken of internall; and this Text will give a good occasion. Our Saviour delighted to speak Parables, and that was the custome of wise men in the Eastern parts so to do. For these have a popular way of teaching by the things of sense, representing heavenly matter to the understanding. For by the Feast here made, described to be a marriage-feast of a Kings Sonne: where all glory and pomp useth to be shewn, is meant the priviledges and grace of the Gospel, that are rendered daily by the preaching of the Word unto you: sometimes that eternall blessednesse and heavenly glory is compared in the Parables to a great feast, made by a chief and mighty man; but here the Gospel-priviledges vouchsafed in the Word are thus called; which is plain, because one came to this Feast without a wedding garment, and was cast out; which could not be, if this Feast were eternall glory in heaven, for none shall be excluded from thence. So then, you see, To what excellent and choice things the preaching of the Gospel is compared. Sometimes it is called *The Kingdom of Heaven*, sometimes *The rich Pearl that a man is to sell all for to obtain*, and here to a great *Marriage Feast*. By which resemblances the Spirit of God would raise up our thoughts and hearts, that we should have an high and great esteem of the Gospel preached. Now though this great and admirable, yet see the rebellion and disobedience of the persons invited; some matter it not, some make excuses, some maliciously and cruelly handle the messengers. If you ask, Why? what is the matter? What is the wrong done to them? Nothing at all. Its because he gives this honour to them, to invite them to a Marriage Feast. He doth not come as an oppressour to them, requiring their estates, and goods, and lives, but he renders them all comforts and refreshments; and for this kindnesse and condescension, they do thus ill requite him; but all do not refuse, for

there is one who cometh and ſitteth down at the Feaſt, is as confident and bold, as any of the other Gueſts; till the Maſter of the Feaſt come, and expoſtulates with him for the want of a *Wedding Garment*, and then he is ſo convinced of his guilt, that preſently he becomes ſpeechleſſe, upon which his Maſter adjudgeth him to eternall torments, where there is *weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth.* If you ask, Who is meant by ſuch an one? I anſwer, All thoſe who do outwardly accept of the faith of Chriſt, and profeſſe a generall obedience to him; but yet in truth, and indeed they do not thorowly and fully walk according to Chriſts rules. As for thoſe who willfully reject and refuſe Chriſt, not ſo much as owning any thing of him; they were the Jews and others; but then there are a world of people, who out of cuſtome give an externall obedience unto Chriſt, and will be judged Chriſtians, but yet retain nothing of the life and power of Chriſtianity; ſuch are all ignorant and prophane perſons, yea and all civill unblameable men in their lives, yet deſtitute of the Spirit of God, and his grace. Therefore howſoever it be hotly diſputed by ſome, What is meant by this wedding Garment? ſome ſaying faith, ſome good and holy workes, yet we may conclude, that by it is meant the whole life of a man ordered in a gracious and ſutable manner to the Word of God. It doth not then mean one grace, but the comprehenſion of all. And as it would be an high contempt and ſcorn of a great man, and the company invited to a great feaſt, if a man ſhould not come in decent and fit apparell; So it is an high neglect and diſhonour unto God and his people, for thee to take the name of Chriſt in thy mouth, and to be called by him, to be looked upon as a Chriſtian; and yet to live in any ſuch wayes that Chriſt doth condemn. Our Saviour having laid down the ſinne and puniſhment of ſuch an one, cloſeth up all that with this Text, *Many are called, but few are choſen.*

Queſt. Before the words are opened, here is one materiall Queſtion, Why our Saviour makes this inference, *For many are called, but few are choſen*, ſeeing in this Parable, of thoſe many who came in at the ſecond call, there is one man onely found without a wedding Garment; ſo that the clean contrary might have been aſſerted, *Many are choſen*, and of thoſe who are called few are rejected. But the Anſwer is two-fold,

Anſw. First, This may relate to the former part of the Parable, as well as the later; and then you ſee all thoſe who were invited by the firſt call, did refuſe and none did anſwer.

But in the next place, which is a true Anſwer, by this One man is repreſented a multitude of perſons of the ſame way and tranſgreſſion, it being ordinary in the Scripture by an inſtance of One, to repreſent Many of the ſame kinde; this is neceſſary for the coherence.

The words themſelves abſolutely conſidered contain a vouchſafing of a great mercy, but an excluſion of a greater. The great mercy is in theſe words, *Many are called*, πολλοὶ is here put for πανπληθεῖς for otherwiſe *Rom.* 11. and in other places πολλοὶ and ἐκλεκτοὶ are all one, the *Called* and the *Choſen* are all one; but here by thoſe that are called are meant ſuch who are called, and openly refuſe, give no conſent at all, or elſe ſuch who do give a generall anſwer, but yet come not up to that fulneſſe and exactneſſe, which Chriſt requireth. The excluſion of a greater mercy, is, *But few are choſen*; that is, of thoſe many who have the outward calling, and give a generall Obedience to it, there are but few that are elected to eternall life. If then any matter may put you into a ſerious and earneſt trembling about your condition, this hath cauſe enough to do it. God may give the preaching of the Word, the meanes of Grace, and people give a formall and expreſſe conſent to it, yet few of theſe be within the number of election. If it had been ſaid, Few or none of thoſe, who reject the Goſpel of peace, and meanes of ſalvation, are choſen; it had been no wonder: but to ſay thus of thoſe, who have Lord, Lord, Chriſt, Chriſt often in their mouths, Oh hard ſaying!

Who

Who can bear it? The first Doctrine to be raised from the words is,

That there are many outwardly called, who yet never partake of the power and benefit of this mercy. Doct.

There are those who sit down at Christs feast, yet for want of a wedding garment are excluded.

To consider this point let us observe, What this outward calling is, and the extent of it. And because I have already shewen, wherein the Nature of the outward calling of God doth consist, I shall only take so much as is implied in the similitude this Parable doth hold forth; for when we see Christ himself fishing with such a sutable bait as this is, when he that is truth it self doth use such expressions. Who can but believe? Who can but receive?

And first in that the word of God calling men to Faith and Repentance, is thus described under the notion of a great Feast, it implieth, *There is in it satisfaction to every soul, that is spiritually hungry and thirsty. Ho every one that thirsteth*, saith our Saviour, *let him come and drink*, Joh. 7. 37. Christ saith, *He is the bread that cometh down from heaven*, Joh. 6. 35. He was born in *Bethlehem*, the house of bread. 1.

Now these expressions imply two things:

1. *That there ought to be in all men an hungring and thirsting after Christ, and the priviledges he offers.* For if you tell a man of a full great feast, he matters it not; because such an one loatheth the very honey-comb; but a thirsty man, as you see by *Samson*; or an hungry man, as you see by the Lepers, and those that lived in the time of famine in *Israel*, Oh what would not they do? How did they rejoyce to have one drop, or one crumb? *Lazarus* was glad of a crum, and thus it is here: A man full of his own righteousnesse, of his own goodnesse, he loatheth all this preaching, he preferreth his husks before the fatted calf. But now take a man destitute of all these, and sensible of his leanesse: Oh how doth his soul thirst and hunger after Christ! Thus *Paul* a called one judgeth all things *dung and drosse for the knowledge of Christ*? All his former priviledges he renounceth, and *None but Christ*, *none but Christ* doth replenish him. Oh while men have their own greatnesse; their own goodnesse and righteousnesse, they will never come to this feast. *David* likewise he speaketh of his hunger and thirst after God, yea *that his soul breaketh for the longing it hath always unto him*: such a disposition is supposed, when the grace of the Gospel is compared to a feast.

And then in the second place, *It doth suppose a satisfying and filling of the soul.* That whereas the wiseman observeth, *That the eye is not satisfied with seeing*; and *There are four things which never say, There is enough*; yet here, he that thirsteth when he drinketh of this water, he never thirsteth more. That is not, as if he did not desire more grace, and more communion with Christ: Yea the more they taste of this object, the more they long to have, but they never thirst so, as to seek out for a better object; They never say of God, as the Church of her Idols, *I will go to my former lusts, and my former sinnes, for then it was better with me, then since I cleaved to Christ.* No, with *Peter* in his transfiguration, they say, *It is good to be here*; and which *Peter* did not, they know what they say. So then in making the grace of God offered to be like a sumptuous feast, it implieth, that there is no spirituall defect or want in thee, but it shall be made up. That grace no more then nature will not suffer any *vacuum*; Some Philosophers speaking how that *Materia appetit omnes formas*, yet say that the heavenly matter doth not, because there the excellency of the form doth satiate it. This is much more true in the godly heart, wherein God dwels, there it desireth to make no more change. Now how great a matter it is to have the spiritual longings satisfied, the godly only know.

Secondly, *As this phrase supposeth satisfaction of spirituall hunger; so it also intends pleasure and delight.* A feast is matter of joy and comfort. Hence a good 2.

consci-

conſcience is called *a continual feaſt*, Prov. 15. 15. And the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaking of the precious promiſes and excellencies under the Goſpel, he calls them *A feaſt of fat things*, Iſa. 25. 6. *At thy right hand*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *are pleaſures for evermore*; Chriſt is ſaid *To knock at the door* (the outward Call here ſpoken of) *and if any admit him, he will come in and ſup with him*, Revel. 3. 20. So then you ſee, to be called to the graces and duties of the Goſpel, is matter of great joy and comfort; Inſomuch that the kingdome of Heaven is ſaid to be in *righteouſneſs, peace and joy in the holy Ghoſt*, yea its called *unſpeakable joy and full of glory*. Oh then how great is the madneſſe and folly of all Recuſants to this gracious offer! You are prejudiced againſt godlineſſe, as if it brought nothing but melancholy and deſpair, as if it would be rottenneſſe to the bones, and like the worm to the tree that conſumes the very entrails of it. No, its to be called to a feaſt, to matter of joy and heavenly pleaſure; certainly did the jolly worldling and merry voluptuous man, conſider theſe things, how would he deſie and with indignation renounce all his former pleaſures? he would call them *miſerable comforters*, and ſay, Though they were honey in the mouth, yet they were gravel in the belly. Go to the world, or to thy luſts, What is the feaſt they call thee to? What are the pleaſures they invite thee to? Are they not like that herb which puts a man into a laughter, but kills him therewith? Seing then that *Vita non eſt vivere, ſed valere*, To live is not meerly to live, but to be healthfull and chearfull, and comfortable: Oh know this can never be, till thou art partaker of this Feaſt. What though you ſee ungodly men jolly and merry, having their hearts-eaſe, and nothing troubles them, this is but a blaze? the crackling of thorns; Its but *Jonah*'s Gourd that gives him ſome refreſhment for a ſeaſon. This is but ſweet poiſon, the ſtings and torments will be the greater. The pooreſt godly man, that hath no raiment for covering, no food to expell hunger, may yet ſit down at this Feaſt with Chriſt every day. And there is no evil eye to grudge; but in the *Canticles* the Spouſe bids them *Drink, yea drink abundantly*, Cant. 5. 1. And if the godly at any time are dejected, go bowed down, have nothing but gall to eat, and vinegar to drink, without any comfort, and joy; Its their own fault, their own imperfection. They drink not of this good wine, they feed not on theſe fat things by faith; and therefore let the godly conſider, that its their duty to walk with joy and chearfulneſſe; All the while thou walkeſt in diffidence and dejections, thou goeſt without a wedding garment, thou art not in a ſurable poſture to a marriage-feaſt. Thy praying, thy hearing is without a wedding garment, thy mourning diſparageth the feaſt.

Thirdly, Here is by this phraſe implied, *The great glory and honour that God would put on all thoſe whom he calls*. He makes thee his choiſe friend; and gives thee this token of friendſhip; *David* expreſſing a friend, ſaid, *we ate bread together*. *Haman*, how did he boaſt when the King made a great feaſt for the Queen, *And I am invited alſo*, ſaith *Haman*. And certainly we cannot be capable of greater honour, then to be called to this communion and fellowſhip with God, yea to this familiarity: hence all the faithfull, as *Abraham*, are called *Gods friends*; Now, were faith alive in mens breſts, they would never refuſe Gods calling: for is it not from ſlavery and bondage to an heavenly freedom? Is it not from communion with the devil in his works of darkneſſe, to ſociety with God and his Angels?

Many called ones reject the Goſpel-feaſt.

Thus you ſee how eminently this Parable ſets forth the priviledges of the Goſpel: in the tender thereof, you would wonder any in the world ſhould refuſe: that all did not come in by an holy violence: yet in the next place, ſee the ſad event, how ill this love is requited: For

1. Firſt, *There are many perſons thus outwardly called, that are prophane Atheiſts, believe none of theſe things*. All theſe Parables of our Saviour, and all theſe excellent reſemblances, they make but notions and phantaſies. *David* complained of this, *Pſal.* 4. when he exhorted men *to ſerve the Lord, and to offer unto him the*

the sacrifice of thanksgiving; he addeth, *Many say, Who will shew us any good?* They counted nothing of that *David* mentioned, to be such a great good that men should run after it. This made the Prophet complain, *Who hath believed our report?* Oh it is thy atheism, thy unbelief that makes thee not presently answer *Gods* call. Otherwise thou wouldest cry out with the Church, *Draw us and we will run after thee*; For want of a divine faith come all that rebellion and disobedience which is: Well therefore is the same word ἀπείθεια, rendered unbelief and disobedience.

Secondly, *There are the sottish and stupid worldlings who have the Serpents curse on them, to feed on the dust of the earth.* These make no matter of this gracious invitation; to in this parable, and in another to this purpose, it is said, *When they were called, that they had bought their fields and their oxen* Luke 14. 19. and so they went to see their earthly possessions; and thus the Pharisees, who were covetous, are said *To deride Christ*, Luk. 16. 14. As the earth of all elements is the heaviest, and inclineth to the centre; so those who minde earthly things have their thoughts and affections furthest off from God, and his calling. These earthly affections do at first resist the very entrance of good affections, and if yet they be received, then they quickly choak them: Never is the Gospel more likely to fall like water spilt upon the ground, than when it meets with an earthly worldly heart: Oh he can find no savour, no sweetnesse in approaches to God! *When will the Sabbath and the new moon be over*, say they in the Prophet, *that we may buy and sell again?* Amos 8. 5. 2.

Thirdly, There are an higher degree of wicked men, who do not onely neglect and slight this call of God, *But they do wickedly and cruelly abuse and persecute the very messengers that come to invite them.* As here in this Parable, when they were called to the feast, They took the Messengers, and some they mocked, and some they killed: Oh barbarous wickednesse! What is the hurt that is done to them? They are invited to a feast, and for this they stone the Messengers. Thus the Prophets in all ages have been entertained: *Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent to thee!* Mat. 23. 37. Yea Christ the Son and Heir, he was put to death for inviting them to this feast: and was this wickednesse only in the former times. Is there not that venom and enmity in many mens hearts? What hurt do the Ministers of God unto thee? Because they would reclaim thee from thy wickednesse, save thee from thy lusts; this makes thee imbittered against them; forgive them this wrong. 3.

Lastly, *There are those which do not refuse, but come in upon invitation.* They sit down at the feast, none findes fault with them; The Messengers they admit him, the fellow-guests they eat with him, *Only the Lord he spieth him without a wedding garment*: Now by such an one is meant all those who have an externall profession of Christ, and so enjoy all the outward priviledges in the Church; none may prohibit them; yet for all that are without a wedding garment, and at last to be cast out. And this is properly the person externally called that I intend to treat on: As for the other, they are only called on Gods part, there is no manner of consent on their part. 4.

Use of Instruction. How inexcusable all they will be, who refuse God calling? Is it not to a feast, to matter of satisfaction, delight, plenty and honour? Why then dost thou reject this Call? Go at the day of Judgement, and say, O Lord, it is true, I was invited, I was convinced, I saw, it was better to obey them not; but my present lusts, my present pleasures, they drew me aside: say unto God, unto Christ, unto Angels, I know you were better company, more glory and happinesse there was with you, yet I forsooke you to be tormented with the Devil and his Angels to all eternity. *Use.*

SERMON.

SERMON CIX.

That moſt of thoſe that are called, come ſhort of what is abſolutely neceſſary; And who they be.

MAT. 22. 14.

For many are called, but few are choſen.

THe perſons called by *God*, who yet are not choſen, are of two ſorts, as you heard:

Firſt, Thoſe, who, though ſo graciouſly invited, do yet obſtinately and premptorily refuſe, and theſe are actively only called on *Gods* part.

The ſecond ſort is of thoſe who do give conſent, and yeild to their call, but becauſe they do not riſe up fully to all that is required, therefore they are caſt away. In this rank is the man, who being invited, made no oppoſition or excuſe, but went in, and ſate down at the feaſt, was as confident as the other gueſts, ſeemeth to be conſcious to himſelf of no fault, but having no wedding garment, the maſter is ſo wroth and diſpleaſed with him, that he is adjudged to everlaſting torments; and from this inſtance our Saviour gathers this concluſion in the Text; ſo that the meaning is, Of thoſe many that are called, and give a generall acceptance of it, yet few are choſen to eternall glory: Thoſe enjoy the feaſt of the Ordinances here, who are to be tormented for ever hereafter; thoſe are admitted to eat in Gods preſence here, who ſhall be commanded to depart from him hereafter, he knoweth them not: Many are admitted into the Temple, that may not enter into the holieſt of holies.

Obſerv. *That many of thoſe who are called, and in many things obey, do yet come ſhort in that which is abſolutely neceſſary.*

He that came to the feaſt, was not guilty of ſuch rebellion, as they that oppoſed, and inhumanely handled the Meſſengers; yet becauſe he did not prepare the Wedding-Garment, which is a converſation and life ſutable to the outward profeſſion of Chriſt, therefore he is caſt away: This is a neceſſary truth; for though we have many Chriſtians, yet we have indeed but few: Though all in the Land come and ſit down at the feaſt, yet we may ſay to many, *Friends, how came ye in here?* How came you to profeſſe Chriſt? how came you to ſay, you are Chriſtians? What? ſuch a ſinner, ſuch an ungodly perſon, and yet ſay, You believe in Chriſt, you love Chriſt? What is the reproach of the Chriſtian profeſſion this day, but the ungodly, ignorant, and prophane lives of thoſe who are baptized into Chriſts name? Monſters they are, and not Chriſtians, who in one part bear the image of Chriſt, and in another the image of the Devil; in one part ſeem to be men, in another beaſts: So that although the Chriſtian Religion may boaſt in the multitude of her followers, yet it may bluſh at the lives of them: This was a point our Saviour did much treat

treat upon, That men did receive the truth, as to ſome particulars, and ſome degrees, but not wholly and throughly. The Parables of the ſeveral ſorts of ground, of the unwiſe builder, eſpecially that of the fooliſh Virgins, who were Virgins, had their lamps, went out to meet the Bridegroom, onely they wanted oyl, and this was not perceived till it was too late; all theſe tend to this purpoſe: You ſee then, beloved, that we may have our lamps lighted, we may have the external profeſſion and acknowledgment of Chriſt, but want oyl in time of need. Certainly, while we are preaching of this ſubject, we may ſay almoſt to every man, *Nunc tua res agitur*, rouſe up thy ſelf and attend, for this matter belongs to thee: Thou receiveſt Chriſt and his ways but in parcels, though thou haſt Baptiſm, the Title of a Chriſtian, ſitteſt down at the Ordinances; yet where is the Wedding garment? where is the converſation that doth agree, and belong to ſo holy a matter?

To open this Doctrine, let us conſider,

First, Wherein lieth this outward obedience to Gods call, which yet is ineffectual; for can any thing more concern you, then that you ſhould not be Chriſtians in vain? that all thy praying, and frequenting of holy duties, may not be in vain? that God may not take thee from this Feaſt, as *Haman* was from his, in which he ſo much boaſted, to be put into confuſion, and everlaſting fear? Conſiderations to clear the point.

Now this external ſubmiſſion, lieth in theſe things:

First, *A conſent to be Baptized, and entred into the number of thoſe that own Chriſt:* They will not abide in the number of Jews, Turks or Pagans; but they are willing to inroll their names in Chriſts Catalogue: Thus in the Apoſtles times, yea, while Chriſt preached, you read, *John* 2. of many who believed in him, yet Chriſt would not commit himſelf to them, becauſe he knew what was in their hearts. To come to Chriſt, is not the work of the Tongue, or of the Head, but mainly and principally of the Heart: With the mouth man is ſaid to make confeſſion, but with the heart he is alſo ſaid to believe, *Rom.* 10. Now if you obſerve the general deportment of thoſe who are thus called, can you ſee any more in them, then a meer bare and general conſent to be accounted as a Chriſtian? Do they matter any more? Do they ever think, What? is this all Chriſt would have me to do? No, but they ſit down with this general acknowledgment: Thus *Simon Magus*, he came to the Feaſt without a Wedding-garment; though the Text ſaith, *He believed, and was baptized*, yet he was in the ſtate of gall and bitterneſs, *Act.* 8. 17. it is true, he did not feel this bitterneſs, he thought all was well, but it was ſo much the more dangerous: Thus it is here, thou believeſt, thou art baptized, thou prayeſt, thou profeſſeſt Chriſt with the mouth, and yet thy ſoul may be in gall and wormwood, a great gulf may be between thee and ſalvation, and thou all this while lie down in peace and ſecurity of ſpirit. 1. The prophane Chriſtians ground of confidence.

Secondly, *Upon this entering themſelves into the number of Chriſts flock, they may be fully, but fooliſhly perſwaded, that now they have done all:* That this will intereſt them into heavenly glory: Oh what a bewitching is this! and are not moſt men ſurprized by this? they think this believing in God and Chriſt, this external and viſible profeſſion, will inſtate them in all happineſs. The Jews of old did deſperately miſcarry upon this point, *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord*, Jer. 7. this made them bold and confident; and in the New Teſtament, ſee how induſtrious *James* is, to ſhew the vanity of that Faith, *Iames* 3. which is titularly Faith, and not effectual in godlineſs. They that cryed, *Lord, Lord*, and had propheſied, and wrought miracles in Chriſts name, are commanded to depart into eternal fire, becauſe they were workers of iniquity. Many times the Apoſtle bids them not be deceived. *Neither Fornicators or Extortioners, &c. ſhould inherit the Kingdome of heaven*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Be not deceived*, ſaith he: We are apt to think that a profeſſion, or bare duties, will carry us to heaven, without this power of godlineſs: And if the Apoſtle ſpeaketh but of the tongue onely, *Iames* 2.

1. 26. *If any man seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue that mans Religion is in vain*: How much rather if he do not mortifie his sinne, and refrain from all other grois impieties? when will people, drowned in sinne, recover out of it? Awake thou that sleepest in this stupidity: What is Baptism? what is Christianity? what is Protestantism, but a meer empty shadow and title, if thy life be pollured with impieties: As the Heathens called their Idols gods, when yet they had no Deity in them, being Images of Wood, *Having eyes, and see not; ears, and hear not; feet, and walk not*: Thus are such Idol-Christians, Idol-Believers. *There are* (saith the Apostle) *many called Gods, in the world, but we know that an Idol is nothing*: Thus it is here, there are many called Christians, many called Believers, but we know this is nothing where the life and power of godliness is wanting: Trust not then to thy good Faith, to these glorious Titles, they will deceive thee.

3. The number of chosen ones very few.

Thirdly, *If in the primitive times, among those many that gave up their names to Christ, few were chosen, how much a less number must there be now of chosen ones*: This I would have diligently considered, If so be in those primitive times of those many thousands that believed in Christ, few were chosen, how little a remnant or handful may we expect to be among our called persons! For there were three Reasons, why all that were then called should be chosen: For

First, To accept of the Faith and Doctrine of Christ, was then a meer free and spontaneous thing; there was no compulsion by outward power, it was not a Religion they were educated and brought up in, their Parents did not teach them Faith in Christ: Now who could not think certainly, they are right indeed, they must needs have the power of grace in them, who did thus readily and willingly receive a Doctrine that was wholly new to them, their Parents did not instruct them in, no earthly power did force them to, but out of meer voluntary choice they imbraced it: Yet in that company there was more chaff then wheat, in that garden there were more weeds then flowers: What then may we judge, when as the contrary Reasons are with us? for the Christian Faith we imbrace is that we have by Education, by Custome: Who is there that makes use of his own understanding, of his own will to imbrace the truths of Christ? who is there, that upon searching the Scriptures, and trying all things, doth thus adhere to the truth? Are not men brutish in believing, as well as in living? *Malunt homines credere quàm judicare*, They take up that Religion their Parents taught them, and its a meer hap, wholly accidental to them, that its the truth: Thus, like beasts, they follow one another, they go *quà itur, non quà eundum est*; certainly, this is far from having the spirit of God opening our hearts, and inlightning our minds: This is not by understanding and judging and proving all things, to hold fast that which is good: This is not for a man to live by his faith, but by his Fathers, or Grand-fathers faith; indeed, to be brought up in the true Doctrine of Christ, is a wonderful mercy, its an excellent seasoning of the vessel betimes; but yet if a man have no more from the Christian Doctrine, then his Education he hath no more to say for the truth, then the Jews and Turks have for their grosse falshoods.

Secondly, That all were not chosen, who were then called, we may wonder, because of the great and wonderful miracles that they enjoyed, which might greatly confirm their Faith; for who could be but perswaded that Christ was the Messiah, when he saw the dead raised from the grave, the blinde made to see, the deaf to hear, and the glorious things of God, shewing themselves thereby? and to these great miracles, we may adde the zeal and remarkable godlinesse of those who lived in the former times: Alas! no comparison may be made of the grace and godlinesse that now is, with what hath been formerly: Now then, if those that were called in those days, had all those great incitements to the power and life of godliness, and yet were defective; what may we look for, when those are not enjoyed?

Thirdly

Thirdly, This may make us wonder that few onely were chosen, of those many called in former times, because there was little or no outward incouragement unto the way of Christ: There could be little satisfaction given to carnal expectations. How often doth our Saviour call upon them for self-denial? foretel of the trouble and hatred they shall meet with in the world? and when men have proffered their obedience to him, he tells them of the little Worldly incouragements they must look for. Now it may be a wonder, that men, who had not the deep impression of godliness upon their hearts, should ever venture upon such profession, where there were no earthly baits. We use to say, That adversity tryeth a friend; yet here it did not hold: Well then, if many men called in those days, did so miscarry, when yet we would think nothing but pure love did set them on work? what little faithfulness may be thought to be in the inward parts of those, who have temporal advantage by Christ; yea, they would be subject to the Magistrates punishment, if they should renounce the Faith of Christ: Thus you see, how considerable a matter it is, that even in our Saviours time, and primitive beginnings of the Church, there should be many called, and few chosen: Oh, if ever, then we should have thought the Church would have been constituted of those that were truly godly; if ever, then it would have been altogether fair, and no spots in it, but we see the contrary: Its therefore sadly to be lamented, that even the greater part of those, who yet give an external submission to Christ, should yet not have their names written in the book of life. 3.

Fourthly, These come upon the invitation, and yet are without the Wedding-garment, *That are diligent in the discharge of the external duties God requireth, but never look to the internal frame and change of the heart*: That was the universal disease among the Jews, for burnt-offerings and sacrifices they were constant and diligent in; they did even weary God with the abundance of them: but God rejected them all comparatively, *Burnt offering and sacrifice God would not have, but a broken spirit, and the Law of God written in their hearts.* Our Saviour also is very earnest in this point, in acquainting people with this, That the meer outward performance of any Religious duty, without any inward change and work of the Spirit, is but a shell, is but the skin: therefore he tells them, The heart is the good or bad Treasury, *Math.* 12. 35. the heart is the Fountain from whence all streams flow; and *John* 4. *God is a spirit, and he seeketh for such who worship him spirit and truth*: No wonder then, if you see many people submit to the external duties of praying and hearing, for these are but a bodily labour: Here is no inward working upon their soul; they pray not, they hear not with a powerful change upon the inward man: Speak to them of a broken spirit, a contrite heart, which is of so great repute with God, you speak a meer fiddle to them. Observe then, if the greatest sort of persons do any more then the meer external duty; and if so, these have but an outward call, they have none of that spiritual glory within. 4.

Fifthly, *Those are outwardly called, and not chosen, who regard some particulars in Christianity, to do them, but not all*; when its the same Christ that commands both, and the same hell and damnation is threatned to the violation of one, as well as another: Its strange to see, how many things those that are called, dare not but do: yet there are again as plain and as necessary duties, that they wilfully omit. Now the Apostle *James* in a pregnant manner doth confute this, *He that breaketh one of the Commandements, is guilty of all*; and he proveth it, because there is the same authority offended, *He that said, Thou shalt not kill, also said, Thou shalt not commit adultery*, James 2. 11. Now then consider, Why doest thou retain any parcels of Christianity, and not all: Thou believest a God, thou believest Jesus Christ was God: Why? because the Word of God saith so: Doth not the same Word say, *Swear not at all?* doth not then the same Word say, *Be not drunk with wine?* doth not the same Word say, *Whoremongers and Adulterers* 5.

Use 2.

God will judge? This man that was called in the Parable, by the same reason that he purposed to go to the Feast, he should also have provided a suitable garment; he could not but think what a neglect and contempt it would be accounted to do otherwise: Oh then, that all who hear this truth, would deeply consider of it, by what reason I obey the call of God in any thing, I should do it in all things; by what ground I would go to pray and hear, I should also leave such lusts, and forbear such sins, either all or none, for all duties have the same Divine stamp upon them.

6. Sixthly, *Those that are called, but not chosen, they are forward for the priviledges of the calling but not the duties of the calling:* The Jews had many priviledges by their outward calling, they were thereby the people of God, Gods presence and power was among them, The Apostle, *Rom.* 9.4. reckons up many prerogatives every Jew had by being a member of that Church; and thus under the New Testament, every one externally called, though not inwardly sanctified, partaketh of many advantages; The promise is made to him and his seed, he is within the outward administration of the Covenant, he is accounted of the Church, and the body of Christ: Now these things people make a great matter of; Oh! to be reputed as a Publican and an Heathen, is an high reproach; should not they be thought Christians, their children to be baptized, they would judge it unsufferable wrong, not considering, that though be thus forward for priviledges, they are negligent about duties: Thou wouldest have thy child baptized, thou considerest not, how God would have thee to walk, and what thy duty is about the education of children, Thy wickedness, and thy ungodly ways do provoke God more then all those priviledges will advantage thee.

7. Seventhly, *Those that are called but not chosen, they would indeed receive Christ as a Saviour, and hope for pardon by him, but do not resigne themselves up to him as a Lord, whose commands they will obey:* Its true, none can really and truly believe in Christ for pardon, who do not also at the same time receive power from him, in some measure, for sanctification and justification; but yet many men have not faith, but a conceit or presumption of Christs satisfaction, without Scripture direction: Now he that is so, contents himself with this, that he trusts in Christ, and hopes in him for salvation, when they have not the Spirit of Christ: No, the spirit of God convinceth of sin, as well as righteousness, and Christ he dyed not onely for comfort for his people, but for grace and holiness: Oh then, do no longer deceive thy self, thou takest Christ, thou hopest in him, all thy trust is in him; Oh but what feel you of the sanctifying and mortifying power of the Lord Christ in thy soul and life.

8. Lastly, *The persons called but not chosen, do all the easie things in Christianity, but not the difficult and exact things:* The way to heaven is a straight way, there must be striving, as in an agony to enter therein, Prayer is to be fervent, to have groans unutterable; the subduing of sin is mortifying and crucifying, which argue the pain and reluctancy of the flesh therein: But alas, the greater sort of Christians look not to, nor mind those things; they go in a formal road, they perform the outward duties sometimes, but as for this spiritual combating, striving and wrestling, they are not acquainted with it: How merry, how jolly, how unexercised are they with any Temptations: Certainly, if the way of Heaven be a straight way, thou art not in it; if the Kingdome of Heaven be had onely by violent persons, thou art never likely to obtain it.

Use. *Use of Exhortation,* to tremble under this truth: Though the Physicians call a disease *Tremor cordis*, yet the Scripture calls a grace, *The trembling of the heart:* What if thou art in the number of one outwardly called meerly; nay, are there not many too clear proofs of it? is there any more then a general consent and submission? do you not leave out the main and necessary things, though other things you do: Is not thy life a large, loose life, and the duties of Religion a meer formality: Oh this is too true of too many; help Lord, and give me understanding

derstanding to perceive these things: Think not that damnation is onely for Jews, and Turks, and Pagans: Oh you see how near it may come to your own houses, and then thy confusion will be greater: This man to be pulled away from a Feast, and to be severely punished had the greater confusion and reproach. Oh glory not in Names, in Titles, in outward Priviledges! for if your lives be full of ungodliness, you are not those Apostolical, but Apostatical Christians; even as we see God, by the Prophet, makes an excellent mutation of the name *Israel*, that was given to all the Nation, and is as much as a Prince, or one that prevails with God: Now God calls it *Jesreel*, a place famous, for the terrible slaughters that were made there; and signifieth as much as the dispersion or scattering of God; as if he had said, *Ye are no more Israelites, but Jesreelites:* Thus will God handle all those, that though they have the name of Christians, and glory in an outward calling; yet wanting the power of it, shall be adjudged unto eternal condemnation.

SERM. CX.

A Plea for strictness in Religion.

MATTH. 22. 14.

For many are called, but few are chosen.

WEE have described the characters and properties of those who are called, and not chosen: And that which is most remarkable in them is, They are careful to do many things, but not the main necessary things. This *Guest* mentioned before, he was careful to come and sit down at the Feast, but not as careful to prepare a Wedding-garment; whereas common reason and discretion would have taught him, If I go to this Wedding, this Marriage-Feast, which is also of so royal a person, I must prepare suitable garments, I shall dishonour them, and disgrace my self, if I do otherwise?

Now the plain meaning of this Parable is thus much, I am called to be a Christian, I am invited to the precious Feast and Dainties of the Gospel; now if I go to them, and accept of them, my Conscience tells me, I must live the life of a Christian, I must not dishonour that Christ, whose Servant and Disciple I professe my self to be: But because men are so apt to divide these two, which God hath so necessarily conjoyned together; and there is nothing more ordinary then to have the faith of a Christian, and the life of a Christian, as contrary as Light and Darkness, whereby they are like those Night-Bats, look upon their Wings, and you would judge them Birds; but look upon their body, you would judge them Vermin: So it is, look upon their Faith, their Profession, you would then judge them Christians; look upon their lives and ways, you would then say, they were Atheists or Heathens.

The meaning of the Parable of the Feast.

Becau'e

Because of this diverse mixture in mens lives, their plowing with an Ox and Ass, their sowing with contrary seeds, I shall amplifie and urge this particular;

A Proposition of great use. *That by the same reason any man doth receive any thing of Christ he is bound to receive all.*

Upon what ground thou wilt pray, hear his Word preached, thou art bound to cast away all thy ungodliness, to set upon the strict and powerful means of holiness: And O that God would by this truth convince you, how contradictory every ill-lived Christian is to his own principles; that he is a self-conceited man, that he is the greatest hypocrite in the World, that God requireth all or none; *that we are to love God with all our heart, all our soul, and all our strength*; that there is no taking half of God or half of Christ: To be almost a Christian, is to be almost saved, and that is to be wholly damned.

Particular rules about this point.

Before we come to lay down the grounds of this, consider these particulars.:

1. First, *That the imbracing of the Christian Faith and the Laws of Christ, are to be an act of the freest choice, and voluntary acceptation that can be:* Though custom and education may help and prepare, and much incline, yet till a man come to Christ by his own Faith and by his own willing inclination, its not acceptable: *Religio non potest cogi: Cæsar non potest dare fidem*, was the saying of the Ancients; even as it is said of *Moses, He chose the afflictions of Christ, rather then the treasures of Egypt*, Heb. 11. Thus a Christian, he chooseth rather the way of Christ, though requiring much self-denial, though exposed to all hatred, rather then any other advantagious way in the World: Now then grant this, That to obey Christs call, is an act of meer voluntary choice, then there is no intelligent man, can imbrace any one command of Christ, who doth not likewise submit to all. Would you then know, how Christianity comes to be thus divided and mingled, an ungodly life, to a godly Faith, like a live man, to a dead carkass; one main reason is, because we have this Religion by Education, by Custome, by the Laws of the Land; if it had been any other, Popery or Judaism, it had been all one: It is to the unknown God that most build an Altar, and by this means men are not careful to bring up their lives to this Christianity, but bring down that to them; whereas every man that taketh this holy and glorious profession upon him should wisely weigh, what is this I have taken upon me? what doth it require of me? In all other worldly or external callings we conclude, and much more this should be done in this heavenly calling. Our Saviour gives an excellent caution herein, making the profession of Christianity, to be like War and building, *Luke* 14. 31. which are the two most expensive attempts that can be: Do you not deride that builder, who goeth about to rear a glorious building, and hath nothing to do it withall? Do you not say, Where is your money? What will you do it with? Will you not proclaim your folly to all the World? So it is here, What! Wilt thou be a Christian? Wilt thou believe in Christ? Why where is thy holiness, thy purity, thy chastity, thy heavenliness? I tell thee, to professe Christ, and yet be a Drunkard, a Whoremonger, is as great a mocking and scorning of Christ, as they did who crucified him, that in scorn put on him a Crown of Thorns, and saluted him as a King: Oh then, that this truth might sound as terribly in your ears, as the Archangels Trumpet will at the day of Judgment! Its no dallying matter, its no matter of words and complement to come at Gods call: No, let every one that calls on the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

2. Secondly, consider this: we grant, *That even the godliest men that are, though they for the substance & main, as the substantial acts of them, do all that God commands, yet they fail in many things, and the degrees of their grace are imperfect:* So that although there be the same reason why they should fulfill all the degrees of grace, yet

yet they cannot in this life; and the reason is, because God giveth no man such measure of grace in this life, as to make him perfect without sin; there are the stubs and reliques of original corruption in the most holy, which are an heavy conflict and combate in them: Therefore let not the godly wring this truth till blood come from it, which is intended onely for milk: Say not, There is the same reason why I should do every thing perfectly, as that I should do any thing at all; for although there be the same ground, yet God gives not the same proportion of strength for one, as he doth for another; our perfection is, to acknowledge our imperfections: The reliques of sin are still acting in us, that the grace of the Gospel may be made the more glorious.

Thirdly, *In the matters of Christ, some are Doctrinal, some are practical, and there is the same reason for the receiving of the one, as well as of the other:* For the matters of Faith, some say, He that doth discredit or misbelieve one main Article of Faith, he doth misbelieve about all, because there is *eadem ratio formalis fidei*, in one as well as another; and therefore the Church never held a *Macedonian* who denyed the Holy Ghost to be God, though he were put to death by the *Arrians* for maintaining Jesus Christ to be God, to be a Martyr; for though he dyed for one Fundamental Article; yet because he denyed another, he did believe nothing at all aright; onely now in matters of Faith, you must distinguish between *Fundamentals* and *Superstructions*. For *Fundamentals*, whosoever receiveth one, must receive all the rest, else the whole building will fall to the ground; and for *Superstructions*, its true, all should be of one accord and minde, speak the same thing, and judge the same thing; but because these are not so clearly laid down in Scripture, nor are conclusions that are very remote so easily discerned as principles, therefore some believe that which another doth not, but because the Wedding-garment consists not in these things, the master of the Feast will not cast out for this difference: Then there are practicals, such things as Christ hath commanded us to do, and they are either moral duties, or positive duties: Moral duties are those which are contained in the Moral Law of God, for Christ did not come to destroy these, but confirm them; and for these none can plead ignorance: The inward light of Conscience, especially furthered by the light of the Word, doth evidently demonstrate all thy wickednesse; yea, as is to be shewed, there is more reason for thy godly life, then thy true Faith; for the former is more easily discerned then the latter: And as for the positive duties, which concern us as a Church, in the government of it, and the good orders he hath prescribed thereby; though all people that receive the former, should come up to the latter, yet time and daily instruction must make way for that. Two things Christ requireth of you: First, duties of you as men; then duties as a Church, as a Society meeting by order in a visible Church: Now these latter duties are not so much known, because indeed men have not attained to the practice of the former: The sum of this head is, That in the things of Christ, whether Doctrinal or Practical, some things are obscure, and some things are evident and plain: Now the meaning of the assertion is, That by what ground we receive or do any thing Christ hath required, by the same reason we are to do all the rest that are of evident and plain knowledge. And I shall especially follow this in practicals, *viz.* That what reason thou hast to profess a Faith in Christ, to come to Church, to pray to him: there is the same to lay aside all thy ungodlinesse and prophanenesse, insomuch, that it is a wonder, that any man should think he is no good Christian, if he do not come to Church and pray, and doth not also say, I am no good Christian, as long as I lye, swear, curse, live in rioting and drunkennesse: Oh! how hath sin and Satan bewitched you, and blinded your eyes, that you should not see these plain things? this matter should so easily convince your Conscience, that it needs not much informing; but yet men are more senseless then the earth, in Divine and Heaven-

3.

ly

ly things. Bring we then the grounds forth, that, if possible, this day thy soul and thy sins may be divorced from one another: And

Reasons of the point. 1.

First, *That of the Apostle* James *is very urgent*, James 2. 11. *viz. The Authority and Divine Command of the Law-giver*: The Apostle speaketh of him that doth all the Commandments, yet breaks one, that he is guilty of all; as a man that breaks the round of a chain, he doth in effect break the whole chain; And why? because the same Authority is despised in one, as well as in all: He that said, *Believe Christ to be God*, said also, *No unrighteous or wicked person shall enter into the Kingdome of heaven*: If so be then, that though Christ commanded thee to believe, and to be baptized, he had given thee an indulgence to any lust or sinne, that thou mightest commit any iniquity without control, there had been no Word of God against it, then thou mightest have answered all well; but now thou must needs be speechless: Oh then that men would attend to these things! We are not now preaching any sublime mysteries of Religion, we have not a vail upon our matter; even the weakest and ignorant may hear and understand this: The same God that bids me pray, and hear his Word, bids me give over my lusts, my drunkenness, my swearing; now why should I make conscience of one, and not of the other? why should I do one because God commands it, and not not the other.

Secondly, *There is the same necessity of one as well as the other*: A man can be no more saved, unless he part with all these ungodly ways, then if he should renounce the Christian Faith: It is needless to reckon up all those places, which make repentance and a godly life absolutely necessary to eternal happiness; If then you should see a man deny his Christian Faith, Renounce Christ and his Truth, you would then presently conclude, There is no hope for this man: So it is here, If you see a man professing the Faith of Christ, yet doing the works of the Devil, renouncing all the holy works Christ hath commanded, there is no hope of such a man while abiding so; and therefore the Scripture calls this *A denying of God*, and *A denying of Christ*, Tit. 1. 16. when men in words do acknowledge him, but in their practice live contrary to him: Oh! how near doth this truth come to many of you? Do not your deeds deny God? Do not your lusts, your oaths, unlawful pleasures deny him? and yet the leaving of these is as indispensably necessary to salvation, as the outward professing of the ways of Christ; going to the Feast with a Wedding-garment, was as necessary as going to the Feast at all; and there was no more hope of him that went without it, then those who did utterly refuse to come unto him.

Thirdly, *There is not the same reason onely, that thou shouldest do all the duties God requireth, as well as externally professe him, and call on his name; but also, that thou shouldest do them with all accurateness strictnesse, and all diligence*: There is no man that thinks himself bound to be a Christian, but he is by the same argument to think, he is bound to be an accurate, diligent, and strict one; and he that is not a strict, precise one, is indeed none, as to have any benefit by his Religion: This I would have you consider, for men think it indeed their duty to be Christians at large, Protestants in a general loose way, they are contented with this; but if you press them to a more exact circumspect walking, not to be conformed to the World, then this is the strictness they cannot abide; What needs all this? cannot we be saved without all this nicety? as they call it. Now consider

1. First, *No, ye cannot be saved without this strictness*: The way to hell is a broad way, the way to heaven is a strait way, the gate is a narrow gate. *Matth.* 7. 14. and men must strive to enter in, ye are to walk circumspectly, ἀκριβῶς, *Ephes.* 5. 15. *What singular thing do ye?* saith our Saviour, *do not even the publicans and the heathens do the like?* Matth. 5. So that you see, there is a good singularity, and we must be singular from the way of the World: Oh then consider, that the same

Bible

Bible, which commands thee to be a Christian, commands thee to be a strict and accurate one: That general, loose and formal way, is too easie to be the way to Heaven: In vain have *David*, *Job*, and *Paul* watched over themselves, if thy way will lead to Heaven.

Secondly, *It is a principle ingrafted in every man, that the best is still to be given to God.* In the Old Testament, the first-fruits, and the fat of the Sacrifices were to be offered: The command is, *To love God with all our heart, all our might, and all our strength*, that as God is *Ens, quo nihil melius cogitari potest*, than whom nothing can be thought better: so if we have any better affections, any better strength, any better power then others, we should spend it wholly in service of God: Thus they cryed, *Hoc age*, in offering their Sacrifices; how then cometh it about, that thou shouldest harden this foolish perswasion, to think thou serv'st God, and thou pleasest him, when the World and the Devil have far more of thee then they have? This made *Joshua* say to the people of *Israel*, when they professed to serve God, *Ye cannot serve God, for he is a jealous God* Josh. 24. 19. Ye cannot serve him, unless you become other men then you are, and betake your selves wholly to him. II.

Thirdly, *Thou must be an exact Christian, if any at all, because if you go over all the Religions in the World, you shall see, that have the greatest approbation, that is a more austere and fervent then others in serving their God.* Doth not the Heathen admire him, who is most touched with a fear and reverence about his Idol? In Popery, are not they Canonized for Saints, who have in the most strict and precise way given up themselves to their Religion? What then should be the matter, that among us it is the clean contrary? If a man walk in the waves of Christ more strictly then others, if a man desire to follow his orders directly, so that he doth not either run into the same excess of ryot, or boundless superstition as others do, such a man is scorned, and most abhorred of all men; yet thus it is: Be no more godly, be no more holy then the custome of the World is, and you shall be applauded: but if you go faster then they, and will not sit down with such looseness and formality as they do, then they cry out of you: Thus you see, that by what reason a man takes up any thing of Christ, he is bound to receive all; and what he doth, he is bound to do it with that strictness and accurateness that possibly may be. You may ask the question then, How comes it about, then when there is the same ground, yet most persons think it enough to come to the Feast, though without a Wedding-garment; think it enough to be called though not chosen: And III.

First, *They do not set Faith, Reason, and Judgment on work*; for if they did, this Sun arising, would presently dispel that darkness: If men would take the Psalmists counsel, *To commune with their own hearts, and be still*; To propound these Questions to their Souls, Why do I take this of Christs, and refuse the other? Why do I own this particular, and neglect the other? The matter would be so clear presently to a mans Conscience, that he would cry out, All or none: As the Apostle compareth wicked men to brute beasts, because they are led aside with the present pleasures; so they are like to them, because they never reflect upon themselves, and compare things rationally together. *Be not as the Horse and Mule*, saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 32. 9. even to men that have no understanding. 1. Why most persons think it enough to come to the feast, though without a Wedding-garment.

Secondly, *A meer speculative and external profession of Christ, is easie and cheap*; it doth not spiritually crucifie or mortifie a man, as the practical power of godliness doth; a man must deny himself, and the practice of his dear lusts, if his life be conformable to so holy a Doctrine, the Wedding-garment will sit straight upon a man: Wonder not then, if the greater sort of people sit down with this general way, for it goeth not to the quick, it tryeth them not about the killing of any one *Isaac*. 2.

3. Thirdly, *A total mistake about Godliness and Regeneration*: Men never seriously consider what exactness, what labour, what conflicts are in that way; They walk by the Rules of the multitude, they do as most do, especially they are resolved, they will not stirre up the hatred of the World against them: And by these mistakes, and being thus blind-folded, no wonder if they fall into the ditch.

4. Fourthly, An inordinate love to some lust, or to the world: So that although in the general they know better, and have this perswasion on the Conscience, yet the violence of some indeared Lust carryeth away all with it, as some violent torrent: Thus the young man, that thought he had kept all the Commandements, when our Saviour tried him in that where his heart lay, he went away then very sorrowful, *Math.* 19.22. So then, though Faith, though Christ, though the Scripture, be never so plain, yet their custom and delight in sin, makes them forget all.

Use. *Use of Instruction*: How inexcusable all wicked men will be at the last day, out of your own mouths God will judge you; Christ will say, If it was good to call upon my Name, to make some profession of my Faith, Why was it not also good to obey my Commands? You need no Devil, no Law, no Justice of God to accuse and indict you, you your selves will condemn your selves: As *Peter* told *Ananias*, that kept back part of the money for which he sold his Land, *Was it not free to thee to do what thou wouldst, before thou didst promise? but since thou hast promised, and yet dealt deceitfully, Why hast thou lyed against the Holy Ghost?* Oh thus it will be with thee: hadst thou been an Atheist, a Pagan, hadst thou never ingaged to be for Christs way, then the sinne had been more tolerable; but now thou hast lyed to the Holy Ghost, thou hast lyed to God: Hearken O heavens, and hear O earth, the just condemnation of such perfidious men! Set these things home upon your hearts; say, O Lord, How clear and evident is this? have I any thing to say, why I should keep this sin, delight in this lust? doth not Christ, whom I believe in, condemn it? doth not the Word that I read, judge it? doth not the Ministery which I hear, reprove it? and doth not the Conscience I bear about with me, witness against it?

SERM. CXI.

Of Election and Reprobation, and of the Fewneſs and Properties of thoſe that are choſen; Anſwering the Objections of men, and clearing the Juſtice of God.

MATTH. 22. 14.

For many are called, but few are choſen.

I Have diſpatched the former Propoſition, *Many are called*, and now come to the adverſative, or exceptive Propoſition, *But few are choſen*, ὀλίγοι; though this Greek word may ſometimes be taken as an adjective, ſignifying as much as excellent, choice and precious; yet it is here a Participle, and doth not ſo much denote any inward dignity and excellency, as an external act of God, ſelecting and chooſing ſome to eternal life, and leaving others: thus the word is uſed very plainly againſt the Arminian gloſſe, that would have it be an Adjective, *Mark* 13. 20. διὰ τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς οὓς ἐξελέξατο *for the Elects ſake, whom he hath choſen:* So that this word doth ſignifie an extrinsecal favour and priviledge of God, *who doth all things according to his own will*; why of theſe called, God chooſeth one and not another, *Noli ſcrutari*, ſaid *Auguſtine*, do not curiouſly pry; and again, *Quærat doctiorem, ſed caveat ne inveniat præſumptiorem.* We cannot tell the reaſon why of thoſe many called, ſome have grace given them to obey, and others remain in their obſtinacy. And as we cannot tell why this man, and not another; ſo neither why few, and not many. For as the *glory of a King is in the multitude of his Subjects*; ſo we would think, the glory of God would lye in the multitude of thoſe that are ſaved, but we ſee the peremptory aſſertion in the Text, *Few are choſen.*

That of thoſe many who are called and enjoy the priviledges of grace, few are choſen to eternal life. *Obſerv.*

Thus Chriſt called his people *A little Flock*, Luk. 12. 32. *Fear not little Flock*; As the number of precious ſtones is few to the pibble and gravel ones that lie in the fields; and as the weeds are far more then the flowers; ſo its here: In the Church of God there are more that are droſſe then gold, more that are ſtubble for hell fire, then prepared perſons for glory.

Now let's open this Doctrine; And

First, This truth about the paucity of thoſe that are elected, may be handled either ſinfully or profitably; ſinfully, as when it is treated on onely to ſatisfie curioſity, and to keep up a meer barren ſpeculative diſpute. Thus that man was exerciſed, who came to our Saviour, and asked him, *Whether there were few that ſhould be ſaved?* Luk. 13. 23. Therefore our Saviour did not directly anſwer to the Queſtion, becauſe he would not nouriſh that ſinful humour in man. This point then of Election but of a remnant and few of mankinde, is not to be agitated in a verbal and contentious way, but in a ſaving way, to make us tremble,

and to set us upon a more diligent and close striving with God in prayer, and all other duties. Hence our Saviour, though he would not encourage that Questionist in a way of curiosity, yet he did indirectly answer it, by bidding the same person: *Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for broad was the way that did lead to death, but narrow was the way that did lead to eternal life, and few enter thereat*; So then this Doctrine, if any other, should produce sobriety, holy fear and trembling. For what Prayer, Agonies, Conflicts, should this work in every Hearer?

2. Secondly, *Consider the aggravation of the Doctrine, Many are called, and few are chosen even of those that are called*; and therefore, as you heard, it is an inference made from the man who came to the Feast, sate down with all boldness, and yet because he had no Wedding-garment, was wholly excluded; and this indeed makes the consideration of this point more terrible and sharp, for had it been said, Of all the men in the world, there are but a few that are elected to eternal glory, this would not have struck so much trembling; for who would not have thought it very probable, that those who are within the Church, those that are within the Ark, none of them should perish? But this should wound at the very heart, that even of those who have called Lord, Lord, who have prophesied, wrought miracles, enjoyed the Ordinances, that an handful of these should be saved: *Oh the depths of the counsel of God!* How can men sit and hear these things, and not be darted into the very heart? As they cryed out, when Christ said, *One of you shall betray me, Is it I Lord? Is it I Lord?* And thus now when the Scripture speaks, Many of you persons called, shall be damned, Is not every one to say, Is it I Lord? Is it I Lord?

3. Thirdly, *That notwithstanding few are elected comparatively to those that are left by God*; yet if you take the number of the Elect absolutely in themselves, so there is *a great number of them*. Hence many are said to *come and sit down with Abraham*, Mat. 8. 11. *in the Kingdom of heaven*; and the spiritual seed that is given unto Christ is very great, compared to the *dew of the morning*, Psal. 110. Hence in the *Revelation* you read of *many thousands sealed in every Tribe*. It hath been a conceit of some of the Ancients, that so many shall be repaired out of mankind, as will make up the number of the Angels that fell. Their opinion is, That for the many Angels that fell, there shall rise up so many men in their room, and God will have that number compleated; but here is no ground for this out of the Scripture: We may truly say, that however it be a few in respect of others, yet it is an *All* absolutely considered in themselves; and therefore they are sometimes called the *world*, and *all men*, as some Divines do expound those places.

4. Fourthly, *The powerful and effectual preaching of this Doctrine, is no just ground of despair to any.* None can rationally conclude, Because there are so few that shall be saved, therefore its likely I shall be damned, I have no hopes. Oh if this be true, then farewel all comfort, and all joy, would I had never been made a man *&c.!* The beasts of the field, and the birds of the ayr are happier. But this is gathering poyson out of a sweet herb; for howsoever this be true, yet no man in his particular may conclude himself a Reprobate; for these Reasons.

The Doctrine of Reprobation no ground of despair to any.

1. First, *God layeth it is a duty upon every one to repent, and to believe, to come to him, and he shall have rest to his soul.* If then it be thy duty to believe, to repent, what dost thou trouble thy self about thy election or reprobation? The way to make this Election sure to thee, is by giving all heed and diligence unto every work of grace: If then thou believest, thou repentest, this may be a sure testimony unto thee of thy everlasting glory: so then notwithstanding this truth, *Few are chosen*, yet those sayings are likewise true, Whosoever shall believe, whosoever shall repent, shall be saved; And *Whosoever comes unto Christ, he will in no wise cast out*; Therefore this election of God doth not infringe those universal promises and in-

invitations that the Scripture holds out. Neither may a man thus query, Am I elected or reprobated? But, Is it my duty to repent, or not? Is it my duty to draw nigh unto God or not? And therefore you may observe, That those who hold Absolute Election, can go as far in administring comfort to any troubled sinner, as those that hold Universal Grace or Redemption; for no Arminian dare say, God will save thee, whether thou believe and repent or not, that is all one; but thou must believe and repent, then mercy is prepared for thee; and thus universally can and may the Orthodox say.

2. Secondly, *This is no ground of despair, because no man can know his reprobation.* No man can ever truly say, I know I am not chosen, I know I am not elected. Its true, some have said so in temptations, some have cryed out so in the horrour of Conscience that hath been upon them; but as *Peter* in a transfiguration spake he knew not what; so these in a black and sad temptation. Secret things belong unto God, revealed things unto us: God keeps that book of mens names that are eternally writ by him in his own custody: Even as the day of Judgment, the time of it, is kept secret. Its true indeed, There may be a certain knowledge of our Election not as it is in the Fountain and Decree of God, but by the fruit and blessed effects thereof, which the Scripture doth abundantly witness; and there is great use of such necessity, because hereby God hath the greater praise and glory; and a man is more imboldened and encouraged in all the afflictions that do accompany the profession of Christ. See how *Paul* doth triumph over all by the sense of this love comforting his heart. But now if a man should know he were reprobated in this life, it would breed in him all desperate obstinacy to commit all wickedness with all delight, and he would take himself disobliged from all the duties commanded, that he was not bound to repent or believe, or to pray, no more then the already damned in Hell.

3. Thirdly, *Therefore this cannot breed despair, because if there be any soul broken for sinne, troubled under the guilt of it, we Ministers of the Gospel have a Commission to preach peace and pardon to such a soul.* Oh then there is no cause thou shouldst bewail thy reprobate condition, that God had no thoughts of thee, but rather thy hard and stony heart, that will not relent, that will not grieve, that will not hunger and thirst after Christ. For let us meet with such a soul, as the body of that man of *Jericho*, wounded with sin, and we must pour oil into it. We dare not keep comfort from any one who discovers unfeigned signs of repentance; yea, if need be, we may in particular absolve, and acquit in the name of the Lord, such a sinner from his sins, and the Lord he will confirm it, *Whose sins ye loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven*, Matth. 18. Oh then that we had such occasions, as to administer this balm of *Gilead*! Oh that we could meet with such persons, to whom we could say, *Be of good comfort, thy sinnes are forgiven thee.*

4. Fourthly, *It cannot be any ground of despair, for there is more possibility of thy Salvation, by Gods absolute Election, then by Universal Grace or Redemption*, as the Authors of that Doctrine maintain it: So that if a man were put to choose which Doctrine he would have as putting him into the greater possibility of salvation, he would rationally choose the former way. For by an Absolute Election some are sure to be saved, but by the Doctrine of those universalists, notwithstanding Universal Grace, and Christs dying for all, not one man may be saved, God may lose all the glory of his mercy, and Christ all the fruit of his sufferings, and a mans salvation is hereby made the more unlikely, in that they have not been able to instance in any one Heathen amongst many thousands that improved his Naturals so well, as to have Grace given him.

5. Fifthly, *This few number that are said to be chosen, are so precisely determined and ordained by God that it can neither be lessened or multiplied.* When the Apostle had spoken of the fall of some eminent persons, he addeth, *Nevertheless the Foundation of God standeth sure*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his:*

So that if the dayes of a mans life are numbred with God, that there cannot be one day taken from them, or added to them; much more muſt this hold in that ſoveraign and glorious Decree. Inſomuch that it is falſe Doctrine to ſay to any man, If thou art not predeſtinated, pray thou mayeſt be; for this is Gods eternal purpoſe before the foundations of the world were laid; and are far ſtronger then thoſe Decres of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, which were ſo immutable, *that they could not be changed*; and ſuch a prayer would be, as if we would intreat God to create the World. There is none of theſe Choſen ones ſhall ever be caſt away as Reprobate, *None of the bones of Chriſt were broken*, much leſſe will he loſe any of his living members: The love of God is unchangeably placed upon his people, and thoſe that are his *Ammi*, his people, in this ſenſe have this mercy, he will never ſay to them, *Lo-ammi*, you are not my people.

6. Sixthly, *Thoſe that are thus choſen by God, of his meer good will and gracious pleaſure, God finds not any thing in one called perſon more then another that ſhould diſtinguiſh them; Paul* ſaid, *Who hath made thee to differ from another?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. And indeed, if in theſe earthly mercies, its God that gives ſome riches, and not another; ſome wealth, and not another; ſome health, and not another; How much rather then is it God, that gives one grace to repent, and not another; one a broken and contrite heart, and not another? Thus always in the Scripture, you ſhall find that repentance is Gods gift. To believe and underſtand the myſtery of the Goſpel, is given to one, and not to another. Thoſe then that are thus choſen, are to be raviſhed with the conſideration of Free-grace, that God out of his good pleaſure ſhould make ſuch a large difference between him and others, that it may be have been leſſe ſinners, and have leſſe diſhonoured God then he hath done. How thankful muſt the *Iſraelite* needs have been to ſee the deſtroying Angel paſſe by his houſe, and ſtrike at the next *Egyptian* houſe to him? How much more then are the godly to rejoyce, who have the ſtroak of eternal damnation paſſing by them, but falling heavily upon others!

Object. And if you object, ſaying, *All is of Gods meer pleaſure, and its wholly of* GOD, *that one is left, and another is taken; then a mans damnation and deſtruction is wholly to be imputed unto God; then a man is no more in fault; for who hath reſiſted his will?*

Anſw. To this we anſwer: That howſoever it be Gods Soveraign good pleaſure to chooſe ſome and not others, yet a mans damnation is wholly of himſelf in reſpect of the meritorious cauſe; for no man is damned preciſely, becauſe *God* hath not choſen him, becauſe he is not elected, but becauſe he is a ſinner, and doth wilfully refuſe the means of grace offered: inſomuch that there is no ſinner, but he doth as willingly and readily ſinne with as much choice and delight as if he were not at all left by GOD; and therefore the Scripture doth wholly attribute a mans deſtruction to his own ſelf: Let no man think then to evade Gods Juſtice under this pretence. No, God will be juſtified, and every man will be found to be a ſinner. Neither may this be thought injuſtice in God; for if he had not ſaved one man, none could have blamed him: we ſee he did not ſpare one of the Apoſtate Angels: Thus alſo might he have done with all man-kind. Let us therefore admire the goodneſſe of God that chooſeth any to eternal life.

Object. But a ſecond Objection, which cavillers uſe to make is, *If God hath thus choſen ſome and left others, then all our labours and endeavours after Godlineſs, are in vain; Why ſhould I pray? why ſhould I ſeek after God, all may be in vain?*

Anſw. To this, the Anſwer is eaſie: Thou muſt live by the revealed will of God, not by the ſecret: Now Gods revealed Will calls for ſuch Duties, commands ſuch graces of every one. What is Gods ſecret Will, none can tell thee; but in the Word he hath ſhewed thee, O man, what thou art to do: Do not thou then cavil

cavil, and argue against thy Duty? But hear what the Scripture saith, Tremble under what God doth require of thee, thou art sure the neglect of these Duties will be unto thee an evident token of perdition. Neither do the Orthodox assert such an Absolute Decree as doth oppose ordered means, but Conditions suspended upon the uncertain will of man. We see the Scripture positively asserting such an Election of God before the foundations of the World: we see it also as positive and peremptory in commands for the use of the means. Therefore these two things may stand together: Let not then the difficulty of reconciling them make thee deny either; and if upon prayer and study thou canst not pitch on a way for their concord (for several learned men differ herein, some going one way, some another) do then rather submit thy understanding, then presumptuously deny the truth, as thou doest in the matter of the Trinity; and this counsel, about a point very near it, not all one with this, doth *Cajetan* the subtil School-man give.

Signs that but few are saved.

And thus much for Explication: The ground why of many called, few are chosen *a priori*, is, as you heard, Gods will, *Who doth in Heaven and Earth what pleaseth him*. *Paul* in the 9th. of the *Romans*, hath so fully determined this, that its a wonder any have had the fore-head to rise up and dispute against it; We rather are to admire the mercy of God, *that a few are chosen*, rather then to dispute why not more, or all. The Church in her temporal affliction did blesse God for the remnant that was saved; and we are much more to praise God for any that are elected to eternal life.

And then the ground *a Posteriori*, or which is rather a sign that few are saved, may be evidenced by considering the lives of those that are called, *View then and judge by the Scripture, and you must then conclude, few are chosen.* For out of the number of those that are called outwardly, Take

First; *All ignorant persons*; and then you remove a great number. That no grossely ignorant person, living and dying so, is chosen, appeareth plainly, *Because God would have men come to the knowledge of the truth, and so to be saved*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. And conversion is an enlightning of the minde; its the giving of a man a spiritual understanding; *They are a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not save them*, Isa. 23. 11. So then, we are to bid all ignorant people, *Stand you by*, you are not of the chosen ones by any outward sign. As yet you are in a damnable condition: O pray that God would open your blind eyes!

Secondly, *From those that are called, Take away the prophane and ungodly man in his life, and then the number is still lesse and lesse.* Are not the ignorant and the prophane men the greater part of called persons? But now if any man be a vicious and ungodly person, he must also stand aloof off; Here are no signs of thy Election, as yet; yea there are the Plague-tokens for the present of Gods eternal displeasure.

Thirdly, There is a third sort to be taken away, and that is, *Of those indeed who live a civil and unblamable life, unspotted from all sinne and wickednesse, but yet have never felt within themselves the mighty power of God renewing their natures.* What a small number by this time will that of the chosen persons be, when those that live in a fair and ingenuous way, but never tasted the good Word of GOD upon their hearts, are also bid to depart, here is no comfort for them.

Lastly, *Yet once more, take away all those, who have the common gifts and graces of Gods Spirit, who have some inward workings of illumination and joy, and sorrow in their hearts*, but yet because they do not dig deep enough, and want root, are therefore carryed no further then hypocrites and reprobates: Such there are, and our Saviour doth often give his Disciples warning, lest they go no further then these. Now then put all these together, The Ignorant Person, The Prophane, The Civil, and the Temporary Believer, and take the rest, and you will say, Oh how few are chosen!

Use

Use. *Use of Examination.* Try your selves under this truth, Hath Christ spoken it once and twice? It will prove true, That though *Many are called, yet few are chosen*: Oh then search and again search and try your ways! Oh enquire, whether thou art in the number of those chosen ones or no? for the thing may be known. The Scripture gives many characters of this that are those chosen. Do thou then fall upon this study. Oh do not hear and hear, but fall presently upon the work! The signs are these:

First, Those that are chosen to glory, they are likewise chosen to grace here. Election will in due time have its effectual vocation. If God appoint thee to eternal life, he doth here in this world appoint thee to a gracious and heavenly life. As thy glory and happinesse is a choise mercy, so are thy thoughts, thy actions choise actions. Is thy whole conversation elected and removed from sin and filthinesse. This is a sure Argument, No Sanctification no Election, No choice grace no choice glory. Thou art to be a precious jewel here, ere God will make thee up at that great day.

Secondly, *Those that are chosen, they have the Spirit of God bestowed on them*: He is the fruit of this Election, and a three-fold work the Spirit of God puts forth in them: Its

1. *A Spirit of Prayer*, Rom. 8. which teacheth us how to pray, and what to pray; which makes our hearts full of conflicts and spiritual agonies in prayer. Thy earnest effectual prayers demonstrate thy Election.

2. *Its the Spirit of Adoption, enabling us to call God Father*: This is a comfortable fruit in those that are chosen; They have a Filial and Evangelical frame of heart. They have a godly boldnes and confidence in Gods love.

3. *Its a witnessing and sealing Spirit to them*; it assures and seals unto them the love and favour of *God*, and by the Spirits assistance they come to be thus perswaded. Alas, they have no such certainty of themselves, as the choisest colours cannot be seen without the benefit of the light.

Thirdly, *Those that are thus chosen, they have a heavenly delight and excellent joy in drawing nigh to God*; His Ordinances are excellent, his Word is excellent, his Sabbaths are a delight. They prize those things more then the Worldly man his Treasure, the voluptuous man his pleasures.

Lastly, *They that are thus chosen, they walk with an holy fear and trembling*: Their heavenly joy and assurance doth not degenerate into presumption, or neglect of the means. No, *Paul* beats down his body, that he may not become a Reprobate; and he giveth this general rule, *Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling*. These are the fruits of Election, not as if all that were chosen had them at all times, or altogether, or in a perfect manner, but with much conflict and imperfection.

SERM. CXII.

More Signs and Effects of Election: And Directions to those that are overwhelmed with Thoughts and Fears whether they are Elected or no.

MATTH. 22. 14.

For many are called, but few are chosen.

THE Doctrine contained in the adversative or exceptive part of this Proposition, carrieth much terrour with it; for how easily may the soul be discouraged under this consideration, The fewnesse of those that are elected or saved? Now although there are few who need encouragements, the greater part of our Auditors being presumptuous and self-confident; yet that I handle this truth compleatly, I shall answer this particular Case of Conscience,

A Case of Conscience.

What that person should do, who is overwhelmed with fears and thoughts, whether he belong to Election or no, Whether he hath any interest in the Covenant of Grace; for though but few, yet some such there are, who, through the tenderness of their own hearts, and Satans subtil temptations, are many times cast down, as if there were no hope for them: Though God be gracious to others, yet not to them; insomuch, That they sit down like deflowred *Tamar*, weeping and wailing, not knowing whither to go: would not therefore he be like a Messenger from God, that could tell how to ease the soul of this burthen? But before I apply my self to this satisfaction, I shall adde some further signs and effects of Election, to what I propounded the last day; and certainly, if the hearts of men were as careful to make their Election sure, as they are to make the Evidences of their Estates, or any outward advantage they enjoy, even a little said, may do good unto them. In worldly things that Rule is received, *Tene certum, dimitte incertum*, Hold that which is certain, and let that go which is uncertain: Why then are ye not as wise in this respect? Thy outward mercies, thy security, and quietnesse of Conscience, these are no certain signs of thy Election; therefore let them go and put no more confidence in them. We proceed to adde more, That he who is not convinced in the want of the one, may be in the want of the other. And

More signs and effects of Election.

1. First, *They that are thus chosen, the preaching of the Gospel comes not unto them in word onely, but in a full and effectuous power on their heart, and assurance of their understanding*: We Ministers of the Gospel may here take up our lamentations, To whom is the Gospel preached, any more then meer bare words? Do not our Sermons, as the Psalmist said of our lives, *pass away as a tale that is told*? Oh this is an ill sign! consider that place, 1 *Thess.* 1. 4 5. *Knowing (Brethren) your Election of God.* The Apostle speaks so of others, either in the

judgment of Charity, or from that ſpirit of diſcerning, which was vouchſafed ſome in the Apoſtles times: Well, how comes *Paul* to know this? by this glorious effect, *Veſſ.* 5. *For our Goſpel came not unto you in word onely, but alſo in power, and in the Holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance:* See what the end and iſſue of every Sermon ſhould be, it ſhould come with power, and with the Holy Ghoſt into your hearts, *viz.* The Spirit of *God*, accompanying the Word, works Faith, Converſion, and a through Reformation of our lives: It is therefore very good to conſider, with what power the Word preached falls into thy heart: Doth it convince thee, humble thee, mollifie and ſoften thee; this argueth thou belongeſt to God, *John* 8. Our Saviour argueth on the contrary, that the Phariſees were not of God, becauſe they did not hear, with faith and obedience, his Word: Thus you ſee, great diſcoveries may be made of men, according to the efficacy Gods Word hath upon their hearts. Every faithful Miniſter is like *John*, a voyce; but if he be no more, then, as is ſaid of the Nightingal, *vox & præterea nihil*, he is a voice, and nothing elſe; wo be to that Auditor who feels it no more: *Ezekiel* was no more to his Hearers; God tells him, *He was like a pleaſant ſong to them*, Ezek. 33. 32. they would come and hear as his people, but they would do nothing: If therefore the Election of *God* ever put forth any glorious power on thee, thou wilt find it in this, ſome time or other, that the Word preached will be more then the word of a man, more then a meer humane Oration, or verbal Declamation: Oh! it will be like fire in thy bowels, like a two-edged ſword in the ſecret places of thy heart; thou wilt cry out, Verily God is here: Oh the power, the conviction, the meltings of my ſoul that I feel within me!

2. Secondly, *A further effect of Predeſtination is, a conformity to the Image of Chriſt:* Thus the Apoſtle expreſly affirmeth, *Rom.* 8. 29. *Whom he did foreknow, he did predeſtinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son:* This is a glorious fruit, to be made like Chriſt, to have the Image of Chriſt in us, affections like Chriſt, zeal and heavenlineſs like Chriſt. This conformity unto Chriſt, may be in three things:

First, That which is future and to come, *viz.* To be glorified, as he is glorified: Thus the Apoſtle elſewhere ſaith, *Our vile bodies, ſhall be made conformable unto his glorious body*, Phil. 3. 21. and as we have carryed the image of the earthly, ſo we ſhall the image of the heavenly, 1 *Cor.* 15. 49. An ineſtimable priviledge it is: But I intend not that.

The ſecond particular of conformity, is the grace and holineſs of Chriſt: that as he was altogether holy, humble, doing the will of *God* readily in every particular, ſo ſhould we. Hence we are commanded, *To be followers of him*, and, *To put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. 12. 14. as a garment which covers the whole body; ſo that we are to expreſs the ſavor and life of Chriſt in all that we do, let nothing of our ſin, our nakedneſs appear, but every thing like Chriſt: How excellently did *Paul* arrive to this, when he could ſay, *I no longer live, but Chriſt within me.* *Hierom* ſaid of *Auſtin*, That he did *Diligere Chriſtum habitantem in Auguſtino*, he loved Chriſt dwelling in *Auſtin*: Oh! this image and ſuperſcription they bear who are elected, they ſhall, at leaſt ere they dye, manifeſt the life and power of Chriſt dwelling in them. Conſider then, are thy affections, thy thoughts, thy actions ſuch as reſemble Chriſt? Thoſe that are elected, are predeſtinated to ſuch a conformity.

Thirdly, There is a conformity unto Chriſt, in regard of his ſufferings, and patient obedience thereunto: This ſome Interpreters make to be the chief ſcope of the place; that as Chriſt had in this life a ſuffering, afflicted and perſecuted life, in all which he was full of humility and patience; and after this he was exalted to glory: ſo it will fall out with every member of Chriſt; every member, as well as the head, ſhall have a time of humiliation, before a ſtate of exaltation

alcation: Let not those then who will live in the power of godliness, expect great and comfortable things always in this world: Though they be chosen ones with *God*, yet with the World they may be the off-scouring and dregs of mankinde.

Thirdly, The third effect, *Is thankefulness, and continual hearty gratitude unto God for this so great and unspeakable a mercy:* You can no more keep in the heart from overflowing, when its sensible of this everlasting love of *God*, then you can put bounds to the Sea: See *Paul, Ephes.* 1. and in other places, with what heavenly joy and inlarged thankfulness he amplifieth the love and grace of *God* in electing of us before the foundations of the world; he cannot satisfie himself with any words, but heaps them up one upon another: And certainly, in that *God* hath elected and chosen thee, he hath done more for thee, then if he should give thee all the glory of the world. That elect Lady, *John* wrote unto, was more happy in being elected, then in all the external glory she had: How then is thy heart affected with joy, and praise, and thankfulness in this matter? He that bestoweth great things, looks for great return of thanks, especially this being all we can do. 3.

Fourthly, *Those that are elected have a spirit of heavenly fortitude and courage bestowed upon them, whereby they are able to rejoyce and triumph in all adversities and troubles:* The apprehension of this doth so animate them, that like *Salamanders*, they live in the fire of persecution; like the Ark, they are so far from being drowned in the waters, that thereby they are exalted nearer Heaven. Read *Rom.* 8. What glorious triumphs doth *Paul*, in the person of all the Elect, make over all kind of enemies that can be thought on! he challengeth every adversary to put forth his sting: Now whence comes all this boldness and confidence? even because *God* had elected, and nothing can separate them from this unchangable love: How can men endure the loss of goods, estates, name, and life it self, did not a gracious assurance of this, raise them up above all humane strength? This is the *Aqua fortis* unto their despondent spirits; this makes them, with *Paul*, say to all friends that would hinder them in suffering for *God*, *Why do you break my heart? I am ready not onely to be bound, but to dye for Christs sake.* 4.

Fifthly, *The last and glorious effect of Election, is perseverance, and a stedfast continuance in that way of grace they are at first set in:* Final Apostacy, and totall backsliding from the ways of *God*, can never befall those that are thus chosen: *If it were possible*, Mat. 24. 24. the Elect would be deceived with the signs and wonders of lying Prophets: *They went from us, because they were not of us*, said the Apostle, 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. Many places might be brought to this purpose; especially that promise, *Jer.* 32. 40. which is nothing but the Covenant of grace, and the execution of *Gods* Decree from all eternity. *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall never depart from me:* Oh what a blessed mercy is this! when there are so many hours of tempeation in the world, so many blustring storms and tempests, that are able to raize up the very roots, did not that immortal seed preserve them. Thus having added some more necessary effects, that demonstrate this Calling and Election of *God*, I now apply my self to pour oyl into that wounded heart I mentioned, to that tender Conscience who is surprized with fear and trembling, lest not so much as the crums that fall from this Table do belong to it; than refuse to be comforted, saying with *Zion*, *God hath forsaken her*. And 5.

First, *Let such as one consider that it is no new or strange temptation, even for the godly to be possessed with these thoughts and fears, that God hath left them, God hath forsaken them:* How often may you have the Church sighing such complaints in *David's* Psalms, *Hath the Lord cast off for ever? will he be gracious no more?* and so in *Isaiah*, *Zion hath said, The Lord hath forsaken me*: But all that she said, and she thought was not true; nay, what need we wonder at this, seeing that even 1. The Case of Conscience resolved. Isa. 49. 14.

even Christ himself was tempted in this manner, though without sin: Was not this the meaning of those heavy groans and cryes, the Apostle saith he uttered, saying, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* *My God, my God*, these were the expressions of faith, adhering and relying; but, *why hast thou forsaken me?* they were the words of one not feeling the sensible comfort and support of God in that presence; which simply was not a small part of that soul-agony, and soul-suffering he did undergo for us. Well then, let no tender heart, and troubled soul be dejected, if it be exercised with such black temptations; for these things have befallen the godly, yea Christ himself.

2. Secondly, *Lay this down assuredly that all those thoughts and suggestions, as if thou were not chosen, come onely from the Devil, and are his poysoned Arrows that he darts into thee.* He is the Prince of Darkness, and loveth to keep the Soul in Darkness; he is the Accuser of the Brethren, not onely to God, but accuseth God to them, as an hard master, as one that did watch to damn and destroy: Now that they come from Satan, is plain, because they are contrary to the Scripture: All Spirits must be tryed by the Scripture, and so thou must try thy Spirit by the Scripture; Well then, thy Spirit saith, God hath not chosen thee, God hath not ordained thee to eternal glory: Now say, Where doth the Scripture reveal any such thing? Where doth Gods Word manifest any such thing? If then the Scripture discover no such thing, it comes but from that lying Spirit, and thy lying Heart together; say therefore in all such Temptations, *Get thee behinde me Satan, these things savour not of the Scripture, these things come not from Gods Spirit*, therefore Gods Spirit is called *The Comforter*, because he inclineth the Soul to believe in Gods gracious promises; Gods Spirit is the Spirit of Adoption, which inableth us to cry, *Abba Father*; thus the Spirit of God, where that is, dispels all tormenting fears, all sinful dejections, carryeth on the heart to Evangelical considerations: Now this should exceedingly prevail with the tender heart, when it feels all those sad and heavy pressures; All these things are contrary to Gods Spirit, they grieve the Spirit of God, as well as my own Spirit.

3. Thirdly, Consider, *We are not to live by our own experiences and feelings, than we have, whether of joy, or fears, but by the Word of God:* Its a very dangerous delusion, when a man makes his own sense and experience, the rule to walk by; He must bring his heart, and all things to the Word, to be directed by it, guided by it. Now the Word of God that commands every one in particular to believe, to repent, to draw near to God; this the Word enjoyneth every one, Why then art thou troubling thy self about the secret things of God, which can never be known? These revealed Commands and Duties, they belong to thee: How much better were it therefore to shake off all those Temptations, as *Paul* did the Viper from his hand; and say, Let me rise up and fall to my duty: The command is plain, unquestionable, *Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden*, Mat. 11. *He every one that thirsteth, come*, Joh. 7. Now then, if these Texts be so clear, so evident, how darest thou refuse them? If sinne trouble thee, then let sinne against these Commandements trouble thee. We have a most pregnant instance in this case, *Mat.* 15. 22. The woman of *Canaan*, when she desired help from Christ, see what a repulse Christ gave her: *Its not fit to give Childrens bread to Dogs*: He calls her a Dog, he tells her, Childrens bread did not belong to her: Whose heart would not this break? Was not this in effect to tell her, she was a reprobate, the promise of Grace did not belong to her? Though Christ spake this by way of tryal to draw out her importunity the more: Well, what saith the woman to all this? yet she will catch something for an argument still of hope; *Truth Lord, yet the Dogs eat of the crums that fall from the Table*: Let me be a Dog, let me be unworthy, I confesse my self so, I feel my self so, yet deny not the crums, the least mercy I shall prize: and upon this answer what great commendation did Christ give her faith? Look you then here is a copy for thee to write after, endeavour

to

to be like this woman; O Lord, though I feel no comfort, though I be a Castaway, though I be a Dog, yet let me have but the crums, the least expressions of thy love, and they will refresh me: So that you see, these temptations are not to deject, but to draw out thy importunity, to quicken up thy affections, as you shall hear afterwards.

Fourthly, *Thou ought'st to be so far from being discouraged, because of these sad temptations and fears, that thou ought'st the more to rejoyce, and to take these groans and cries, as the sure signs and symptoms of thy Predestination.* For so we told you, where this Election was, there the Spirit of God did accompany the Soul with prayers and groans unutterable: So that those exercises and troubles of heart, they are to be a great ground of comfort and hope to thee; thou art to rejoyce and blesse God, that puts thee in such agonies, such exercises, though for the present so heavy and unsupportable! Alas! he that is a reprobate, and indeed forsaken by *God*, he is never thus troubled, he is given up to a stony heart, as *Pharaoh* was; and therefore such are said to have a blinde eye, a deaf ear, a fat heart, that cannot understand: No, those that are thus forsaken by *God*, they make a mock of sin, they eat and drink, and go down quick to Hell: Let not then those things which ought to comfort thee, be matter of discouragement to thee. Turn not honey into gall. 4.

Fifthly, Consider, *The unprofitableness, and sinfulness of all such fears:* They come to no good at all, they are thorns in thy side, and hinder thee in all that livelinesse and power of godlinesse that ought to be; they hinder thy praying, thy obedience, thy comfortable discharge of thy relation, duties: *The joy of the Lord is your strength*, said *Nehemiah*, Nehem. 8. 10. and fear, that makes feeble hands, and feeble knees: so that as that timber which is eaten into by Worms, cannot serve for strong building; so neither can those who are devoured by these temptations, be for that while serviceable unto *God*: Know then, if thou wilt fear, thou hast cause to fear these fears, thou hast cause to take heed thou doest not run into sin, while thou art afraid of sin. 5.

Sixthly, *Examine thy self, whether thou doest not live in some known secret sin unrepented of*; and that puts thee upon the question of all; or whether thou hast not grosly fallen from thy former love, and power of godliness: These things many times raise a dark and gloomy mist upon the soul, *Psal.* 32. when *David* kept close his sin, and did not confess it, that made great trouble and perplexity in his soul. As vapors got into the bowels of the earth, and finding no vent, make a terrible Earthquake. 6.

Seventhly, and lastly, *Grant all thy fears and troubles to be upon just grounds, yet if thou must perish, perish depending upon God*: Take up *Jobs* resolution, *Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him*; as *Hester*, venter to go in to Gods presence, and say, *If I perish, I perish*, and thou wilt find, as she did, the King of Heaven holding out the Scepter of grace: Thou art sure to be damned by unbelief; and by keeping off from *God*; but its possible to meet with salvation, yea, its sure, if thou draw near to *God*: As those Lepers were sure to perish with Famine, if they staid in the place they were in, therefore they would venture, though in the enemies Countrey: And thus much for application of comfort. 7. Job 13. 15.

I shall conclude with an Use of Admonition, Try your selves about these forementioned fruits of Election; do not reject these things as nothing belonging to thee: Oh! doest not thou see thy self as yet in the state of gall and bitternesse? what mean those grosse impieties, those unfruitful and unreformed ways, under so much preaching? Put thy mouth in the dust, if yet there may be hope; pray, and again pray, *God* would deliver thee from those sins that overcome thee.

SERM.

SERM. CXIII.

Of Christians walking worthy of their Calling; what to walk worthy implies, and what are the Properties and Actions that will become and grace our Holy Calling.

EPHES. 4. 1.

I therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called.

THE Apostle, in this Epistle, as for the most part in others, divideth his Discourse into two parts; The first whereof is didactical, informing and confirming in matters of Faith and Doctrine. The second is moral and practical, wholly tending to form us in a Christian and heavenly life. Now in the beginning of this Chapter, wherein my Text is, the first verse, the Apostle betakes himself to an wholesome and savoury Exhortation, to live in the powerful expression of all the graces of Gods Spirit. And first, he layeth down his Exhortation in the general; and then instanceth in particulars.

The general Duty is in my Text; wherein observe,

1. The Duty it self; *Walk worthy*: To walk, implieth the perpetual course and exercise of a mans life. He that steps now and then occasionally in such a path, is not said to walk in it: To be godly by fits, to have some pangs and sudden resolution; for what is good, and then presently to let all vanish, is not to walk. *To walk worthy*; This is not worth of merit or congruity antecedent to Gods grace calling us. No, he plainly supposeth the grace of God hath called us already: and therefore, as is to be shewed, it denoteth onely a worth of condecency and fitnesse that is subsequent to this Holy Calling, that all our thoughts, words and actions should be decent and becoming such an Heavenly Call. Even as *John* bid them, *Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance* Luk. 3. 8. that is, fit and beseeming repentance.

2. You have the object of this Duty, and that is *The Vocation wherewith ye are called*; by this he means, that outward favour of God, calling them from their former ignorance and sins, to the profession of faith, and obedience to the Gospel. They are not now what they were once; they must be other men; They must consider their heavenly dignity and condition. As *Paul* said, *While he was a childe he did all things as a childe; but when a man he left those childish things, and did as a man*: Thus it is here, When thou wast ignorant, prophane, and a stranger from God, thou didst as such do; but, when called by God, then thou takest up more holy and divine resolutions.

3. There is the Argument to inforce it, and that is from the outward condition of him, that doth thus intreat them, *A prisoner of the Lord*; one that is in bonds and prison for the Lords sake. This he doth to excite their affections, for how

how well might they part with their lusts and unlawful pleasures, when he had parted with his liberty, and was ready to lose his life for the Lords sake! And see here the gracious disposition of *Paul*, who being now in prison and bonds, is not solicitous about himself, doth not write about means to set himself at liberty; but all his care is, that these *Ephesians* might do nothing which should be a scandal to Christianity, a reproach to the Gospel, that all their life should be a praise and a glory to that Calling, *GOD* had called them with.

That it is the earnest and hearty desire of the faithful Ministers of the Gospel, that all Christians should live such a life, that is worthy and beseeming so excellent a Calling. *Observ.*

There are no sadder objects, then to see a prophane, a debaucht, an ungodly Christian; to see men professe Christ in words, and in works to deny him; For these things their souls mourn in secret. Because of this, they intreat, beseech and exhort without ceasing: See the like hot affection burning out in *Paul* to the *Thessalonians*, 2 Thess. 1. 11. *We pray alwayes for you, that our God would count you worthy of his calling.* We pray alwayes for you; This we never forget; This is alwayes in our heart, that ye may be a people becoming this glorious calling. And indeed its a most absurd and even loathsome sight, to see a man with the same mouth pray to *God*, yea to curse, swear and blaspheme; with the same body, to worship *God* in the Congregations, and to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. *Solomon* hath two excellent sayings together, *Prov.* 26. *v.* 7. and *v.* 9. The first is, *The legs of the lame are not equal, so is the parable in a fools mouth.* A fool is the wicked man, and a parable is a grave, holy sentence: Now, saith he, as those that are lame and halt, they shew an uncomely inequality in their going, such a deformity there is in a wicked man; that yet hath holy truths in his mouth. The second is, *As a thorn goeth up in the hand of a Drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of a fool.* The Drunkard he feeleth no smart, though a thorn run into his hand. Thus a wicked man, though the obligations of Christianity, and his Baptism be never so piercing and powerful to godlinesse, yet he feels no efficacy in them.

To open this Doctrine, consider,

First, What it is to walk worthy *digne* of this Holy Calling; and that implyeth these things: What it is to walk worthy. 1.

First, *To do nothing but what is suitable and connatural with this Calling.* Those actions are worthy such an Agent, as are suitable and proper for him. All Agents have their suitable operations; the fire ascends, the stone descends. If therefore the fire should descend and go downwards, it would be against nature, it would argue great violence. Thus the suitable and connatural actions of a Christian are to avoid sin, to walk holily, [redacted] above the World, to keep our selves unspotted from it. Now if any one [redacted] called a Christian be not thus, he doth unnatural actions. His principles, his obligations are against these things. Oh (Beloved) if men were real Christians, as well as titular, you should see no more prophane and ungodly persons amongst us, then venemous and poisonous creatures will be in some Countries; It should be even a wonder, a strange thing, that any one should, among Christians, be found in the way of wickednesse: On then reflect upon all thy words, all thy actions: Are these suitable? Are these proper? Do these agree with my Baptism, with my profession of Christ? How can I call on Christ, and do the things Christ hateth?

Secondly, *The word implieth, besides suitableness, a convenientcy and decency, to do such things as are comely, that are no reproach or debasement unto our holy profession. Whatsoever things are comely, whatsoever things are pure and just,* Phil. 4. 8. *If there be any praise, any vertue, think on these things.* Its a Rule that *Tully* gives in Moral Offices between man and man, that we should observe the τὸ πρέπον, what is convenient and decent: Though haply Pagans and Hea- 2.

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thens, and such who never heard of Christ may glory in all excesse of riot, yet this is not decent or becoming a Christian. The Apostle forbids *foolish jesting, which is not convenient*, Ephes. 5, 4. how much more then thy oaths, thy lusts! Oh how indecent and unbecoming are such words and actions! Though other men might drink wine, yet it was not befitting a *Nazarite*, who by vow had separated himself to God, promising abstinence from these things; and so though the world lieth in wickednesse, and glory in their impieties, yet these things are not for thee to do, who art separated to God. What then shall we think of such persons, who account their Oaths a grace to their mouth, who judge strictnesse and precisenesse of walking, the most indecent and ridiculous way? Oh what do such persons think of their Divine Vocation? Hath God called us to uncleanesse, to lusts? Where are your Consciences? Why do they lie so fast asleep in your breasts, and are not awakened?

3. Thirdly, *The word implieth glory, and an ornament to this heavenly Calling, which is more then meer comelinesse and decency.* Glory is *clara notitia*, a famous and illustrious manifestation of such godlinesse in our lives, that thereby all others may honour the Gospel, and love that Christianity, which instructs them in such things. This our Saviour meaneth, when he commands, *That our light should so shine before men, that others may glorifie God for us*, Matth. 5. 16. Oh, every Christian is to be like a Star, or the Sun in the Firmament; as lights in the dark night, so these in the midst of a crooked and perverse people: Oh its a woful thing to be an offence or a stumbling block to others, and that is, so to live, as that others are more confirmed and encouraged in their wickednesse! Look we then upon mens lives, and compare them with their Christian Calling, here is no more agreement then with light and darknesse: Oh the reproach and scandal they are to Christianity! *Salvian*, a godly Ancient, doth excellently describe this, What do Pagans say, when they see Christians live wickedly? They think Christ taught them no better, he instructed them in no more holinesse; *Christiani sancte vixissent, si Christus sancta docuisset*; Christians would have lived holily, if Christ had given them holy Commands: Oh blasphemy! Yet thus is the name of Christ blasphemed by thy ungodly life.

4. Fourthly, *The word doth imply a giving the preheminence and excellency to those things that beseem this Calling*; That we minde this in the first place. Many they attend to keep up their state, their pomp, their pedigree; but the true godly man, he seeketh this in the first place, how he may adorn that holy profession, ἀξίως from ἄγω, and is properly from that side of the scales or balance that weighs down the other; so it is here: Those things that become this Holy Calling, that make for the glory of it, they should weigh down all other thoughts and affections: whatsoever is chief, precious and glorous in thee, it should go to glorifie this Heavenly Calling. So that this shameth those who never seriously consider nor meditate, what this Christian profession [illegible] them to: As *Nehemiah* said, *Shall such a man as I flee?* He thought it a great dishonour to him, whatsoever it might be to others. And so do thou reflect, Shall such an one as I swear, curse, deal unjustly, be proud and earthly? Oh when thou hast been overcome with such things! say truly to thy self, that which *Michal* did falsly to *David*, *Thou hast made thy self like one of the vile and base ones of the earth.* Thus you have heard what the word ἀξίως, worthy, doth imply.

What are the properties and actions that will become our holy Calling.

Now let us consider, *What are those properties or constant actions that will thus become and grace our holy calling.* And

1. First, *They walk worthy of this calling, who have heartily and totally left all that former life God hath called them out from, and have no desires to return to that again.* By this Call, GOD takes us from all those former customary wayes of impieties, that we lived in: Were we prophane? we are so no more: Were we proud, earthly, unjust? we are so no more. GOD hath called us from such a wretched and cursed estate of life. Now a man cannot walk in a meer unworthy

thy way of this call, then to desire to return to his former lusts: To think it was better then with us, than now; we had more pleasures, more love in the World, more content and esteem, then since we have followed God thus calling of us: Oh wherein can we shew our selves a people more unworthy of this mercy, then in so doing! As it was with the people of *Israel*, when God had delivered them out of that place of bondage, and by a mighty hand had wrought wonderful deliverances for them; wherein did they demonstrate their horrible ingratitude more then in this, *That they would go back again to Egypt?* They prized not the Manna, but thought of their old flesh-pots. Thus its an unsufferable wickedness in any man, whom God hath called from his former lusts, and he begins to desire them again, and to do as he hath done: Oh what is this, but to repent of thy marriage to God! To proclaim to the world, that thou didst finde more pleasure and content in lusts, then in the service of God! *Remember Lots wife*; when God had by a merciful hand pulled her out of *Sodom*, she looks back, and was immediately turned into a *pillar of salt*. *Augustine* said, It was to season us; but the Hebrew word for salt, may signifie Brimstone, or such Materials; and so she was punished, in some measure, like the *Sodomites*, partaking of their punishments, because she had some compliance with their sins: Oh then consider thy self! Hast thou forsaken all thy former dear lusts? Hast thou bid them all, Be gone? Is the very memory of thy former life, a shame and a bitterness to thee? Art thou daily blessing God, that he hath given thee eyes to see, and an heart to understand thy former life, and that for thousands of Worlds, thou wouldest not be the man thou once wert? This is to walk worthy of so holy a calling.

Secondly, *Those that walk worthy of this Heavenly Call, they keep themselves unspotted from the wickedness of the world, they are not conformed to the wayes and customes thereof.* Thus the Apostle prayeth earnestly, *Rom.* 12. *that they might not be conformed to the world, but transformed in their mind*; and true Religion is that which keeps a man *unspotted from the world*, Jam. 1. 28. If God hath called thee out of this Dungeon, out of this noisome and filthy place, its for thee to cast off all thy rags, and not to carry about thee so much as the smell thereof. The whole world lieth in wickedness, saith the Apostle; *And if ye were of the world*, saith Christ to his Disciples, *the world would love you*. Though the godly are in it, yet not of it. Thou dost therfore then walk in a way beseeming this holy profession, when thy life is singular, and contrary to the world, thou hatest what that loveth, thou lovest what that hateth. Thy thoughts and affections are above these things. As God made the Fowls at first out of the waters, but they left them, and flie up in the air towards the heavens: So it ought to be with us; though we are born of flesh and blood, and have one being from below, yet we are to soar above. Do not then defile thy self with the pitch here below. Be as the Sun-beams upon the dunghil, that are not pollured by the vapours there of. Be as those three Worthies in this fire, and yet not have thy garments sindged. 2.

Thirdly, *They are very attentive and diligent to avoid all those wayes that may be an active scandal or offence to others.* To walk worthy of the Gospel, is so to carry our selves, that others may love it, that we may win others by our life and conversation. Now on the other side, they walk unworthily of it, who give just offence and scandal to others, that are stumbling blocks in other mens wayes. This is an heavy sin: our Saviour cryeth out of a wo to such men, *Mat.* 18. 7. and saith, *It had been better they were thrown into the bottome of the Sea with a millstone about their necks.* They had better never have been born, that it might be said, There were never such men, than so to harden others in impiety. How unworthy was *Judas* of that gracious call he had, when by his secret theft and perfidious betraying of Christ, he gave him up to be crucified? What such a man to be found in the number of those that lost all and followed Christ! What a scandal was this! Those that are tender of Gods glory, and of the repute of godliness they dare 3.

not do such things as shall make Religion stink in the nostrils of men? Oh they have always a care to that, that they may be well spoken of, may hear well: Indeed there are passive scandals and offences, such as wicked men take by their own corrupt and malicious hearts, as the Pharisees did at Christ, but those are not to be mattered; such persons do destroy their own selves, and, like Serpents, they turn every thing they eat into poyson: but we speak now of those things that give a just offence, that are not justifiable and warrantable. These things, those that desire to adorn Religion will abstain from. If *Augustus* said, That an Emperour was not onely to be free from crimes, but also from the suspition of them; How much more should Christians, who are commanded to abstain from all appearance of evil? 1 *Thes.* 5, 22.

4. Fourthly, *They that walk worthy of his calling, they are endued with magnanimous and high resolutions suitable thereunto.* They are said to be *born of God*; *Fortes creantur fortibus.* They resemble their father of whom they are born: Doth earthly greatness and nobility make men put themselves in a different behaviour and deportment from those that are of an inferiour breed? we say, such a man sheweth his breeding, he is a Gentleman every inch of him: How much rather may we say, Such a man sheweth his Christianity, He is a Christian in every particular, you may know who is his father, he scorneth to debase himself by sinne? yet many men think the onely gallantry in the world lieth in the beastly pleasures of the flesh: Thus while they think themselves more then other men, they make themselves worse then the very beasts. Remember thy Christianity, and that will raise up thy heart to things that are indeed glorious and excellent; to mortifie thy passions, to conquer thy lusts, to have fellowship and communion with God in holy Duties, to be above the allurements or discouragements of the world, to fear nothing but sin, these are magnanimous and generous things, and such onely they do that walk worthy of this calling.

5. Lastly, *They walk worthy, who abound in the graces following this verse.* For the Apostle, of whother duties, instanceth in lowlinesse and meeknesse of mind, with all long-suffering and forbearance. Lowlinesse of mind is that humility of heart, whereby we give all to Gods grace, and take nothing to our selves. *Pratiss. Accomplishment of the upright.* Nothing but grace, grace, should come out of the mouth that is thus graciously called by God. Thus *Paul* often breatheth out the praises of the riches of Gods grace, and long-suffering, with much patience, intreating, and exhorting others to come out of their dangerous estate they are in. They consider how much patience God and good men shewed to them, how often they were rebellious and refractory, yet God did not leave them. And certainly, this is a very great grace, not to be wearied out, but still importuning those that gainsay: it God may yet give them grace to repent.

Use. *Use of Examination.* Bring we our selves to these trials and touch-stones. Is all our calling thus holy? Is Christianity thus obliging unto all purity and godliness? Oh then let the greatest part of men amongst us be ashamed, and full of confusion! Whose zeal should not burn like fire, to see the reproach and scandal to Christianity by the lives of those, who call themselves Christians, but indeed are not? They have a name that they live, but are really dead. Doth your Christian Religion teach you to lie, swear, and live in all carnal jollity? Doth the Scripture, doth Christ teach you no better things? Let the heavens blush, and the earth tremble, to hear and see what is done among those, who yet profess the faith of Christ! Oh cursed lay aside such sins, or lay aside those ungodly practices! Thou art bound to thy good and godly behaviour, its not for sheep to lie and wallow in the mire like swine: its not for flowers to smell like weeds; not for the myrtle trees to become like the brambles: How long shall these things sound in your ears, and yet the Lord not give you understanding rightly to apply them? Cry out of your selves as unfeeding fools, stand aloof off as unclean lepers, unworthy that God or good men should own you.

Use

Use 2. To the godly: Let this be a goad in their side, let not the same sins and infirmities be in them, as in men of the world: Art thou proud, earthly, passionate, discontented? say, How am I become thus like a beast? I forget my self, I forget my Holy Calling.

SERM. CXIV.

Of the Nature, Extent, and Example of that Holiness to which God calls a man.

1 PET. 1. 15.

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

THe Apostle having in the former part of the Chapter, spoken of glorious encouragements in the way to heaven, at the 13. *Verse*, he presseth to an exact and accurate diligence in the exercise of grace, which is emphatically expressed by that metaphorical phrase, *Gird up the loins of your minde*: The body girt, is more expedite and prepared for any work, and so is the mind. In the 14. *Verse* he amplifieth this duty: first, Comparatively, *As obedient children*: This sheweth the inward willingness and readiness that should be in them to all acts of obedience: as also the evangelical and filial motive to draw them out. Secondly, This is pressed negatively, *Not fashioning your selves, &c.* You see what it is to be men and women of the best fashion, *viz.* Such as do not conform to those lusts and sins that the world doth lie in: And that 2. Is positively commanded, *But be ye holy*, where you have the duty enjoyned *Be ye holy*: There are four words commonly used for this holiness, sometimes ἱερὸς, sometimes ὁσιότης, sometimes ἰσιότης, and most commonly ἅγιος. Whether this word come of ἁ and γῆ without earth, or of ἄζομαι because holiness deserveth all reverence and veneration, I shall not much regard; this is certain, it doth imply a choice and sublime frame of soul, whereby we are carried out in reference to God in all our actions. 2. There is the extent of this duty, *In all manner of conversation*: Here this is considerable, that men may demonstrate some holiness in some particular acts, and in some channels, but not in all manner of conversation. 3. Here is the exemplary cause, after which we are to be conformable, *As he that hath called you is holy*. 4. There is an Argument confirming it by authority from Scripture, *Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy*: That is written many times, to raise up our thoughts in godliness, not to propound any men, no not the most holy that are, but God himself: Now the Apostle doth not mean an *æqualitie*, for how can a drop be equal to the Sea? or a spark to the Sun? but only of similitude and proportionable imitation, as is more particularly to be shewed. Observe,

That persons called, ought to be holy, even as God who calleth them is most holy. *Observ.*

This very consideration should work an heavenly metamorphosis and change: Who and what is that God who calleth me, should the soul say, God who made me after his own image at first, doth still require the [illegible]tion of it in my life: Of all the attributes the Angels selected to glorifie [illegible]with, this was that they

pitched on, *Holy holy holy*, Isa. 6. and certainly, of all things remarkable and considerable in thee, this should be thy chief, *Holy*: Thou art wise, but holy; thou art rich, but holy; this is the Diamond in the Jewel.

To illustrate this point, consider,

1. First, *What this holiness is*, and that is in these things;

What this holiness is. First, *An inward rectitude of all the parts and faculties of the soul, whereby they are inabled and improved for holy ends*: Holiness is not a particular grace, or a particular abounding of some disease in the soul, but it is an universal medicine applied to all the sores of the soul; and if it doth not perfectly cure and heal all the disease, yet it doth for the main: So that this holiness is nothing but the sound and right temperament of the soul, whereby it is inabled in minde, will, and affection, yea, the whole man to be carried out towards God; therefore this holiness is called *The image of God*; and we know, an image is not an hand, or a leg, but a full delineation in all the parts thereof; when therefore we are commanded thus to be holy, we are to look to holiness in the fountain, to holiness in the root; even as God is not onely holy in actions, and in all his works he doth, but in his essence and nature also: So that although all thy actions have never such a shew of holiness and outward splendor, yet if not flowing from this inward image, they are but guilded Sepulchres, and like the ashes of *Sodom*.

2. Secondly, *This holiness is a pure and unmixed disposition of soul, from any thing that may foil and debase it*. So some make the word בדד, that is, without any terrene or earthly mixture; for as every thing is debased, when it is mixed with that which is of a more inferiour nature to it, as bread with Silver, Water with wine: So it is here, when the Soul of man which was made for the enjoyment of God, and communion with him, is bowed down to earthly things, and mingleth it self with them, then it becometh base and degenerate. Now the soul may admit of a twofold mixture, both which makes it unholy.

1. First, with the lusts of sin, and the beastly pleasures of the flesh; and this is the deepest pollution, as if the Sun should become a Dunghil; and therefore wicked men are compared to Dogs, licking up their vomit, and Swine wallowing in their mire, 2 *Pet.* 2. 22. Oh therefore remember, when thou hast been committing any grosse sin, thou hast made thy self like dirt and dung, thou hast made thy self like a loathsome Toad, God abhorreth thee; and were thy eyes opened, thou wouldest be abominable in thy own eyes, thou wouldest not endure thy self, but cry out with *David*, *Wash me throughly, and I shall be clean*, Psal. 51. Or

2. Secondly, a defiling mixture may be by the inordinate and immoderate affections of a man, even to lawful things; even as the Waters that overflow the Banks, they get soil and filth by that means: So those affections that are carried out beyond their limits, in over-loving, in over-grieving in over-desiring, they debase and make unholy. Hence *Esau* is called *A prophane person*, Heb. 12. 16. why? we read not of his grosse, vicious, beastly sins, but because he had a low and undervaluing esteem of heavenly things, of that birth-right behold: So then, thou art an unholy and a prophane man, though free from thy grosse sinnes, if thy thoughts, thy esteem about holy and heavenly things be low and careless: Thou hadst rather have, as he said, *Guttam vini*, then *Caduum mentis*, a drop of pleasure, then an whole vessel of heavenly wisdome, this argueth thou art unholy. Holiness lieth in the spiritual dieting and moderating of all thy affections to worldly comforts: *He that marrieth, as if he married not; he that buyeth, as if he bought not*, 1 *Cor.* 7. In all our estates and conditions, we are to cut off those luxuriant branches, we are to put bounds to them, as God to the Sea, Hitherto thou shalt go, and no further.

3. Thirdly, *Holiness is mainly seen in referring all unto God by pure and upright intentions*. The Pharisees holiness, though so dazling in the eyes of the World, was no holiness, because they did all to be seen of men: This makes all the civil and admirable actions of Romans, and other Heathens, to be no holy actions but,

but *splendida peccata*, because it was vain-glory, or at least, the love of their Countrey, that put them upon the accomplishment of such actions; so that the greatest part of holiness is invisible, hath much meeting at the true end we ought to shoot at. *Jehu* in all those wonderful Reformations he made in the Church and State of *Israel*, yet was not in the number of the holy Kings, because his ends were selfish, worldly, and vain-glorious. Look then thy intentions fall not short of that *ultimate* end, the glory of God, and this proveth a dead flye in the box of thy ointment.

Fourthly *Holiness lifteth in bearing up the heart in all kind of duties, with such heavenly and sublime motives, that flesh and blood can no ways attain unto*: Holinesse is a power above all refined natural abilities: Thus Faith is an holy grace, because it beareth up the heart with a promise, in the Word of God, when all natural reason and hopes are against it; and so he can rebuke those strong Winds and Tempests of unbelief and discouragements, which natural strength could never do: So to love God in adversities, not to mutter or repine at him, though his hand be heavy on thee, yet thou hast no hard thoughts about him, but he is as good and as gracious a God in thy apprehension, as ever. Here is iron swimming, here are the Rivers of *Jordan* running back, here is holinesse exalted above nature: so likewise to rejoyce in tribulations, to triumph over all troubles, to find honey in the dead carkass of the Lyon, to get bread out of stones, this is the work of holiness. And lastly, patience and forbearance to men that hate us, love and pity to those that cruelly persecute us: Thus holiness teacheth, but the nature of man kicketh against all these things. 4.

Fifthly, *Holiness is in the dedicating of our selves wholly unto the Lord*; that we are no more our own, much lesse the Worlds or Satans: Thus there were holy Vessels, and an holy Temple, because altogether separated unto God, and might not be imployed unto any common use: Thus the persons that are holy, *Are made the Temples of the Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. 3. they may not touch any unclean thing. Oh what a strong obligation is this, to depart from all evil and wicked company! To whom art thou given up? Hast thou not parted with Self? and art not thou given to GOD? Be then as the Temple, let no unclean thoughts or affections passe through thee. 5.

Sixthly, *A necessary Concomitant of this holiness is reverence, and an awe it breeds in the Consciences, even of those who yet hate it*: As the image of God put in man, made him have dominion over the beasts of the earth; so this holy image of God breeds an awe, a fear even in wicked men: Thus ἁγιος is of σεβας, and hence *Herod* though a King, yet feared *John*, because he was a righteous and holy man, *Mat.* 6. 20. This holinesse is called by *Peter* θειας φυσεως, *A Divine Nature*: 2 Pet. 1. 4. and certainly, as the Sun makes a glorious dazling upon the eyes of men; so doth holinesse, powerfully expressed, make a Throne in the hearts of the ungodly, convincing and overawing them: Though therefore outwardly they may deride and oppose the practice of holiness, yet in their Consciences they count such happy, and wish their souls might be in the same condition with such mens. 6.

We come, in the next place, to the extent of this duty, *In all manner of conversation*. And The extent of the duty.

First, *It must be in our conversation, & vice versa*. Now a mans conversation is not some few acts, or some few times to be holily affected, but constantly and customarily. *Our conversation is in heaven*, saith the Apostle, *Phil.* 3. 20. and its called the godly mans way, wherein he walketh; so that unlesse holinesse be thy main business, unlesse Religion be thy chief imployment, thou art not yet holy, thy way is not an holy way, though there may be some occasional holy actions; neither is thy conversation an holy conversation, though there may seem to be some holy fits: Oh this is greatly to be attended unto, for some mens holiness is like the morning dew, or like the ebbings and flowings of the sea, its by way of a 1.

transient

transient passion, not as a permanent principle within them; its a Land-flood that makes a great noise, its not a constant Spring.

2. Secondly, It must be all holiness, in all manner of conversation:

First, There must be all holinesse *subjective*, that is, all the parts and faculties of the soul and body must have their peculiar holinesse; the mind holy, thoughts holy, meditations holy, the will holy, desires holy, and holy choices, the affections holy, holy love, holy anger, holy grief, holy fear; the memory an holy Treasury, to retain holy directions and instructions: Thus a mans soul must be like that part of the Temple, *Sanctum Sanctorum, The holiest of holies*; the body likewise, that is to be holy instrumentally, holy eyes, holy hands, and holy tongues, holy words, holy actions, holy gestures: That as the Prophet *Zechariah* propheseth, upon the horses bells there should be written, *Holiness to the Lord*, Zech. 14. 21. so here upon the whole man shall be written, *Holiness to the Lord*; and the meaning of that Prophesie is, That he who is holy, shall be in every respect holy; as *Paul* prayeth, *I pray God ye be sanctified throughout, both in spirit, soul, and body*, 1 Thess. 5. 23.

Secondly, *This must be all holiness* objective, *in respect of the object*. Our actions must be holy in reference to God and man: *I exercise my self*, saith *Paul*, Act. 24. 16. there was his conversation; *to keep a good conscience towards God and man*, there was the extent to every object, for although all holiness doth immediately refer to God, yet when we do the duties of justice, righteousness, and charity towards man, because God commands, and out of love to him; then these just and righteous actions, are likewise holy actions, because of the consideration of God that draweth our the Soul: So that we may make our very eating, drinking, and lawful refreshments, holy actions, when a motive from God doth put us upon them.

3. Thirdly, *We are in our conversation to put forth all holiness, in respect of the degrees of it*: We are to endeavour, and to hunger and thirst after all the degrees of holiness; if there be better believing in God, better heavenly mindedness, more love to God then ever yet we have attained, this we are to press forward to; as *Paul*, who was exalted to so high a degree of holiness, yet he forgets all behind, and pursueth that before, *Phil.* 3. as if he were but beginning to be godly, and hence the godly are said, *To hunger and thirst after righteousness*, Mat. 5. *Alexander* wept when he heard a Philosopher arguing, there were more worlds then one, when he had not yet conquered one: And thus when thou hearest the Word of God requiring such a perfect holinesse, such a pure exercise of graces, thou mayst weep to see the dross, the defects and weakness that are in thee; yet take heed thou dost not reject thy holinesses as none at all, because it may be better; for perfection and sinlessness is not in this life, still here is something wanting, but our prayers and endeavors should be after perfection.

4. Fourthly, *We are to put forth all the parts and kinds of godliness in our conversation*: Holinesse is a chain, and we must not break one link; *Adde to faith, vertue; and to vertue temperance, &c.* 2 Per. 1. 6. To be holy in some things, and not in others, is to be holy in nothing: Holiness is universal, it comes in with no buts, no ifs or ands, no exceptions; but as the Word of God is universal, and the rule is universal, so is his holiness: Oh its this partial holiness, this holiness in some pittances, that makes such a reproach to Religion: Holiness will no more swear then lye, or lye then swear: Holiness will no more deal unjustly, then leave off praying and holy duties; if any do so, the Scripture makes not such holy. Oh therefore be sure to study the extent and largeness of holiness. Do I shew forth all holiness? The Apostle bids us pray, that under Magistrates we might live in all godliness: There is some holiness, some godliness many times the world will suffer, but not all: And none would think how false and guilful their hearts are, how much they are to seek for some kind of godlinesse, when they are put to it.

Lastly,

be holy. Lastly, *we are to shew holiness in all manner of conversations*: There is no hour, no moment, wherein thou canst say, Now I may not be holy, now its not required I should be holy: So that as wicked men, the imaginations of the thoughts of their hearts are onely evil, and that continually; so should ours be holy, and that continually: This is our duty, though in this life it cannot be fully practised. 4.

In the third place, consider, *The example of our holiness*; and that is, *As God is holy*: Not that we can be infinitely holy, and essentially holy, as he is, but to imitate him: So that we must not take the world for a rule of holiness, but God; and we are not required to be Omnipotent as he is, Mighty as he is, but Holy as he is. Now the grounds of this are: The Pattern of holiness.

First, *It behoveth a Father and a Son to be of the same nature*: A man doth not beget a beast of another nature, but a child of the same being: Thus the Apostle, *As obedient children*; and hence they are said to *Be born of God*: How then can ye call God Father, who have not the likeness of his nature? Is there such sin and impurity in God, as in thee? Oh tremble at such things! *Gods eyes are purer then to behold iniquity*; so let thine be. Why 1.

Secondly, *Love to God will put a man upon the imitation of him whom he love*: So that similitude, as it is a cause, so its an effect of love; that as you see fire assimilates every thing into its own nature, it turneth every thing to fire, so love to God, and delight in him, that makes us wholly to become like him. A man that liveth under the torrid Zone, gets a colour from the Sun, which shineth so hot upon him. 2.

Thirdly, *We must needs be holy, because else we are not prepared for any communion or fellowship with God*: Herein lieth the happiness of a godly man, that he hath fellowship with God, that he enjoyeth his presence, that he seeth his face, as you may see it represented in the *Canticles*: Now how this can be, when a man is prophane and unholy? Christ speaks there of his heavenly love, and spiritual imbracements, and how can this be to a soul that is loathsome, and uncomely through sin? God speaks by the Prophet, of the abominable and vile condition of the Church of *Israel* in her sin, wallowing in her blood, *Ezek.* 16. 6. and till he put on comely Ornaments on her, she was no fit object of love: *Follow holiness, without which no man shall see, enjoy God*, Heb. 12. 14. As the eye distempered with diseased humors, cannot comfortably behold the Sun, so neither can the soul, debased through sin, behold the favor of God; yea, as the soul is not fit for such communion, so the presence and purity of God, if it would draw near, would be an heavy burthen to a wicked man. Heaven it self, and enjoyment of God, is no suitable or welcome mercy to a wicked heart: So far as the notion of safety and deliverance from hell is in heaven, they can be glad of it; but take the positive part of heaven, which is indeed the heaven; *viz.* Injoyment of God, and delighting in him, a wicked man can no more agree with it, then sore eyes do abide the dazling Sun. 3.

Let us make application of the point. And

First, *Of Instruction*: Is holiness thus necessarily required of every one called by God, because he is holy? then to be sure do not mistake what true holiness is; for if thou erre about that, thy destruction is irrecoverable, who can help it? Therefore to know what it is, study and peruse the Scripture: Oh what an exact, sublime, and accurate thing is that represented to be! Will no less serve than an holiness, in some degree (though with vast disproportion) like that of God? What shame, what trembling should this work in us! Thou judgest of holiness according to the principles of the world, and they, when a man is less wicked, call it holiness; if there be worse men in the world, then they bless themselves. As in an Hospital, the man that is less diseased then others, he is judged healthfull and strong: This undoeth you, holiness and godliness is made a less and more easie business, then the Scripture describeth. *Use* 1.

Use 2.

Use 2. *Use 2.* Of Terror and Woe to those called persons, who deride, oppose, and malize holiness: Oh that the earth should bear, and the Sun shine upon such incarnate Devils! Whersoever there is the power of holinesse, there all their venome is vented: Who would think that men called by so holy a God, should deride holiness? That men convinced by an holy Spirit should mock at holiness? That men who read an holy Bible, who have an holy profession, should thus be turned into Serpents, and no men? This is not to be holy as God is holy, but malicious and envious as the Devil is.

Use 3. 3. Of Exhortation to you who are indeed holy for the main, grow in this, be more quickned in it. The Apostle speaks to these that were already holy. Holiness is a large field, an high hill, thou art but at the very bottom. Alas, how much stronger might thy Faith be? How much more mortified might thy affections be? Is holiness suitable, connatural, constant and permanent in thee? and certainly this is more to be looked at, then all outward mercies, riches, honours, earthly greatness; for this onely hath the promise of eternal life, and this present life. Thou mayest be rich, but damned; wise and learned, but damned; but not holy and damned: Oh there is no comfortable living an hour, a moment without this holinesse! And then to increase and preserve it:

First, Cherish and entertain the holy Spirit, this is peculiarly called holy, because it works holiness; grieve it not then by committing known sins, or by lazy and sluggish walking.

Secondly, Prize the Ordinances, the Ministery and preaching of the Word; men grow loose and cold when they leave this fire.

Thirdly, Consider the nature of holinesse is such, that the more we have, the more hunger and thirst there should be after it.

SERM. CXV.

Of the glorious Estate of the Saints in Heaven, to which God *cals all Sinners, repenting and believing.*

1 PET. 5. 10.

The God of all Grace, who hath called us into his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, &c.

THE Apostle *Peter* concludes his Epistle with a Petition in this verse, and a doxology in the next. In the Petition we have these parts:

First, The Object to whom this Petition is addressed, *viz.* God described by a glorious property suitable to the matter of the prayer, *The God of all Grace*; he was to pray for Grace, and therefore mentioneth the fountain of grace. This is of great consolation, the people of God want more and more

more grace, and God is cloathed with all-sufficiency: if you want it, you know where to be supplied.

Secondly, God is described by a gracious effect of this grace, *Who hath called us*: This fountain was not sealed up, but diffuseth it self.

The term to which, of this grace, described in its nature to be *Glory*. Believers should lift up their heads at the very hearing of this; and there is the adjunct of it, *eternal glory*.

Fourthly, There is the meritorious cause of this grace, *By Christ Jesus*.

Fifthly, The matter prayed for, which is in the accumulation of many words together, *Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you*. Some do curiously enquire after a difference between every one of these: but I take them to be nothing but the vehement and holy Oratory of *Paul*, affectionately expressing himself in his prayer for them, and they are most of them metaphorical words from the Artificer, who is careful to settle and establish his building. Now by the matter prayed for, *viz.* further perfection and establishment in grace, we may see even the best godly men do need further addition and strengthning in grace. As he cryed out, *O me nunquam sapientem*, so mayest thou, *O me nunquam plum*, still there is a further degree in every grace to be obtained. There is imperfection, and there must be continual correcting: but this is not the matter I intend, I come therefore to my purposed subject in this Text; and that is the term to which, of Gods gracious effect mentioned in the Text, *Who hath called us to eternal glory; That which the eye hath not seen, nor hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive*; that we are now to treat of, or rather to stammer about, *viz.* that infinite and everlasting glory which God calls wretched sinners, but repenting and believing, unto. He hath called us unto it: This sheweth how close and intimate that fruition is we have of this glory. It may never trouble a man to part with his beloved lusts and sins, which are but for a moment, for this eternal glory; it is to part with dirt and dung to have gold and precious stones.

For the further opening of this, you must know there is a two-fold end of Gods calling us, the near and proxim one, and that is, Repentance and Faith: So the first thing God calls wicked and sinful men unto, is truly to repent of their sinne, and stedfastly to believe in him: But secondly, There is the remote and further end, which is Salvation and Eternal Glory. Of this we are to speak at this time.

God calls Sinners, repenting and believing, to no lesse then infinite and eternall glory. *Observ.*

This point certainly may much affect you; for did the Devil think by showing the glory of the world, to tempt Christ to worship him? and shall not we by the discovery of this heavenly glory, make you fall down and worship, and obey God, who hath promised to give this unto all those that do so to him? There is a parallel place, 1 *Thess.* 2. 12. *Who hath called us unto his kingdome and glory*. What unspeakable condescention is this that God should take us, and put us into a communion with him of kingdom and glory, to set us upon Thrones next to Christ and him, yet the Scripture doth frequently insist on this glory that God intends to put on those that obey his calling. To open this: If they were so many dayes to purifie and prepare themselves for hearing the Law, which was a ministration of death, and there was such glory on *Moses* his face in the delivering of it, that the people could not stedfastly behold him: Certainly, there ought to be more cleansing and preparing of the soul to receive the Doctrine of this Gospel-glory. We can onely shew you the back-parts of it, for we cannot comprehend it all in its fulness, no more then a little shell can hold the Ocean.

We shall first speak of the Nature of this Glory, and then the Properties. And

First, *The Nature of it is seen in discovering the object to be enjoyed by us to all eternity, and that is God himself, the perfect, universal, and sufficient good.* Our glory is The nature of Glory.

is in this, that we enjoy *God* to all Eternity, who is the inexhausted Sea of all heavenly happiness. See how *David* doth triumph in that enjoyment he hath of *God* in this life, which yet is but the cluster of grapes to that heavenly *Canaan*. *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and whom in earth but thee?* Psal. 73. 25. And in other places, *The Lord is my portion, and my inheritance.* So then, if God enjoyed by faith do give so great a blessedness in the soul to this life, how much more when he is enjoyed by immediate vision? This the Scripture calls, *Seeing of God face to face*, 1 Cor. 13. 12. So then, herein lieth this unspeakable glory, that whatsoever goodness, excellency, fulness and blessedness is in *God*, the same is communicated unto the glorified Saint according to its capacity. *Deus meus & omnia*, said he: but this will be much more in Heaven, where not onely our sinful, but our animal lives will be ended; *Then shall we be with the Lord for ever*, said *Paul*: that is spoken, as the compleat perfection of all happiness.

2. Secondly, *This glory which may be called formal or subjective, as the former objective, lieth in the intellective and affective part of a man closing with, and enjoying of God.* When we say we are made glorious by enjoying of *God*, the meaning is, the intellective and affective parts of the soul are wholly fixed upon him to their utmost desire and capacity; for the glory of a man must consist in his rational part; his understanding, will and affections, which are the best faculties, must be united to the best good, in the best manner. And

Of knowledg in heaven.

First, *For the intellectual or knowing part of a man, its plain there can be nothing of this happiness, if that be not present.* For as of an unknown thing there can be no desire, so neither any love or delight: and the more clear and intuitive this knowledge is, the more is our glory. Now the Scripture speaks, that we shall then *see him face to face, not as in a glasse*, 1 Cor. 13. 12. *We shall know him even as we are known of him*; and our glory is expressed in this phrase, *To see God.* So then, herein will our blessedness and glory be, that we shall fully and clearly know and behold all the excellency that is in *God*, all the objects and motives of love and delight. That as the bodily eye, descrying the pulchritude of a sensible object, presently kindles love in the heart, *Ut vidi, ut perii*; So it is here, The Soul of a man glorified, beholding all the admirable loveliness and excellency in *God*, that holy and pure nature of his, those gracious and free acts of his love to us, is hereupon set on fire, and made glorious; That which the Apostle prayeth for us here to attain, will then be compleated, *To know the breadth, and length, and depth of the love of Christ Jesus*, Ephes. 3. 18.

Again, This glory lieth in the affective part of the soul, whereby it takes infinite complacency and delight in *God*, who is thus made known; and certainly, if good be the object of the will and love, then *God* being infinitely, universally, and in an unlimited manner good; the will and affections of a man must needs be drawn out to the full.

3. Thirdly, *That the soul of a man can thus gloriously enjoy God, its necessary that all the filth and loathsome spots of sinne should be wholly cleansed away:* For as long as there is any relique of this noisomness, as it is not fit or suitable for such a glorious object, as God is; so neither hath it compleat and full glory in self. The blood of Christ was shed, that we might be without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but this loveliness cannot be obtained in this life. Its true, Christ in those Spiritual Songs of *Solomon*, calls his Church, *His Love, his Fair, his undefiled one, that she is altogether Lovely*, but that is meetly because of the lovely Ornaments, and Excellency Christ put upon her. But in Heaven this Loveliness will be inherent, she will have all this Glory inexistent, not imputed: Oh then what Tongue can expresse the gloriousnesse of such a condition, when there shall not be the least imperfection, or defect in thy grace, thy Love perfect Love, thy Delight in God a full and perfect Delight! *Paul* in Heaven doth no longer complain, *When I would do good, evil is present with me*, Rom. 7. No, his heart is as godly and as holy as he can desire.

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This then is the glory that the called ones of *God* should breathe after; when will the time come, that all my spots and blemishes will be done away? I am as yet ashamed to see so much dross and filth in my self; I blush because of my nakedness; but the day is coming, when all things that are imperfect will be done away. This should exceedingly support them, for the present in their conflicts and combats with sin: Oh what shall they do? Their hearts suffer violence within them, they are loathsome beasts in their own eyes; they do not love to see themselves in the pure glass of *Gods* Word. Well, comfort thy self, the time is coming, thy graces will be made perfect, thy soul will be glorified with all fulness, not the least spot or blemish in it.

Fourthly, *This glory will be in the enlarging and extending of all the faculties of the Soul to partake of God.* For *God* being infinite, and the Soul of a limited and finite Nature, hath no proportion till God raise and elevate it up to that which Christ, and glorified in Heaven, is stretched out to an actual capacity for the full enjoying of *God*. The Apostle, *Heb.* 12. calls them, *The spirits of just men made perfect*. So that *God* doth widen and enlarge the Soul of a man, whereby it doth partake of *God*, and hath communion with him in a more powerful and eminent manner, then of it self it could have. 4.

Fifthly, *This Glory doth not onely stay on the Soul, but reacheth to the body also.* Which the Scripture 1 *Cor.* 15. and in other places doth often speak of. *Our vile bodies shall be made glorious bodies*; That as the Artificer by his Art out of earth can make curious and resplendent glasses, so God much more out of the dust of our bodies, will make immortal, incorruptible and even spiritual bodies, as the Apostle cals them. The glory of our bodies, is, First, In the perfection of them, all the Defects, Imperfections, Deformities, will then be quite removed. Secondly, In impassibility, there will be no Pains, no Diseases, no bodily Grief, no Passion from, or suffering of, any offensive object. Thirdly, In Immortality, it will be no more mortal, no more subject to fears and pains of Death. And lastly, In agility, in quick Motions, *We shall be snatched up into the Clouds, and be there with the Lord for ever.* Oh who can believe that this vile house of clay shall ever be made such a golden Palace? who can even think that so much glory should be put upon such vessels of dishonour and infirmities? 5.

Sixthly, *This Glory is not onely thus real and inherent, but it is also manifested and revealed Glory in the eyes of others*; For Glory is properly *illustris & clara notitia*, the knowledge and favour of an excellency, the manifestation of it to others; and thus the glory of called persons will be a known manifested Glory, it will be seen by the eyes of the whole world, God will put the Robes and Crowns of Glory upon them in the midst of all persons at the Day of judgement. Lo these are the persons whom I have thus honoured! The Angels they will bear witness of it. The Divels, and wicked men condemned, they shall see it and gnash their teeth. Those men whom we scorned, derided, opposed, how doth *God* honour them! So then God will hereafter put such visible glory upon his people, that all the world shall be witnesses of it; *As yet it doth not appear, saith the Apostle, 1 John 3. but it shall be made manifest.* That as precious jewels have their natural, which covers their excellency, and the choice gold lieth in the earth, and at first sheweth not its full lustre, till by Art made so: So the godly, who in this present life are despicable and uncomely by their weaknesses, by their infirmities, by the outward meanness of their Condition, will hereafter have all these rags pulled off, and the day of their glorious Coronation will appear. This is for the Nature of their Glory, and for the Adjuncts and Properties of it, they are admirable.

1. First, *Its eternal Glory it abideth for ever and ever.* All the greatest outward glory and pomp, is but like the burning of the Torch, *Sic transit gloria mundi*, but there needs no *Memento te hominem esse*, *Then shall we be with the Lord for ever*: Oh that phrase *For ever* should astonish us, What is for ever? What is eternal glory? After thou hast sate down and thought, and thought still, Eternity is above thy thoughts. The fear of death is like *Jonah's* Gourd, that eateth up all our outward glory. You are but glorious Glo-worms that shine for a night; but glorious Flowers that presently fade: Give me any worldly glory, of which you can say, it is eternal, that it is for ever; yea men of the greatest glory in this world have found it to be like a shadow, the longest before night come upon them. King *Solomon* in all his glory was not above a Lilly, and a Lillies glory endureth but for a day, when cropt from its root. The Scripture saith, *Act.* 24. 23. *Agrippa* and his wife came to the Court of Judicatory with great pomp μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας! it was a great fancy that presently passeth away.

2. Secondly, *This Glory is spiritual and heavenly as well as visible.* The glory of the body is indeed visible, and Heaven is a glorious visible place, but yet that which is the greatest glory is spiritual, the soul made holy and perfect; God who is the object of our glory is invisible; and although it be disputed, yet many conclude, that God is not seen with the bodily eye there, onely Christ because of his humane nature is: So then, the greatest part of this glory is spiritual and holy. And thus it is far above the glory of the world, which is in outward sensible objects, that tend onely to a bodily and carnal delight. If the Queen of *Sheba* was so overwhelmed to see the external glory and pomp of *Solomon*, How can we be able to bear all that heavenly glory?

3. Thirdly, *This glory is sound and solid, it is that which hath a true bottome.* *Paul* cals it, *The eternal weight of glory*; and the Hebrew word for *Glory* signifieth *weight*: So that the glory of believers is substantial and real, it will inwardly and deeply possess the whole man: whereas, if you look upon the outward glory of the world, its but a puff, a bladder, an empty nothing. This is a true solid glory, which is accepted of by God, to which he giveth his witness, that it is true; What is it to have glory among men, and to be abominable before God? What is it for a while to have external pomp in this world, and then God to raise thee out of the dust to everlasting contempt and reproach? Thou glorieth in thy wealth, in thy beauty, in thy honours, but what is this to the glory in Heaven?

4. Lastly, *This is an universal and entire glory.* There is nothing of glory to be desired which is not here; In the world all their glory hath some gall or other to bitter it. *Haman* had much outward glory, yet because crost in his ambition about *Mordecai*, all his glory did him no good; *Solomon* that made it his business to have all external happiness, yet found a vexation and vanity in it. No worldly glory did ever satisfie a man, no more then the air or the winde will an hungry stomach: yet this heavenly glory is so perfect and compleat, that there is nothing to marre it, to corrupt it; and it hath this admirable effect, that it doth wholly satisfie the desire, and yet excites it to desire it more: they desire no other happiness, no other glory, they are in their centre, yet they are never wearied, as they were of the Manna; but this glory is as admirable, as ravishing, as ever it was at the first moment they enjoyed it. This may be greatly improved practically.

Use. 1. Use. 1. What good reason is there for every sinner called by Gods grace to part with any lust or sinne, though never so profitable, so pleasant, so delightful? For what is that sin thou art so endeared unto? Is it comparable to this eternal glory? Oh the madness and folly of men! Sin and the Devil, they call by their lusts to eternal horrour and torment, and men readily obey; but God cals to eternal glory, and they stop the ear. *Hear, O Heavens, and be astonished, O Earth!* wicked men do not believe or consider these things, or else the matter is so evident, that it needs no deliberation, no dispute; for what is the chaff to the wheat, drosse to

gold

gold gall to honey? Do then wicked men know what they do? These lusts are dear lusts to thee, they will deprive thee of this eternal glory, they will hinder thee of all this happiness, and yet thou imbracest them.

Use 2. *Of Instruction.* How sad a thing it is to be moved to any good action out of humane and vain-glory, when yet this solid eternal glory doth not affect thee. What is more ordinary, though nothing scarce more abominable? you shall have men to get glory and repute in the world, be diligent in the external profession of Religion, when the true glory of God doth not at all move them: The Pharisees they prayed, they gave alms; why? out of vain-glory to have repute with men. Thus its said of some that believed, but would not confess Christ, that *they loved the glory of men more then of God*, Joh. 12. Oh let this meditation make thee even a loathsome beast in thy own eyes: Shall I pray, preach, have religious conference, give alms, do justly, that men may praise me, that I may be exalted with humane glory, and neglect that eternal glory which we ought principally to seek after? *Use 2.*

Use 3. Are people called out of their sins, and endued with grace to partake of this eternal weight of glory? Then what vanity is it to glory in any earthly thing, and yet to want this? Thou glorieſt in thy birth, in thy prosperity, in thy outward greatness: but oh miserable wretch, if destitute of this eternal glory. Oh say, Its not for me to hold up my head, to go proudly, to fare deliciously every day, but rather to throw my self in the dust and tumble upon the ground, and to cry out, Oh me miserable sinner, worse then beasts, undone for ever, till God fit me for this glory! Do not then glory in thy rich apparel, for that is but the excrement of an unreasonable creature; not in thy beauty, that is the spoil of time and years; not in thy riches, they are winged birds that quickly fly away: No not in any thing, but in grace and the knowledge of God, which is accompanied with everlasting glory. *Use 3.*

Use 4. Of comfort unto the godly, who though despised, contemned, villified, and rejected as the off-scouring of the world, yet are sure to inherit eternal glory: Oh this should sweeten every affliction! this should make every bitter pill to be swallowed down! Doth not the Apostle bear up himself with this? *We account not these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, comparable to that eternal weight of glory?* See how he lessens his afflictions, they are but light ones, but the glory to come is weighty and eternal: Could the people of God live in a lively faith of this, make these things real to them, they would be above the fear of any outward loss, or the love of any unlawful advantage. He that hath the Sun needs not the Star, or the Ocean, that hath a drop. *Use 1.*

SERM. CXVI.

The Nature, Possibility, Duty, and Means of the Assurance of ones Effectual Calling.

2 PET. I. 10.

Wherefore the rather (Brethren) give diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.

THE Apostle at the fifth verse, mentioneth a chain of graces, which every Christian must keep linked together. They are like so many flowers to make up a Garland that every Believer is to wear; and to this purpose he suggests divers arguments. The first is, that then they will not be barren in the knowledge of Christ. Christianity without these graces, is like the fig-tree without fruit, it deserves a perpetual curse from Christ. Look not to leaves of blossoms, but to fruit. Secondly, He that hath the title of a Believer, but wants these graces, he is blind, and cannot see afar off. *Μυωπάζει* some derive it from *μῦς* Moules, or earth-mice, that can see nothing, though in the open light: Others from shutting the eye, and so purblinde men are said *μυωπάζειν*, who see things that are near, but not afar off. Though some say *μυωπάζειν* is not *ἐγγίσω*, but *πυκνάζειν*. Thus wicked men have knowledge about the objects that are present to sense, but the matters of faith, which are more remote, they cannot discern. Now here may seem a contradiction in the Apostle, *He is blinde and cannot see afar off*; For if he be blinde, he cannot see, neither near or afar off. Some therefore make these later words a correction to the former. He is blinde, at least he cannot see things that are afar off, if he be not blind, he hath a dimme sight. But without any straining, we may thus interpret the Apostle, He is blinde, *viz.* absolutely in respect of heavenly things, and although he can see those objects that are obvious to sense, *viz.* all earthly things, yet he hath no perceiving about heavenly things. And indeed it is very sad to consider how many are eagle-eyed in the matters of the world, and very blinde moles in heavenly things. The third argument is from the ingratitude such men are guilty of. They have forgotten they were purged from their old sins, when they undertook the profession of faith in Christ, and were baptized, there was, Sacramentally at least, a cleansing from their former wayes of wickednes. Now it would be high ingratitude for any not to preserve themselves from such defilements still. Lastly, Here is another argument for abounding in all grace, which is laid down by way of Exhortation. There cannot be any assurance had of our calling or election, unless we are fruitful in these graces. This should greatly awaken us, for it behooveth us above all things in the world, to have some comfortable knowledge how it stands between God and our souls.

In the words, then consider, the duty injoyned, and the way how to accomplish it. The duty injoyned is, to make *your calling and election sure*. Calling, *viz.* the graces of God we are called to in this life, justification, adoption, and union

union with Christ, as also regeneration and sanctification of our natures, and election that is the basis or the foundation of our calling. But how may we make these things sure? not in themselves, for the purpose of God stands firm in its own self. *The foundation of the Lord stands sure*, saith the Apostle, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. And the gifts and calling of *God* are without repentance, *Rom.* 11. 29. But sure in respect of our selves, that we may be upon good grounds confirmed in our own hearts, that we are such whom God hath called or chosen. So that the Holy Ghost doth here blame all those who put their comforts and hopes upon a venture; who maintain doubts and uncertainties in their own soules, about their eternal condition, that will not seek out for comfortable evidences herein. 2. You have the manner how this glorious priviledge may be attained, by giving diligence; *and the rather by giving diligence*; which words do imply, that unless we set our main thoughts and strength about this matter; unlesse we carefully set our souls to distinguish between true and false, we shall never be perswaded upon good grounds. This Text is much vexed in the controversie between Papists and Protestants: The Papists denying the certainty (unless some few) and the Protestants pleading strongly for it. And this Text seems to be an impregnable place for assurance.

That its not only possible, but a duty in Christians, to indeavor after an assurance of their effectual calling and election. *Observ.*

They are not to bring an ill report, as they did about *Canaan*, such Giants and difficulties were in the way, that it could never be conquered: so this assurance or certainty can never be had, it will breed presumption, and eat out all humility and godly fear. It is not my intent to enter into the controverial part, I shall onely lay down some material particulars; and then shew you what are those things that may beget this assurance, those effects that do necessarily argue such causes. And the rather, because formerly I treated more largely about the nature of it.

To clear the Doctrine, consider, First, That when we say, A believer may and ought to be assured of his *calling and election, we do not mean as if of his own self he could have this divine perswasion.* For then many of Gods own children would never have lain in such uncomfortable desertions and dark dungeons as they have done, having no light; crying out, they have no certainty, no assurance, oh they cannot believe, they cannot find any comfort, but their hearts are like a barren heath, or a black hell! They cannot, I say, of themselves come to this sure perswasion, but it is the gift of the Spirit of God, *Rom.* 8. 16. *The Spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God.* So that Divines use to say, this certainty lieth in a practical syllogisme, thus, Whosoever believeth, repenteth, is heavenly minded, is tender about all sin, These are called and elected; But I do so, saith the gracious heart, inlightned and inabled by Gods Spirit, Therefore I am called and elected. Now this assumption, I do so, the heart being blinde or deceitful, could never truly make, without the help of Gods Spirit. Hence it is called the Spirit of Adoption sent into our hearts, whereby we cry *Abba Father*, Oh then, till Gods Spirit thus Evangelizeth, as it were, and puts a filial frame in us, we are afraid of God, our thoughts are slavish and despairing, and we desire to hide our selves from him; but this Spirit of Adoption calleth out all tormenting fears, and doth inlighten the minde, that we may see the good things *God* hath wrought in us. Hence is that Exhortation, not to grieve the Spirit of *God*, because it sealeth us to the day of redemption, *Ephes.* 4. 30. So then, as it is with the colours that are the object of the sight, though they be never so good, and visible, yet if there be no light, the eye cannot see them: Thus it is here; though there be never such excellent graces, and though *God* hath wrought a wonderful change in thee, yet thou art not able to see it, till the Spirit of God inable thee. Some particulars to clear the doctrine. 1.

Secondly, *You are to know, the soul of a man being a rational and spiritual sub-* 2.

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stance, hath two kinds of acts. There are first the *direct acts* of the soul, whereby it is carried out immediately and directly to some object. And there are secondly *reflex acts*, whereby the soul considers and takes notice of what acts it doth: It's as if the eye were turned inward to see it self. The Apostle *John* expresseth it fully, *Wakhow that we know*, 1 John 2. 3. So that when we believe in God, that is a direct act of the soul; when we repent of sin, because God is dishonoured, that is a direct act; but when we know that we do believe, and that we do repent, this is a reflex act. Now whether this certainty or assurance be a certainty of faith, or of sense, or rather mixed of both, I shall not dispute. To be sure, it is more then those probable conjectures and mean humane certainty, which the Papists plead for.

3. Thirdly, I say, *This assurance we speak of may be had, and it is our sin, if we labour not after it, or do any thing that may justly fill our hearts with doubts and suspicions.* Yet it is not of absolute necessity to salvation: It is not a necessary effect of our calling and election at all times, as heat is an inseparable effect of fire, and light of the sun. We see *David* and Christ himself in such spiritual desertions, though there was unbelief in *David*, but not any sin in Christ. Faith of adherence is many times where this faith of evidence is not. Although therefore it be our great sin to do those things which may grieve the spirit of God, and chase away our assurance: yet many times the people of God may walk without this comfortable perswasion. Yea they may be greatly assaulted, as if God had cast them off for ever. They may be as *Paul's* fellow-passengers in the ship, who had seen no sun for many days together. Let not therefore any argue they are not called, not elected, because this is not yet made sure to them; for many times God works the greatest certainty out of the most perplexing doubts, and the shaking of the soul makes the root faster.

4. Fourthly, *Neither yet is this assurance the Apostle presseth as one, such as admits of no doubts, no temptations or oppositions by Satan.* No, as he cried out, *Lord I believe, help my unbelief*, so, Lord I am assured, yet give me more certainty. When *Nathan* told *David* his sins were done away, yet he still prayeth for pardon, *Psal.* 51. because guilt and doubts in his soul were ready to obscure and darken his faith: And therefore the Apostle *John*, 1 Joh. 3. calls this assurance, perswading of the heart: That doth excellently imply, The heart sensible of sin is full of arguments and cavils, bringeth many strong contradictions against the promise. Hence the great word that is used often to comfort, παρακαλεῖν, is also for Exhortation, because to the grieved and troubled heart for sin, comfort will not be received but by frequent Exhortation. That opinion therefore of having such an assurance, as to have no doubts, is much to be suspected, as not being of the Spirit of God. For *the flesh lusteth against the spirit*, in all the actions of it. And the Devil doth diligently assault our comfort and assurance. If therefore it be of God, if it be spiritual and heavenly, it cannot be but that the heart of a man, and the Devil, will oppose it. Presumption being indeed a sin of a mans self-flattering heart, meets with no contradiction: so true is that saying of a solid Divine, *Nulli sunt magis desperati, quam qui minus sunt desperantes*, None are more desperate, then those that are least despairing, viz. in their own selves, though not in the grace of God.

5. Lastly, However in practical Divinity it be disputed, whether there be not an assurance by the immediate testimony of the Spirit, *viz.* whether the Spirit of God doth not by immediate revelation perswade the soul of its good condition and interest in God; yet I shall not touch upon that, but onely speak to that mediate assurance, *viz.* which the Spirit of God works, by the arguing from the effects to the cause, from the fruits of grace to the root, and this is not subject to such dangerous delusions, as the former is. for this goeth upon a sure ground, the fruits of mortification, and vivification; and the Apostle plainly meaneth this assurance, *viz.* by adding one grace to another, and by abounding in the fruits of holiness,

holineſſe, ſo they ſhall make their Calling and Election ſure.

In the next place, let us conſider, what are thoſe effects of grace, which if a man walk in he may be partaker of this priviledge: not but that God by his abſolute ſoveraigney, and for holy ends, may leave the moſt exact and circumſpect Chriſtians in darkneſs, without any light; as it was in *Job*: And the Prophet intimateth *Who is among ſt you that feareth God, and hath no light, walking in darkneſs? Iſa.* 50.10. One that feareth God, and is precious to God, may walk in darkneſs, having no light, and all that he can do, is to ſtay his ſoul on God by a meer act of recumbency, not of any aſſurance at all. This God may do, but yet there are particular ways, which if walked in, God may give thee this white ſtone, as it is called, *Rev.* 2.17. Thou ſhalt walk as one acquitted from thy ſin, and no man can tell what it is thou feeleſt, but thy ſelf onely.

Effects of grace, by having which, a Saint may obtain aſſurance.

1.

And firſt, *We muſt give all diligence and heed to the obtaining of this priviledge*; We muſt make it our buſineſs, it muſt be importunately begged for in prayer. Thus the Text, *The rather give all diligence*; neglect not this, whatſoever thou paſſeſt by. Now it is no wonder that natural men they look on it as a matter not to be regarded, becauſe they have never been wounded with ſinne, they have always had a ſelf-fulneſs, a ſelf-righteouſneſs, and by this means have not breathed and thirſted after this aſſurance; *Qui nil dubitat, nil diſcit*; he that never doubts will never learn: And ſo he that hath not been in the depth of Gods diſpleaſure for ſin, he that hath not felt his frowns and his anger, he never comes to think, oh what a bleſſed and happy thing it is to be truly aſſured of the grace of God! that I am ſuch an one to whom the Covenant of grace belongs! a child to whom the bread of the promiſe appertaineth, and not a dog: Hence therefore it is, that men ſit down without this priviledge, they do not look at it as a great mercy; they do not prize it above all other things; and therefore they do not, becauſe they were never ſenſible of the want of it. They never lay wounded with ſin, they never were amazed at the hypocriſie and unſoundneſs of their hearts; They never felt themſelves dropping as it were into hell; and hereupon they give no diligence for this aſſurance. You ſee in earthly things, how careful men are to make all their bargains ſure; in all purchaſes to make their evidences ſure: Poor men think they are undone, if they loſe their evidences about an earthly inheritance, and never think themſelves miſerable, though they have no true ground or evidence for their ſpiritual condition.

2.

Secondly, *The way to obtain this aſſurance, is a fruitful, fervent, and active walking in all the wayes of holineſſe.* If theſe things be in you and abound, ſaith the Apoſtle. The ſparks that are ready to go out, do hardly evidence there is any fire. We doubt of life, when we feel ſcarce any breath; and thus it is here; The more remiſs, and negligent, and lazy thou art in the ways of godlineſs, the leſs certainty muſt needs be in thee: And the reaſon is plain; for if graces exerciſed be the ſign or ſeal, then the more theſe appear, the more thriving and flouriſhing they are, the ſurer teſtimonies there will be of thy Calling and Election. When the Church was lazy and negligent, ſhe loſt the comfortable preſence and enjoyment of Chriſt. The ſtanding pools, and ſluggiſh waters, they beget the croking frogs: And thus he who prayeth, as if he prayed not, believeth, as if he believed not: this man takes the way to have wounds and blows, and all manner of tormenting fears in his heart. Though grace exerciſed be not the cauſe or merit of thy ſalvation, yet it is an infallible ſign of thy ſalvation: As the Rainbow is not a cauſe but a ſign that God will never drown the world. Hence *Paul* argueth from his fervency in grace to aſſurance, *I have fought a good fight; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of glory*, 2 Tim. 4.9,10. *I have fought a good fight*: Chriſtianity was a real combate with Sin, with the World, and all oppoſition; and he had not been idle or cowardly, but alwayes upon his Watch, and therefore he had this comfortable perſwaſion. So that nothing will darken thy ſoul more then duſt, lazy, and negligent walking. When thou abateſt or decayeſt in

thy graces, these tend to make a sad division between God and thy soul.

3. Thirdly, Another way to preserve or obtain this assurance, is, *humility and meekness, going out of our selves, avoiding all presumption, all self-righteousness.* Thus the Apostle, *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12. That is, with exceeding great humility and debasement of your selves. So that, true assurance is so far from nourishing carnal presumption and sinful confidence, that it is built upon the clean contrary, holy fear and trembling; for although they be assured of grace in them, yet they do not trust in this grace. These two things differ as much as heaven and hell. *Paul* who was so highly assured that nothing could separate him from the Love of God, *Rom.* 8. And speaking of Christ, he saith *Who loved me, and gave himself for me*, Gal. 3. yet this *Paul* would not be found in his own righteousness, but in that of Christs by Faith. So then the godly rejoyce to see such testimonies and arguments of grace in themselves, but they put no confidence in them: They repent with an holy fear and trembling: They pray, they hear with an holy fear and trembling.

4. Fourthly, *This assurance is obtained and preserved by a tender watchfulness against all known sin.* For it being sin onely that separates between God and the soul, this onely raiseth up the great gulf; therefore all witting and willing allowing of this, is a direct destroyer of all assurance: And herein this holy certainty is expressly distinguished from all carnal presumption, which makes a man have confidence and boldness, though in the constant custom of all gross and foul sinnes. They can live in all uncleanness, in all lusts of the flesh, in all contempt and neglect of God and his Worship, and yet have as vehement perswasions that their hearts are good, and that Christ will save them, as if they committed no such sin; oh therefore that way might be made for Christ, by throwing away all such dangerous conclusions! *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*, saith *David*. And the Apostle saith expressly, *If our hearts condemn us not, we have boldness with God*, 1 Joh. 3. There is no mans heart, but it condemneth him for many defects, and several failings; but he speaks of a condemning for the willing practice of known sins. No marvel then, if thou complainest thou hast no assurance, thou hast no certainty; for as long as there are these desperate venturings upon sin, it cannot be but continual quakings should be upon thee. If *Cain* carry about with him guilt in his conscience, no wonder if he fear every thing will destroy him. *David* could have no peace in his bones, while any sin lay unconfessed and unforsaken.

5. Fifthly, Another way to obtain this is, *To take heed of grieving the Spirit of God or quenching the motions of it.* For seeing it's the Spirit of God that witnesseth, and it is the Spirit that sealeth, If we would have assurance, we are to nourish it, to do nothing that may resist and repel it. His office is to comfort, and to bring gladness into the heart. Now if thou either by rebelling against the motions of it, or by despairing thoughts, reject this Comforter; thou takest the ready way to make thy self an undone man. Know then, that as you are to hearken to Gods Spirit convincing of sin, and sanctifying the nature, so also sealing and witnessing unto them the love of God. Though the Spirit of God moved upon the Waters at first, and still doth on godly sorrow, yet not on sorrow unbelieving, despairing, and accompanied with hard thoughts of him.

6. Sixthly, If thou wouldst attain to this assurance, *Acquaint thy self with the Covenant of the Gospel, with the precious promises revealed there, with the gracious Condescentions of Gods love in Christ.* Many of the Children of God are kept in a doubtful and perplexed estate, because they consider not the riches of Christs grace revealed in the Gospel; They judge unbelief and doubting even a kinde of a duty, and that to do otherwise were arrogance. As *Luther* said, His Soul hated that word *Repent* all the while he was a Papist, because he thought there was nothing in it, but bitter sorrow, and terror about sin; whereas when he understood the Evangelical nature of it, and that it was to be accompanied with Faith

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in Christ; and that nothing was more acceptable unto *God*, then believing in him, and to have good thoughts of him as a Father; then the word he did run from, as *Moses* from the Serpent, he took up and imbraced.

Use of severe Reproof, of that horrible, prophane, and supine negligence of most men in this point! Who giveth all diligence to make their calling and salvation sure in their own consciences? Who doth not put it upon a venture? who doth not trust all upon miserable uncertainties? They that in matters of estate by the Law, or in matters of their health by Physick, will be sure to go upon good ground: In the matters of Religion they never enquire, they never seek to search out things; Oh we would think, that Religion and a godly fear should make thee of no rest in thy bones, till thou knowest in what condition thy soul stands in towards God: Hast thou never heard, *That the heart is deceitful above all things?* it will tell thee, thou doest repent, when thou doest not; that thou lovest God, when thou doest not: And wilt thou still put off all to this, If I be saved, I be saved; if damned, I am damned. *Use.*

SERM. CXVII.

The Possibility and Duty of Assurance of our Calling, demonstrated: And the Reasons why some think a certain Assurance impossible; with Answers to the Objections brought against it.

2 PET. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.

YOu have heard of the possibility, yea, and necessary duty, to endeavour after the certainty of our Calling and Election; as also, what are those means, in the diligent exercise whereof, we may expect this privilege: And for the clearer apprehension of this, I shall Answer one or two Objections, by the discussion whereof, the truth will be more illustrious, as the file getteth off the rust: For whereas there were two things in the Doctrine, *The possibility and duty of this holy certainty*, we may first question the possibility of it, and then the duty. Now in these things I shall be brief, because the matter hath been formerly more largely handled: That therefore certainty is not possible; among other Objections, I shall pitch upon one that is most practical, and that which doth most usually obstruct assurance in the godly; and that is,

The Hypocrisie and the deceitfulness of the heart.

For thus commonly the Christian that is tender about his condition towards God, Objecteth:

Objection against the certainty of assurance.

I know the promises are true and good, it is without all question, *He that believeth and repenteth, he shall be saved*; he that is born of God, and effectually called, he may conclude, *I am my Beloveds, and my Beloved is mine*; but whether I do so or no, there is my perplexity: The heart is full of guile, and we read of *Ahabs* humiliation, of the foolish Virgins, of the stony and thorny ground, such who had some affections and delight in holy things, some sorrow and humiliation about sin; yet for all that, their own hearts deceived them, their gold proved dross, they took *John Baptist* for Christ, some imperfect dispositions, for the compleat and effectual workings of grace; and why may not I delude my self? and the rather, because every one is apt to flatter himself: We see all people, that are indeed far enough from the Kingdom of heaven, between whom and godliness there is a great gulf: yet peremptorily conclude, All is well with them: So true is that of *Solomon*, *Every mans way is pure in his owne eyes*; but then that which followeth should make all tremble, *But God pondereth the heart*, Prov. 21.2.

Answ. This is very specious, and so far this Objection hath strength, that no man should easily and speedily perswade himself that all is well with him: That those duties of searching and trying the heart, and communing with our own selves privately, are again and again to be practised by us; but yet the Doctrine of the hypocrisie and desperate guile of the heart overthroweth not this Scripture-certainty. And before I give you the reason of that, I shall set down some arguments briefly, out of Scripture and Reason, that prove the possibility, and then answer that; for let it once be manifested by Scripture, that such a thing may be, then we are not to regard a thousand Objections that may be made to the contrary.

Grounds for the possibility of Assurance.

Now the grounds for the possibility of it, may be taken from these general heads:

1. First, *The Scripture requiring this of us*: God would not put us upon such a search, if to find had been impossible; for besides this Text, which seems to speak this truth in the Sun beams, *Give all diligence to make your calling sure*; if certainty hereof had been impossible, might not any one stand up and say, This is to command one to give all diligence for that which cannot be? I may be as well required to touch the heavens with my hands, or to remove the earth from its center? Besides this (I say) I shall name you one impregnable place, which hath stood like a rock, that all the Popish Engins have not been able to stir, 2 *Cor.* 13.5 *Examine your selves, &c.* where you have the duty required, *To examine, to prove your selves*, as the Artificer doth his metal, to see whether it be counterfeit or true, so the Greek word signifieth; and thus they are to do to themselves: And he ingeminates the duty, to shew his earnestness and affection therein. 2. There is the object matter of this duty, *whether ye be in the faith, whether Christ be in you*; that is, whether ye be effectually called or no; and he brings a reason from an absurdity, *If you do not know Christ is in you, ye are reprobates.* As we use the English word, it may seem harsh, but the Greek word is no more then unskilful in mind, not able to discern: So that reprobate is not here taken for one that is not elected, but for one that is foolish, weak, unskilful, as the Scripture speaks of reprobate silver: see more of this in the first Sermon. So that you see the Apostle makes it an ignorant and weak unskilfulness in the ways of God, and in the work of grace, when we are not able thus to discern our selves. So then, let this Text put it out of all question; for when the Apostle commanded the *Corinthians* to make this proof and examination, had the thing been impossible to be found out: It would have been as absurd, as for a Physitian to come to a diseased person, and tell him, he cannot be cured, unless he eat of a Phenix, or use the Philosophers stone, which haply can never be found out.

2. Secondly, A second general ground is, *From the peculiar office and work attributed*

ture to Gods spirit; and that is; to witness with our spirit, to seale unto us; Its the spirit of adoption, subduing those tormenting and slavish fears about God, which makes the soul suspect every thing, and so to be tossed up and down like the uncertain waves, 1 *Cor.* 2.12. *We have received the spirit of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God*; especially that is clear, 1 *John* 3.24. So then in this doubt, we must attend to a greater cause then our own hearts, we must consider, what great things that spirit of God can do in our souls: No man naturally can hate his sin, can deny himselfe, yet the spirit of God sanctifying, he is ready and willing in the work: So no man seeing the horrible depths of wickednes in his own heart, can ever come to be perswaded: but the spirit of God can rebuke these waves and tempests, and make all serene and clear in the soul.

The third general head is, *From those places where the people of God have plainly declared their assurance:* That therefore which the children of God have attained unto, must needs be possible, and we ought to imitate them in. *Hezekiah* is without question in this point, 2 *Kings* 20.3. *Remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart*: He doth not speak this arrogantly, but humbly, making use of his sincerity, as a testimony to confirm him in his prayer to God. Now *Hezekiah* could not make use of such an Argument as this, had he not been assured, that he was not deceived in what he uttered to God: And thus *David* is often in his *Psalms* professing his love to God with his whole heart, and the uprightnes of his heart, which had been a vain brag, and sinful ostentation, if he had not known it had been so. In the New Testament *Paul* is often speaking of his assurance and confidence; and lest it might be thought he had this by immediate revelation, he speaks as in the person of all believers, *The spirit witnesseth with our spirit*, *Rom.* 8. and so *John*, *We know that we know*, 1 John 2. He doth not make this a peculiar priviledge vouchsafed to some favorites, but such a mercy as all Believers are capable of. So when our Saviour asked some *If they did believe with their whole heart*; it had been a vain question, to which no man could have returned any answer, if they could not be certain whether they did believe or no; and that man, who said *Lord I believe, help my unbeliefe*: He shewed the certainty he had of his faith in the first place, as the weaknes of it in the latter. 3.

Lastly, The general head I shall end with, is, *the joy and thankfulnes that ought to be in the people of God:* Now what joy can there be, where the soul knoweth not, or doubteth much of Gods love? How can the heart be inlarged to praise God, for those spiritual mercies, which findes them not in its self? For joy, the children of God are said *To joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. 14. 17. and its called *Unspeakable joy full of glory*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. And can this be in a matter that we know not whether it be ours or no? Can we joy in the promise, and yet doubt whether it be ours? Can we rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and yet question whether he dyed for us? And so its for praise and thankfulnes, Can any man bless God for translating him out of darknes into light, for working the fear of him in his soul, for the wonderful and mighty change he hath made on his heart? Can the soul, bless and praise God, when he doth not think God hath indeed done these things for him? These general heads may suffice, to cleare the possibility of it. 4.

I shall give you also a Reason for it, which is this, *Supernatural habits or principles of grace, do vitally and evidently discover their actions and effects, as rational and animal principles:* As the principle of love to *God*, of repentance for sin, do in the acts thereof manifest themselves spiritually, as rational principles: So that as a rational man, he knoweth the arguments he hath, he discerneth his acts of reason, he can tell you he is of this judgment, and not of that: Thus it is with a spiritual man, he perceiveth the faith in him, the love of God that is within him: Can the Animal lover find sensible love burning within? and doth

doth not the ſpiritual lover feel ſuch fire in his bones? Doth not *David* cry, *That his ſoul breatheth and longeth for God*? Doth not the Church cry out, *She is ſick of love*? So then, ſupernatural principles acting in the ſoul, are perceived ſpiritually, as rational acts, or ſenſible acts are. As *Auſtin* ſaid, He that believeth, findeth he doth believe *viz.* Gods ſpirit aſſiſting him; otherwiſe, like *Hagar*, there may be a pleaſant fountain of refreſhment hard by, and ſhe not perceive it, till her eyes be opened: What then ſhould be the cauſe that men may think this certainty impoſſible? This may ariſe from three grounds:

Why men think this certainty impoſſible.

1. Firſt, *When we take no effects of grace to be ſure ſigns unleſs they be perfect and compleat*: And this is very often a deceit, even to good and tender hearts; they do not love God, they are not ſo heavenly minded, ſo zealous; they have often failings, they have daily infirmities: And thus, becauſe they have not perfect workings of grace, they doubt of any grace at all; but then *Hezekiah*, *Paul*, and all the Worthies of God, who enjoyed this priviledge, ſhould have been ſtripped of it, for at the ſame time they complain of the remainder of their corruptions, they feel thorns and goads in their ſide: So great a matter is it to make a difference between truth of grace in the Eſſence, and perfection in the degrees.

2. Another good ground may be, *Becauſe men for the moſt part keep at a remote diſtance from God*: They are not diligent and conſtant in ſpiritual duties and approaches to God: Thus becauſe they draw not nigh to God, God draweth not nigh to them; becauſe they are eſtranged from God, God is alſo from them: If therefore we did take the Scriptures counſel, To walk with God, and to acquaint our ſelves with God, which is done by lively meditation, and quickned duties of Religion; we ſhould then finde that from God, which we thought impoſſible: You ſee the effects of all acts are thought impoſſible, to thoſe that have no skill therein: And thus it is here, Aſſurance is a myſtery, and impoſſibility to thee, becauſe thou haſt no familiar acquaintance with God; thou comeſt not into his preſence often, thou delighteſt not to draw nigh to him.

3. Thirdly, One main cauſe of this uncertainty, is alſo, *A nouriſhing a ſervile ſlaviſh fear about God; not praying for the ſpirit of Adoption, and a filial Evangelical frame of heart*: This is greatly to be attended unto by timorated conſciences, ſuch as are ſhaken with fear and terrour for ſin; *Nunquam ſatis cavent etiam cum cavent*, they diſtinguiſh not between *Timor ſollicitudinis*, and *Timor anxietatis*, A fear of godly care and diligence, and a fear of perplexing anxieties: Oh this many times is a labyrinth that good people are in; their hearts are not directed into the way of believing, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 5. they fear God as an auſtere Maſter, watching the opportunity to damn them; they have not the reverential fear of a father, which is accompanied with faith and love of God: Thus *Cain* and *Judas*, they did ſplit their ſouls upon this rock, they were terrified about their ſins, horror had taken hold of them, becauſe of the wretched condition they were in; but they had not faith in God as a father, which would have been the Clue of Thred to have helped them out of their diſtreſſe: Oh then do not delight in thy bondage diſpoſition; do not look upon God with a ſlaviſh fear; this will breed hatred at laſt, *Oderunt dum metuunt*; and hatred, blaſpheming deſpair: Theſe things diſpatched, I come to Anſwer the firſt Objection:

Object. *The heart of man is deceitful*, its ſuch a deep we cannot fathom: *Who can underſtand his errors?* ſaith *David*, *Cleanſe me from ſecret ſins*, Pſal. 19. 13. There may be a great deal of unknown wickedneſs in me, ſuch pride, ſuch earthlineſs, ſuch unbelief, that I never can underſtand.

Anſw. To this I Anſwer, *That though a man may be deceived in his judgment about himſelf; yet it doth not follow, that he is always de facto deceived*: We ſay, General Councils may erre, yet they did not always *de facto* erre; ſo it may fall out, that a man in judging about himſelf may be deceived, but that he is in every act

a& deceived, this would bring groſs Scepticiſm into the world; no man could tell his own thoughts, his own affections, and there could not be ſuch a thing as Truth in the world. Now the Scripture ſpeaks the contrary, 1 *Cor.* 2. 11. *What man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the Spirit of a man within him?* So that you ſee, that a man may know the things of his own ſpirit. Again, if this were ſo, then no man could diſcern his Dogmatical faith, as well as his ſaving faith; no man could tell whether he were a Proteſtant or a Papiſt, or a Socinian; for the heart being deceitful, as is objected, I may think I believe ſuch a point, and ſuch a point, when indeed I do not; and ſo the Academical doubting ſhall come in, Nothing is known, and nothing is believed.

But the ſecond and full anſwer is, *That indeed the heart is naturally deceitful, full of guile and hypocriſie, but when its ſanctified and converted, its made ſincere and upright:* Its no longer as thoſe pictures that repreſent at a diſtance ſuch and ſuch different Forms, but as a glaſs, ſincerely repreſenting the form of the viſage, if deformed, deformed; if comely, comely: Thus *Nathaniel* is ſaid to be a man, in whom was no guile; and, *Bleſſed is the man*, Pſal. 32. *to whom the Lord imputeth no ſin, and in whoſe heart there is no guile:* Hence its called, *An upright heart, a ſincere heart*, and, *Truth in the inward parts:* Although therefore there are ſome reliques of guile and hypocriſie in the godly, as of all other ſins, yet for the main they are made ſincere; and ſo all that ſelf-flattery, and ſelf-love, is for the main crucified: And this indeed is the full Anſwer to that Objection. 2.

Secondly, Whereas it is ſaid to be a duty, to this it may be Objected: *Object.*

That this Aſſurance would prove a dangerous Temptation, men would grow ſecure, and carnally confident; therefore as God keeps the hour of death, and the day of judgment, to make us always prepared; ſo by the ſame Reaſon, he ſhould keep the knowledge of our condition from our eyes, that ſo we might alwayes fear.

To anſwer this practical Objection (for I avoid all ſpeculative and meer controverſal ones.) *Anſw.*

Firſt, *If the truth of God and the Scripture is not to be maintained or aſſerted, becauſe the corruption of men will abuſe it, we muſt preach no divine truth at all. E veromon niſi veram, E bono non niſi bonum*, No good or ſound truth doth produce as its genuine effect, any other then what is good; but, by accident, and by reaſon of the poyſonous diſpoſition in ſome men, they will turn the ſweeteſt flowers into poiſon: *Paul* did frequently preach the grace of God in the Goſpel, and ſome hearers turned this into wantonneſs; ſhall therefore no mention be made of this grace? If therefore ſome men, through Satans deluſions, think they have grace, when they have not, ſhall not he that hath true grace be perſwaded of it? if a man in a dream do verily think he hath ſuch riches, ſuch honours; ſhall we conclude, that a man awake can have no certainty whether he be in a dream or no? And further, by this reaſon no man ſhould contend earneſtly for the true Doctrine of Faith; no man ſhould inſeparably adhere to the truth of God even unto death, becauſe an Heretique, who pertinaciouſly maintaineth a damnable Hereſie, he may be as confident as the Orthodox man: Should not the Iſraelites make a good uſe of the Manna, becauſe he that abuſed it, found it corrupted to Worms.

But, Secondly, This Doctrine from its own nature, cannot breed any arrogance, or neglect of God and godlineſs, for many Reaſons:

Firſt, Its onely maintained and kept up by humility and holy fear: So that when a man ceaſeth to be humble, to have an holy fear of *God*, his certainty likewiſe ceaſeth, even as the Lamp goeth out when the Oyl is taken away: *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſalm* 25. 14.

Secondly,

Secondly, It cannot breed arrogancy, for theſe exerciſes of grace are meere ſigns and teſtimonies of Election or Salvation, they are no cauſes of it, or merit; whercin then can the ſoul be puffed up? And

Thirdly, Theſe gracious effects that are ſigns, they are not of our working, by our free-will and power of nature: *We are his workmanſhip created to good works*, Epheſ. 2. 10. So that the diſcovery of theſe effects, may indeed inlarge the ſoul much to praiſe and glorifie God, but to ſtir up pride in us, there is no conſequence at all. And

Fourthly, Theſe very effects of grace, though not wrought by us, but by God, they are not purely good and perfect, there is much droſs, and many imperfections in them: So that the godly heart doth at the ſame time rejoyce and debaſe its ſelf; it rejoyceth to ſee the love of God in the ſoul, but that this love is ſo weak, ſo languid and fainting, it doth alſo grieve: It diſcovers grace indeed, and therefore is aſſured; but it diſcovers alſo thouſands of failings and imperfections, and therefore is laid low: And yet further, though they be in the heart, yet of our ſelves we have not eyes to diſcern what God hath wrought for us, till he inable us; ſo that its Gods gift to be aſſured: How many dear children of GOD walk in darkneſſe, and would give a whole world if they had it, but to have this clear evidence of Gods love to them, though for a day.

Uſe. *Uſe of further Exhortation*, to prove and examine your ſelves, whether thoſe viſible characters of Chriſt be in thee, or the marks of the Devil: See what fruit ye bring forth, and then you may judge whether you are trees for eternal burning or no: Oh its a ſign all is not well, when thou art unwilling to put thy ſelf upon the touchſtone; its an argument there is guilt within, thou ſhalt find thy ſelf to be ſuch an one as thou art afraid to think of; thou thinkeſt, If certainty be onely had in the uſe of ſuch means; then farewel my hopes, my evidence for heaven. Oh! who ſaith as *David*: *Prove me, O Lord, and examine me, if there be any evil in me.* And to all the former means, we may adde one main one, which is a ſign that never faileth, If we love the brethren, if we love and delight in thoſe that are godly; as *Davids* delight was in the Saints of the earth: He that is not godly himſelf, cannot heartily love one that is godly, becauſe ſimilitude is both a cauſe and an effect of love; and this is, when godlineſs is the cauſe of love, not his riches, his parts, his love to thee, but the holy image of God appearing in him.

SERMON CXVIII.

The Advantages the Godly have by Assurance, How it may be known from Presumption; with Directions to the godly that want it.

2 PET. 2. 10.

Wherefore the rather (Brethren) give diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.

THe possibility and duty of this Assurance hath been already declared & proved; as also the practical objections against it, removed. I now come to shew the great advantage of this certainty. Where the godly heart hath this holy assurance and perswasion wrought by Gods Spirit, there it hath many helps which the tempted soul wanteth. It is therefore good to propound them to you, that so the profitablenesse of it in heaven's way, may excite you to seek it.

The advantages that the godly have by Assurance. 1.

And first, *Where there is certainty of this heavenly priviledge, there the soul is more inflamed and inlarged to love God.* It's an assertion against all reason and experience, which the Papists utter, That assurance of Gods love in us would breed contempt, security and neglect of God. For with all ingenuous natures (and such the children of God are) the more perswasion of anothers love to them, the more they repay it with love again. The wife, the childe, the more they know they are beloved of husband or father, the more this inflames them. Love is fire, and fire turneth all things into fire. Thus *David*, when he could say, God had forgiven his iniquities, and healed his diseases, in particular; Then, *blesse the Lord, O my soul, and all within me praise his holy Name*, Psal. 103. 1. Thus *Paul* in *Rom.* 8. 6. what put him into those extaticall raptures, and transcendent expressions about God and Christ, but the assurance that he was such an one whom God had elected, called and justified? Oh then, know all the while thou hast doubtings and servile fears upon thee, so long thy love to God is very imperfect and cold. The fear of *God* brings hatred, and wearisom thoughts of *God*: And hence the Apostle sheweth, that fear, *viz.* slavish, hath torment with it; and that love casteth out this tormenting fear, 1 *John* 4. 18. Love to *God* as a gracious Father, would allay all those tempestuous and swelling waves that are in the soul. Now this can never be done, but by some certainty that we are such whom *God* loveth. *Tranquillus Deus, tranquillat omnia*; when we know *God* is pacified, then the soul is also pacified. As it's with the sea, that is quiet as long as the air and winds from above are quiet and still; so it is here. The soul, that is calm, comfortable and gracious, all the while it can by assurance enjoy *Gods* favour. Now if we cannot so vigorously love *God*, while we are without this certainty, how should this provoke us to indeavour after it.

2.

Secondly, *Certainty of our calling and election will breed much spirituall strength and heavenly ability to all graces and duties, to go through all relations with much*

holineſſe and lively vigour. For feare which is the oppoſite to this, that makes weak hands, and feeble knees, that diſheartens, that ſaith, *A lion is in the way*: whereas the certainty of our good condition would put hope and life into us. The teſtimony of a good conſcience made *Paul* ſo active in the courſe of his Miniſtry, 2 *Cor.* 1.12. Certainty breeds joy, and the *joy of the Lord is our ſtrength*, as *Nehemiah* ſaid, *Nehem.* 8.10. Take a piece of timber full of moths and worms eating into it, and it's no wayes ſtrong enough for any building. Grief is made rottenneſſe to the bones, which conſumes the heat of all our ſtrength: ſo ſpirituall dejections and ſinfull doubtings about the work of grace in us, they conſume the very heart, they deſtroy the very foundations. No man but a ſanctified man can have a good conſcience in a Scripture-ſenſe; they may have a quiet conſcience not accuſing them for groſſe ſins commited againſt the light of nature: But this is not a Scripture good conſcience, for that is freed not only from groſſe ſins, but heart-ſins, and ſoul-ſins, and it is ſprinkled with the bloud of Chriſt. And thus a good conſcience is a continual feaſt. Oh then, this ſhould ſtir thee up for this holy certainty; thou wilt be farre more chearfull, more joyfull in the work of the Lord: Thou wilt be more ſervent and zealous; thou wilt be as the ſun, like a giant running his race. We complain of our barrenneſs, of our weakneſs, of our ſlothfulneſs: what can be wings to us but this certainty of our gracious eſtate? This will be like the Spirit in *Ezekiels* wheels. This will be like the winde that gathered the dry bones togeher. Oh then that the people of God would more matter this. Thou couldſt not be ſuch a lump of earth, if this breath of life were breathed into thee.

3. Thirdly, *This certainty and aſſurance of grace would exceedingly keep up the heart under all afflictions and outward miſeries.* Had not *Paul* been aſſured of that eternall weight of glory, he could not have judged theſe worldly miſeries light and eaſie. When *David* was in all that miſery, all outward hopes gone, *He incouraged himſelf in his God*, 1 Sam. 30.6. *His God*; He knew God was his God, though he had loſt all things elſe. And thus *Paul* is more then a conqueror and doth ſo highly challenge all troubles to hurt him if they can, becauſe he knoweth by Gods Spirit, that he is one called and choſen; and ſhall not this prevail with you? Is it not a miſerable thing to feare to be killed by men, and to be damned by God at the ſame time: To be impriſoned by men, and impriſoned in thy owne conſcience. Oh what will provoke thee if not this? Alas, I am ſure of nothing, not of my life, not of my outward comforts, not of any outward enjoyment, and wilt not thou then be ſure of grace within thee? Oh our vanity! when will we be wiſe? We labour for thoſe earthly things, which when we have, we cannot be ſure of, but not at all for grace. Is it not with many men, as with the bees, when all the ſummer they have laboured to fill their combs with hony, then comes the husbandman and burneth them, and takes their hony. So thou haſt a long while laboured to get up ſo much wealth, ſuch an eſtate, and then comes death, or ſome ſudden publique judgment, the ſword and warre, and that takes all thy hony from thee. Oh when we can be ſure of no outward thing we have, let us be ſure of inward grace.

4. Fourthly, *This certainty of grace is a ſtrong and mighty buckler againſt all thoſe violent aſſaults and temptations, that the devil uſeth to exerciſe the godly with.* His temptations are, That they are hypocrites, that all the calamities which fall upon them are becauſe God is not reconciled with them, that they ſeek themſelves and not the glory of God. Now there is no ſuch brazen wall to repell all his darts, as the teſtimony and knowledge of the truth of grace in our hearts. This was the *aqua vitæ* that kept up *Job*. You know what fiery temptations he had: God ſeemed to be againſt him; godly friends judged him an hypocrite: The devil he aſſaults him; he ſaith, *Doth Job ſerve God for nought?* God hedgeth him in, and giveth him outward proſperity: no wonder then if *Job* ſerve God, *Job* 1. There are ſtrong tempeſtuous windes, able to tear up the roote of the ſtrongeſt

ſtronger oak; but yet he ſtands like an immoveable root; and all becauſe of that integrity and ſincerity which he knew to be in himſelf; he knew his aims and ends to be pure, he knew he ſerved God for Gods ſake. As this is of great conſequence to defend againſt the devills accuſations, ſo alſo againſt the calumnies and falſe clamours of the devills inſtruments. As the devill is *Sathan*, *The accuſer*, ſo all wicked men do diabolize; they charge the generation of the godly for hypocrites, for diſſemblers, for painted ſepulchres; but the knowledge of their own upright neſſe, and the graces of God in their ſoul, do abundantly fortifie them; whereas this is terrible to have other men condemning us; and God alſo, and our own conſciences condemning us.

Fifthly, *This certainty is a ſpeciall means to breed contentation of minde, and a thankfull, chearfull heart in every condition.* As we told you, *David* in that great exigency of his, *incouraged himſelf in his God*: and in his Pſalms, that the Lord was his portion, and his inheritance; Now this could not be known, unleſſe he alſo were certain of his godlineſſe; for God is not the portion or inheritance of wicked men. And upon this it is, that he ſaith, *God had put more joy into his heart, than they have, when wine and oil increaſeth*, Pſal. 4. If therefore thou wouldſt have that happineſſe on earth, true contentation of ſpirit, it muſt be from the knowledge of thy grace, and ſenſe of Gods love in Chriſt, when thou canſt ſay, Soul, take thy ſpirituall eaſe and heavenly quiet, for here are many good things ſtored up for thee: This is to be a godly *Dives* indeed, a *Dives* in ſoul, and to fare deliciouſly, in a ſpirituall ſenſe, every day. 5.

Laſtly, *This certainty of grace is a ſure and ſpeciall antidote againſt death in all the fears of it.* This makes the King of terrors, a King of all conſolations: For ſeeing that by grace we are the members of Chriſt, death hath no more ſting on us, then on Chriſt our head. And therefore the godly may in Chriſt triumph, *O death where is thy ſting, O grave where is thy victory*? 1 Cor. 15. 55. Theſe ſerpents may be handled, becauſe their ſtings are out. Let them howl and roar out at the approach of death, who know not whether God be their friend, or enemy, or rather may know he is their enemy; who have juſt cauſe to doubt, whether they are going to hell or heaven. Oh to ſuch, the very name and thought of death and judgement, muſt be full of amazement and terror: But to thoſe who are in a holy manner perſwaded of their intereſt in Chriſt, that perceive the ſure evidences of Gods grace in them; they may lift up their heads for their redemption draweth nigh: And indeed this ſhould much incite you to ſeek after ſuch a ſupport at death. *Hezekiah* upon the ſentence of death paſſed on him, ſupported himſelf with this, 2 *Kings* 20. 3. And what wilt thou do, when the hour of death approaches: here is no longer the comfort of thy riches, wife and children to be injoyed; here is no longer the company of thy friends and acquaintance to be retained. Oh then! when thou art to be ſure no longer of any earthly comfort would it not be better then a world to have to be ſure of heavenly comforts? Oh that you would be wiſe for your latter end. Do ſomething that may ſtand you in ſtead, when you are dying men, gaſping at the laſt. Drowning men uſe to catch hold on any thing. Oh dying and drowning men ſhould be ſure of a full hold to lean upon; Theſe are the advantages. 6.

But the godly heart may inquire, *How ſhall I know this holy certainty and perſwaſion by Gods Spirit, from my own perſwaſion, from the falſe flattery that is in me?* Are there not thouſands of people that call darkneſſe light, and bitter ſweet? that conclude the truth and goodneſſe of their heart in all reſpects towards God. It is true it cannot be denied but that there are ſuch fooliſh dreamers, who dream of their fulneſſe when they are indeed empty; yet to a ſearching eye they may be quickly diſtinguiſhed. How to know true certainty which is wrought by the Spirit, from the falſe perſwaſions of a mans own heart. 1.

Firſt, *Holy certainty is kept up in all exerciſes of grace, and conſtant tender walking of all known ſin*: but preſumption will agree with the practice of all ſins. He is confident of Gods love, of his own good heart; yet a notorious

beast, a constant swearer, a constant liar, unjust in his dealing, lustfull and voluptuous in his life. Oh these must needs be horse-beetles that can live in such dung; not Christs doves who delight in neat and sweet places. What? thou hope in God? thou trust thou hast a good heart and a good conscience, when so much wickednesse is in thy life! This is impudent presumption, and Gods eies are purer then to accept or love such. Doth a man then think he hath grace in his heart, how carefull is he to practise all good known duties, and to avoid all known sin?

2. Secondly, *Presumption is unwilling to be searched and tried.* It flieth from the light, it cannot abide the touchstone; but this holy certainty loveth a deep search. It is here as between the Heretique and the Orthodox man: Heretiques they are *lucifugæ Scripturarum*, as *Tertull.* said, The bats and owls that fly from the light. The thief hates the light, saith our Saviour, *John*, 3. 20. But the true doctrine, that desireth to be tried and dived into. Then thus, where a true knowledge of grace is, that man crieth with *David*, *Prove me, Lord, examine and try if there be any false way*, Psal. 26. 2. But where presumption is, that would not have a cracked title, or a forged evidence brought before the Judge.

3. Thirdly, *Presumption beareth up a mans heart, till a man come to some great and extraordinary calamities, and then this bubble vanisheth away.* Its not truly rooted, and so will not abide a violent storm. They fall from presumption into despair. But see how *Job* and *David* can go through the hardest brunts; though they be under many briars, yet these innocent sheep lose not their wooll. Dross will melt in the fire, but gold will be the more refined. The winde makes chaff fly away, but leaveth the corn more purified. *The righteous hath hope in his death, Prov.* 14. 32. then when the presumptuous mans hope doth most wither many times.

4. Fourthly, *Presumption is not opposed nor assaulted by the devil.* Satan doth not compe and labour to drive people out of it, but nourisheth them in it. But out of this holy certainty, the devils main scope is to drive them. You see he was not afraid to shoot out his fiery dart even at Christ himself, upon this: Whether he was the Son of God. And his stratagem was to make *Job* think, and condemn himself for an hypocrite. So that godly assurance is much opposed, both by the devill and the unbelieving heart of man: its hardly obtained, and hardly retained. But of presumption we may say, as *Isaac* did of his son's counterfeit venison, how comest thou by it so quickly my son? How come you to be confident thus quickly, thus easily? This man-childe is born, and your soul hath not been in travell and pangs: this is not Gods way.

5. Fifthly, *It is the sure character of presumption, that it dividath the meanes and the end.* It hopes for such privi edges, though it never do the duties. Now this is not assurance, but a presumptuous delusion, whereas you see this text is, *To give all diligence to make your calling sure.* Presumption is like that charity *James* speaks of, that giveth good words, bids the party go home and be warmed and clothed, but doth not give any thing; and in this presumption most men live: They hope for that end, the means whereof they are never conversant in. Should they tempt God about their naturall life (they will not eat and drink and think to live) all men would say it were horrible presumption: but though they do impudently about supernaturall life (they will neither repent or forsake sin, or live holily) and yet hope Christ will be their Saviour, Though they do thus, yet men see not their own folly and madnesse therein.

6. Sixthly, *Presumption is but a self-deceiving, false logick, that a man deceiveth himself with.* Whereas you heard this certainty is a knowledge wrought by Gods Spirit in us. The Apostle *James* saith, *If any man seem to be religious, and bridle not his tongue, &c.* he makes a false syllogisme, *James* 1. 26. He that seemeth religious, &c. and indeed all presumption is nothing but a false syllogisme: a man takes that for a cause which is not a cause: or else it is an ignorance of the proper state of the question, what it is to be indeed godly, how much doth to the nature of it.

Seventhly,

Seventhly, *The presumptuous man is full of haughty arrogance and proud preferring of himself, contemning and undervaluing others.* Thus that Pharisee, *Lord I thank thee that I am not as other men*, &c. Whereas true assurance is accompanied with deep humility, and a pitifull respect to others, praying and mourning for others; Oh that their eies were opened; Oh that they were inriched with the grace of God, as they are. Humility and self-emptinesse is an inseparable effect of godly assurance, and of precious esteem with God. *Minimum de se sensisse, tam magnum est quam maximas res seciſſe.* The lowest love, and the least thoughts of our selves, is as great, as to have done the greatest and most excellent things. 7

In the next place it may be questioned, What that godly person should do, who hath not this assurance; though grace be in him, he knoweth it not, yea he thinketh the clean contrary. Even as *Luke* 24. 16. When Jesus after his resurrection appeared to the disciples, though he drew nigh to them, and talked to them, yet saith the Text, *Their eies were holden, that they did not know him.* So it is with many a gracious heart, Christ is spiritually in the soul, grace is present, yet he cannot feel this. Though the Sun of righteousnesse be in his heart, yet he walketh in darknesse. What a godly person should do that wants Assurance.

Now to such an one we say, *Let him walk in a faith of adherence and dependance when he hath none of these evidences.* This the Scripture calls trusting, rolling, leaning and staying of the soul upon God. *David* in many Psalms hath only this plank to stand upon in the great Ocean: For this you must know, though assurance be a duty, and to be pressed after; yet it is not the faith that justifieth. Thou maiest belong to God, and have an interest in the promise, though thou feel no evidences of it. *Who is he that feareth God, walking in darknesse and hath no light, let him stay himself upon God?* Isa. 50. 10. So then, if thou findest thy soul like a parched heath, thou goest bowed down, thinking thy self a withered branch, a dried tree; consider what is thy duty, what doth God require of thee? even a depending and waiting on him. And this dependance of faith is far more noble then the assurance of faith.

For first, in assurance, there I go on in holy duties, and love of God, because of the sensible sweetnesse and delight that I have, but in dependance there I trust in God, when I have no sense or feeling: So then, as it is a greater act of love to God, when I love him though he afflicts me, though he blesseth me with no outward mercies; so it is a greater act of obedience to wait and depend on God, when I feel my own unworthinesse and load of sin, then when the goodnesse of my heart is cleared up unto me. The dependance of faith more noble then Assurance 1.

Secondly, To depend and wait on God, though darknesse be in thy soul, argueth thy faith more firm and strong. As when the woman of *Canaan* would not give over, though Christ called her dog, yet this made her faith to appear great faith. It was an high expression in *Iob, Though he kill me, I will trust in him.* Do not then give over thy constancy in holy duties, be not discouraged in waiting on God for assurance, for he will at last cause the sun to arise, and the dark night to fly away. 2.

And thus I shall conclude this text, still pressing you to be upon more sure and certain terms about your souls, then many are. God bid *Hezekiah* set his house in order before he died: Oh do thou set thy soul in order, cast up all thy spirituall accounts. It is a woefull thing when thou art dying, then to cry out, Oh I know not what to do, live I must not, dy I dare not; every thing is in disorder, there is nothing sure about my soul. What do you think my beloved brethren? Are not these things the greatest reason in the world we perswade you to? How unexcusable will ye be? when will ye go away and say, It is true indeed, we should be upon sure terms, It is an happy thing to be so, but the world, that hinders me, my lusts they hinder me. I tell you the consideration of these things have so affected men heretofore, that they have gone and lived in cells, and holds of the earth, they have shut themselves up in woods and wildernesses, that they might

might attend to this great matter the salvation of their souls. This indeed was their blind zeal and indiscreet forwardnesse, but it will certainly at the day of Judgement rise up and condemn thy jollity, thy carnall security in a sinfull way.

SERMON CXIX.

Sheweth in how many respects wicked men (before their effectual Calling) are afar off from God, and consequently miserable.

ACTS 2. 29.

For the Promise is unto you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

THe later part of this Text will continue further new matter unto us, while we treat of this Divine Vocation: and to bring you to the coherence of it; You may take notice of two great and strange wonders recorded in the Chapter: The first is, That admirable Apparition of the holy Ghost in fiery cloven Tongues upon the heads of the Apostles: Wherein take notice of the time when this was, *In the day of Pentecost*; On this time the Law was given on Mount *Sinai* by *Moses*; and now the Gospel is to be preached to the whole world.

2. Consider the Manner of this Apparition, It was with a *rushing mighty winde*; this did denote the great efficacy and mighty power of the Spirit in the Word preached.

The second way was of Tongues, to shew the gifts that God would bestow upon the Apostles; and fiery Tongues to signifie the light, and the heat, and the purifying vertue that would be in the Word preached; and cloven Tongues, because they would divide the Word aright to every hearer. Thus, as once diversity of Tongues was a judgement, and by it *Babel* was built; so here, divers Tongues are a mercy, and by it the spiritual *Jerusalem* is built.

In the next place, you have the Efficacy of this Apparition demonstrated in the Apostle *Peters* Sermon. And.

First, He confirmeth this wonderfull work of God by a Prophecie out of *Joel*, wherein God promised *To pour out his Spirit* (that denoteth abundance) *on their sons and daughters, their men-servants and maid-servants*, the meanest and most contemptible; contrary to that wicked saying of the *Rabbins*, *Spiritus Sanctus non cadit super animum pauperis*; And after the Apostle *Peter* had doctrinally instructed them about Christ, and practically convinced them of their particular sinne in crucifying of him (for *Singularia sunt quæ pungunt*) you have the wonderfull and savoury effect upon the hearers, described in two things:

1. Their remorse and trouble of conscience for sinne, *They were pricked in heart*, as a man that is stabbed at the heart with a dagger. This ought to be the fruit of all our Sermons, to send you away grieved and troubled, wounded at the very heart.

heart. The tears of the hearers are the praises of the preacher.

2. Their desire and enquiry, *What shall we do that we may be saved?* then is our Ministery blessed, when it puts you upon these serious Questions. When you go home, What shall I do to be saved? I am out of the way, my sinne is discovered, this Sermon hath told me of all the evil that ever I did: Oh what shall I do to be saved? Now that which is the second wonder in this Chapter is, The Number of those Persons that were converted at this time: its said, *ver.* 41. *That they were about three thousand.* Here is one to be admired more then the Heathen *Orpheus*, that could make beasts follow him, and tame their natures; for ignorant and prophane enemies, even a great multitude imbrace Christ Here is *Peter* catching of men, as once he did fish, and the net is so full, that it is ready to break.

In the next place, You have *Peters* Advice and Counsel, directing them into the way of Salvation; wherein consider a two fold duty; 1. *Repent.* 2. *Be baptized*, with the Object, *Into the name of Christ*; This doth not exclude the other persons.

3. You have a two-fold encouragement; 1. From the benefit sealed in Baptism, *Remission of sins.* 2. A gracious Effect God would vouchsafe to them, *Ye shall receive the holy Ghost.* And my Text is brought in as a reason, why they should repent and be baptized, and hope for remission of sins, *For the Promise is to you* &c.

Which words are diligently to be opened, because of some late Questions arising about Infant-Baptism, that are started hence. In them you may observe, The mercy spoken of or published, *The Promise.* 2. The Subject, and that is in a three-fold enumeration, *To you*, viz. the Jews to whom then he preached. 2. *Their Children.* 3. *To those that are afar off*, εἰς μακραν. Some understand it of place afar off from the countrey of *Judea*; Some of the time to come, because its εἰς μακραν, To the generations that are to come. To be sure its meant of the *Gentiles*, who in other places are said *To be afar off.* And therefore you have this explained in the last expression, *Even as many as God shall call.*

Now first let us consider, What is meant by the promise. Those that would elude this place so pregnant for baptizing of infants of believers, because the promise is made to them, say, Its meant of extraordinary gifts, such as those miraculous gifts spoken of. But this is very absurd, because 1 *Cor.* 14. all that did believe had not those extraordinary gifts, *all did not speak with tongues*, *all had not the gift of healing.*

2. Its against experience, for if the promise of these extraordinary gifts be made to believers, then why have they not all extraordinary gifts that thus expound it? Why do they not speak in the Hebrew and Greek tongues? And

3. *Vers.* 16. The promise of these extraordinary gifts is said to be *fulfilled at that time*, and therefore not to be expected at any other time. By the promise therefore which sometimes is in the singular, and sometimes in the plural number, because of the many good and spiritual things promised therein, we are to understand the Covenant of grace, wherein God promiseth to be the God of believers, and their seed; for that which was made to *Abraham*, setting aside some personal priviledges, is made to every believer. Now in this Covenant is contained Pardon of sinne, and all other mercies, which Baptism sealeth; and that this is the meaning, is plain, *Chap.* 3. 25. *Ye are the children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant God made with our fathers*; So the promise here, is that gracious Covenant of God, whereby he offers grace to those that do accept it; now those that accept it are such as are inwardly sanctified, and these have the inward Covenant as well as the outward administration of it. But secondly, Others do only outwardly accept of it, and professe their obedience to it, are not inwardly regenerated, and these only have the external Covenant, and a right to Church-priviledges, being destitute of the saving benefit by them: So that this

this promiſe of grace in the outward offer of it, as alſo in the Church-priviledges, are diſpenſed to ſuch who ſometimes have an external profeſſion onely, but are without the inward efficacy of it.

The ſecond ſubject is *Their Children*: Here we ſee God taking parents into Covenant, takes alſo the ſeed, and upon this one main ground Infant-Baptiſm is faſtned: So that though children be not expreſly named in the command to baptize, yet they are in the promiſe accompanying the precept, and that may put it out of all doubt.

I choſe this verſe for the later part, containing the Subjects enumerated, *viz. Thoſe that are afar off, even as many as God ſhall call.* From whence obſerve,

Obſerv. First, *That all men till called by God, are afar off from him.*

This expreſſion doth contain the dreadfull and woful eſtate of all men by nature, They are afar off from God. As *Abraham* ſaid to *Dives*, *There was a great gulf between them two*; ſo there is a remote diſtance between God and all men till called, *Epheſ.* 2. 13. *Ye who were ſometimes afar off*, ſaith the Apoſtle ſpeaking of the *Gentiles*; and ſo *verſ.* 17. Thus the Prodigal that took his ſtock to ſpend it upon ſinne, and the luſts of the fleſh, he is ſaid *To go into a far Country*. Now when we ſay, All men till God call, are afar off, you will eaſily underſtand that we ſpeak not of Gods omnipreſence; for that is impoſſible, none can be far off God in that ſenſe. *Whither can I go from thy preſence*, ſaith *David*; *If I would take the wings of the morning, or go into the depths, or dig into hell, I cannot go from thee*, Pſal. 139. 7. Now in this ſenſe, God is near even every wicked man: but we ſpeak of Gods gracious preſence and demonſtration of his loving favour, in which ſenſe its ſaid, *That Cain was caſt out of Gods preſence.*

In how many reſpects wicked men are afarre off from God.

But to open this more particularly, let us ſhew in how many particulars they are thus elongated, or made afar off from God. And

1. First, *In regard of the knowledge of God in a true and ſaving way.* They are as little children, *in utero ignorantiæ*, as *Tertullian* expreſſed it, no more apprehenſive in a right manner of God, then the children in the dark womb are perceiving of the things of reaſon. Therefore *Epheſ.* 2. part of this diſtance from God is in that they were ἄθεοι, *without God in the world*. *Athens* that was the eye of *Grecia*, yet that could ſee no better, than to dedicate an Altar *To the unknown god*; Hence the Apoſtle ſpeaking of the Heathens, ſaid, *They did feel or grope in the dark after God*, Acts 17. 27. Even as the *Egyptians* in their thick darkneſſe, or the *Sodomites* ſtricken with blindeneſſe did; and therefore Gods willing of men to be ſaved, is declared in this, *That he would have all men come to the knowledge of the truth*; and generally the Nations of the world are deſcribed by this, *That they know not God.* Its true, *Rom.* 1. the Apoſtle ſpeaks of γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ſomething that by nature may be known of God, ſome ſparks, ſome embers; but this is ſo corrupted, ſo confuſe, ſo imperfect, that it groſly miſtakes like that blinde man recovering a little ſight, that ſaw men like trees: Oh then, if to be a corporally blinde man be ſo heavy a miſery, that ſuch cried to our Saviour, *Lord that we might receive our ſight*! How much rather may we cry out, to have the eyes of our mind opened, who are wandring far from God! For although theſe that are here ſaid to be farre off are Heathens and Gentiles, yet even Chriſtians by birth are alſo farre off from God, till they have this ſpirituall eye-ſalve; and therefore in two reſpects men may be ſaid to be far off from God: First, both in reſpect of inward grace, and the outward means of ſalvation: and thus all the Heatheniſh part of the world is afar off God: Or ſecondly, in reſpect of the inward grace only: When men do enjoy the outward means of ſalvation, and in this ſenſe by their duties are ſaid To draw nigh God, but in reſpect of any ſaving work of grace, are as farre off as Heathens and Pagans: and this is the condition, as is to be feared, of many thouſands. They are nigh God in reſpect of the Chriſtian faith they profeſs in reſpect of the Duties and Ordinances they exerciſe them-

themselves in, but in respect of their affections and heart, so they are at as great distance from God and his holy waies, as Heathen and Publicans. This distinction must be attended unto, that we do not vainly deceive our selves, as the Jews did, with *The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord.*

Secondly, *They are afar off in respect of Gods speciall and gracious love to justifie their persons, to pardon their sins.* This also is urged *Ephes.* 2. *He preached peace to them that were afar off*; Peace, so then there was war and enmity before between God and them. And thus they may be said to be without God, both actively and passively; actively as before, having no knowledge or love of God; and passively, God hath no approving knowledge or love of them. Thus are we till God calls us, in a state of Gods displeasure; as *Absalom* cast out from *Davids* presence. His anger is towards us all the day long: And if the terrour of a King be like the roaring of a lion; what are the frowns and displeasures of the King of Kings! Oh that people were wise to consider, what they are by nature, under what heavy displeasure they are! Doth the Scripture bid us agree with a man that is an adversary quickly in the way, lest he deliver us to the Judge; what reason then is it, to agree with God our adversary speedily, who hath such spirituall and eternal torments to scourge us with, that no man can have? Do not thou please thy self then with these thoughts, that thou hast free accesse to the presence and into the favour of great ones on earth; for if thou art farre off from God, if he regard thee not, if his displeasure be towards thee, thou art in the state of gall and wormwood. 2.

Thirdly, *We are by nature afar off from Christ the Mediator between God and man.* And this indeed is the foundation of all calamity; for as in Christ we are blessed with all heavenly blessings, so without him we are cursed with all spirituall and temporall curses. You speak the summe and abstract of all misery, when you say a people are without Christ. This also is mentioned *Ephes.* 2. as part of that distance from God. For such is the contrariety between God and man, God an holy and pure God, man a wretched and corrupt enemy to him, that here could never be any reconciliation but by Christ. We see how farr off the Apostate Angels are cast from God, never to be reconciled, and all because Christ took not their nature upon him: And thus men without Christ, for the present, have no way of accesse to God; for why? Should they come in their own names? alas! they are sinners, they are adversaries unto God, who then must speak for them? who will plead for them? And consider, that not only the Heathens and Pagans in the remote places of the world may be without Christ, but even many of those who have the title of Christians, and professe obedience to him, may yet be without him in a saving manner. Will not Christ say to many who did prophesie and cast out devills in his name, *I know you not*? So then Christ may not know many within the Church, many that call on his name. Oh be afraid lest this truth should be verified of any of you; that though you be near Christ in words, in prayer, in profession, yet wholly without Christ in respect of any gracious effect. Now what is it, to have riches and honours, and to be without Christ? To have the great things of the world, and to have no portion in him? When God promised great earthly mercies to *Abraham*, Oh saith he, *I go childlesse*; that troubled him; what was all that wealth, if he had no childe? And thus, although God gave thee all externall happinesse, and the desires of thy heart; yet say, behold I am without Christ still, and what will all these things avail me. 3.

Fourthly, *Such as are afar off, They have no hope.* They are an hopelesse people; which way soever they look, every thing curseth and condemneth them; and no marvell, for, if without the promise, they have not the ground of hope, and if without Christ, the object of hope. And this also is added in the forementioned place, *Ephes.* 2. *Without hope.* Now you know the Heathens fained, that though all blessings were gone, yet hope was in the bottom of *Pandoraes* box; im- 4.

plying, though we be invironed with calamities, yet as long as there is hope, the heart will not break. When *Cain* and *Judas* thought there was no hope (though that was their sin) then they began to feel an hell burning in their conscience. And indeed, what is that which makes the fire of hell burn seven times hotter then it would, but that there is no hope there? Hence Hope is compared to an Anchor, *Heb.* 6. 19. implying that a man without hope, is like a Ship without an Anchor in the midst of the raging sea, and tempestuous waves. Thus not only the Gentiles, but Christians also are afar off from hope, till sanctified. Now when we say, *They are without hope*, the meaning is not, as if God might not shew mercy to them, for how many times doth he call those his people, that were not his people; but in respect of any visible humane help, no created power can save them: They are like little *Isaac*, bound to be sacrificed, and the hand lifted up to give the mortall blow; and then God comes in wonderfully, and provideth a ram in his room to be sacrificed. Lay it then home to your hearts, you that are afar off in respect of saving grace, though not of the outward means of it, you are a people of no hope, no true solid hope. Indeed you have a presumption, you have an hope that is a dream, a false imagination, and that will perish like the blaze of straw; but it is not a lively hope, for that property the Scripture giveth the hope of a godly man, It is a lively hope, 1 *Pet.* 2. such as is not overcome by death. *The righteous hath hope in his death.* If therefore thou wouldst descend into a serious examination of this matter, thou wilt see thy self for the present an hopelesse man. Thou hast no ground to hope upon; there is no promise to draw out thy hope; What should be like a two edged sword at thy heart, if this be not? This carnall hope of thine will not indure, will not last, seek out for a better hope.

5. Fifthly, *Such are a far off in respect of their love of God, and an universal constant obedience to his holy will.* As God loveth not them, so neither do they love God: As God is not gracious in his promises to them, so neither are they obedient to his precepts. God is not only afar off from them but they also are afar off from God; hating and hated of God. As *Paul*, Rom. 4. describing all men by nature, saith, they are all turned out of the way, *and the way of God they have not known*; Neither is this also true only of the Heathens, who are in every sense afar off, but also of all those, who within the outward meanes of grace, yet have their hearts set contrary to God. Doth not God of old complain of such, that did *draw nigh him with their lips, but their hearts were far from him*, Isa. 29. 13? And doth not the same complaint still hold, that men draw nigh him, when their affections and lives are wholly opposite to God? And thus we may say of all those who draw nigh to God in religious duties, but in their hearts and lives are wholly contrary to him; they are afar off; they are at a great distance from God and his grace. Christ saw a young man, and because he answered some questions in a discreet manner, he told him he was not far from the Kingdom of heaven; or but when we see the prophanenesse, the ungodlinesse of most mens lives, we have cause to say, They are far from the Kingdom of God, for they are side-fare from the Kingdom of darknesse. Oh then consider, you who live dissolutely, and in the accomplishment of the lusts of your flesh, you are wholly out of the way; and so the faster you run, still the further off you are from happinesse. You may fansie impossibilities, and think of making heaven and earth meet together, for this you do, all the while you judge that this life and way of yours is consistent with true peace and felicity.

Use. *Use* first, What cause of thankfulnesse we have, who live under the meanes of grace; for God hath brought us many degrees nearer to him, then when once we were the children of Heathens. The time hath been, when this very Island was wholly without God and Christ; the Gospel was not preached amongst us, we lay like a barren heath, and a cursed wilderness, forsaken, and no notice taken of us by God. But since the Gospel hath been preached, God hath drawn near to us, and

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we to him: Oh! but for all this, we may be as far off from saving Graces as Heathens, If our lives be no better, if our conversations be no more Christianized: Those places to which the Sun draweth nearer, are warmer then the remote, cold parts, where ice and cold is: Thus it should be with us, where the Sun of Righteousnesse hath appeared, there should be heat and zeal for God, there should be meltings and mournings for sin, there should be a separating from all drosse, and every evil way: *Calor separat heterogenea*; whereas frost and cold hath fastened many heterogenious things together, heat that separates them: And thus the heat of the Gospel should separate us from our former lusts, and from our by-past iniquities: and know this, he that is far off from God, he cannot but be near to the Devill and Hell: Thus the *Ephesians* that were without God, they were under the power of Satan, and in the state of darknesse: why then doest thou not tremble and fear thy condition? the farther that thou art going from God every day, the nearer thou art to hell: Your life is a motion, you are always a going, every action is a step; now if it be sinfull, it is from God, and towards hell: What though thou findest the way pleasant? though there be many delights and temptations in the way: *Per fallacia bona itur ad vera mala, per fallacia mala itur ad vera bona*, Through seeming good and pleasant things, we come to real misery.

SERMON CXX.

That not all Mankind are called with a saving Call; How absurd it is to hold, That the Works of God, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, &c. may so call Men; And Gods Justice cleared in that point; stirring up all to behold the severity and goodnesse of the Lord.

ACT. 2.39.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

WE have handled the third kind of persons enumerated in this Text; *viz. Those that are afar off.* The next thing in order to be considered, is, the further description of those that are afar off, which is by way of restriction and limitation, *As many as God shall call*; wherein observe, 1. The limitation of the number, *As many as God shall call*: You see its not an universall, its not to all that are afar off, but onely to those whom God shall call unto him. 2. There is the benefit or priviledge God vouchsafeth, described; 1. From the nature of it, *Call.* 2. From the efficient cause, *The Lord our God shall call*; the Greek word is with the proposition, προς. shall call *unto* him, which doth partly denote, the great distance that all men by nature are from

him; and partly, the mighty power and ſtrength of God, whoſe word onely can make ſuch a change. Chriſt from heaven ſaid, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me*, and his blackamoorſkin, yea, heart, was preſently made white and clean: Chriſt did by a word onely call *Matthew* the Publican from his place of gain and profit, and he preſently leaveth all and followeth him: Thus as he ſaid to Chriſt, *Lord, if thou ſay but the word, my ſervant ſhall live*: So in the here; Lord, if thou ſpeak but the word, the mountains will melt like wax, Iron ſwim, the rivers of *Jordan* run backward, the hills skip like lambs; that is, the lives, the thoughts, the purpoſes of men will be wholly altered and changed, its but Gods call, and that will make the deaf to hear, and the fooliſh to underſtand: And partly this doth imply, the meer good will and pleaſure of God, to reſolve thus all into his grace: Here is no goodneſſe, no worth in thoſe men that are afar off, moving God, but, *As many as God ſhall call*: The utmoſt into which all is reſolved, is, *God will have mercy, on whom he will have mercy*. I ſhall at this time pitch on the reſtriction or limitation of the ſubject, Not all that are afar off, onely ſuch whom God ſhall call: And from thence obſerve,

That not all of mankind, but ſome onely doth God call, with a ſaving call.

Obſerv. The Apoſtle plainly makes a difference of thoſe that are thus afar off, and this onely to come from God; ſome are ſo afar off, that they never hear the voyce of God in the word, calling them to repent, and believe in Chriſt: Others again have ſalvation brought unto their houſe; And if thou aſk, why God calls ſuch, and not others? *Noli ſcrutari*, do not curiouſly pry into this myſtery, Gods wayes are juſt, even when they are hidden to us: Too much gazing on this Sun, may quickly blind us.

To open and clear this point, conſider,

I. Conſiderations opening the point. First, *That there is a general and common invitation*, even of all in the world by God; and there is *A ſpecial gracious one*: The former invitation is by the creatures, by the works of God; and as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *There is nothing hid from the heat of the Sun*, Pſal. 19. That doth penetrate one way or other to every ſublunary thing: So its true of this invitation and call, none is denyed it, none are ſo afar off, but that God thus calls: Now in deed, this is not properly, and in the Scripture-ſenſe a calling. I do not remember that the Scripture any where makes the works of Creation and Providence, as a calling of men, unleſſe in a very large ſenſe; as the heavens are ſaid, to declare the glory of God. And the rod of God, or his judgements (though that be ſpoken of his judgements on the Church) are ſaid to have a voice. Now that God by the works of his Creation and Providence in the world, doth teach and convince men, and ſo in that general way call men, is plain, *Rom.* 1. where the creatures made by God, are ſaid to declare thoſe inviſible properties of Gods wiſdom, power and goodneſſe. Thus Divines ſpeak of a twofold School God hath, the School of the Creatures, and the School of Grace by the Goſpel: And though the books in the firſt School, *viz.*, Of the Creatures, be very dark, and in characters hardly legible, yet God did puniſh and chaſtiſe men with very ſore and heavy judgements, yea, ſpiritual judgements, the worſt of all, *Rom.* 1. becauſe they did not learn this leſſon, and were not proficients in that School: So then, the whole world, in the excellent harmony of it, doth neceſſarily teach a God: Even *Tully* doth by an excellent Similitude demonſtrate this: If (ſaith he) you ſhould ſee a Book conſiſting of many letter, and all thoſe exactly ſet together and orderly, ſo as to make up a compleat ſenſe; no man will ſay, Thoſe letters and words put themſelves together, or that they came together by chance: So it is with the world, This great book, the excellent compoſition and harmony of all things, do fully declare that theſe things did not make themſelves, or that they came accidently together, but a great God diſpoſed them by his wiſdom and power. This invitation *Paul* conſiders of in his Sermon at *Athens*, *Acts* 17. 27. That they ſhould ſeek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and finde him. Now there have been ſome

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old, yea, and many in these days, that would stretch these Texts too far, as if the invitation by the creatures, were immediately Saving, or that men might obtain salvation by looking unto these: They have not been afraid to say, That by the Sun and Stars we may come to be effectually called, as well as by the Apostles, and the preaching of the Gospel: But how senselesse and absurd is this? For

How absurd it is to affirm, that by the works of God, the Sun, Moon and Stars, &c. Men may be effectually called.

1. First, *This invitation and call by the creatures, doth not, nor cannot reveal any thing of Christ, the onely cause of salvation*: Without Christ there is no Salvation. Now how is it possible by the Creatures, in a natural way of discourse, that ever we should come to know or believe in a Christ? The Doctrine about him is still called a mystery, and the revelation of it hath been more or lesse clear, as God hath pleased to dispense it: The very Angels did not know it, till revealed to them. Indeed, by the Creatures we may prove a *God*head, but to prove a Christ, God and man, cannot be known by any Naturall way of Argument.

2. Secondly, *The call by the creatures is not saving, because it discovers not the way of salvation, no more then the cause*; viz. *Faith*: As Christ is wholly a Supernaturall object, and by revelation, so is faith the way to come to him, the hand to lay hold on him, onely by revelation: And therefore the Heathens, they looked onely for reasons the *Gospel* way was a foolishnesse to them, the Christians were called *Credentes*, Believers, by way of scorn; yea, learned men observe the very phrases, πίστιν τῷ Θεῷ and εἰς Χριστὸν are such phrases that no humane Greek Authors ever used: So that not onely the thing it self, but the very words to expresse it, are altogether strange; where then there is no Christ, nor no faith, there must necessarily be no Call to salvation.

3. Thirdly, *This call could not be saving, for the furthest and utmost effect it had upon men, was onely outwardly to reforme their lives*: It restrained many from grosse sins, and kept them in the exercises of temperance and justice, and such Morall vertues; which though named vertues by *Aristotle*, yet the Fathers did upon Scripture-grounds call them vices and *splendida peccata*, glistring sins: for so indeed all that Piety and Morality which is out of the Church of God, is a *Sodom* apple, fair to the eye, and inwardly nothing but ashes; for there is no true Sanctification, no true and right principles of holinesse, but within the Church of God. As typically every vessel was unclean, that was not in the Temple, and sanctified thereby. The heathens much boast of one *Polemon*, a prophane beastly man, that came to hear *Socrates* at his Lectures, with a purpose to scoff and deride him, but went away wholly changed in his minde, and made sober; but what is this one external change, to those many thousands and thousands of changes which have been made both internally and externally by the word preached? But you may say, To what purpose is this call of God by the Creatures, and the work of his providence, if it be not to salvation? Yes, it is much every way:

1. First, *Hereby even all men are made inexcusable*: As the Apostle urgeth, God had not left them without a witnesse or testimony, giving rain and plentifull Seasons: Thus because men did not glorifie God according to what the creatures might have taught them, they are given up to vile affections: Men therefore are made inexcusable by this way; they cannot say, God hath left them without any conviction or manifestation of himself: No, the creatures they call, all the works of Gods justice and Gods mercy, they call; and then conscience, which is implanted in every man, the dictates and reasonings thereof, they also call. Thus there will be enough to clear God, and to stop every mans mouth.

To what use and purpose is the Call by Gods works & providence.

2. Secondly, Gods purpose in these calls, is to restrain sin, and to draw men on further then they do: There is no man that hath no more then this remote and confuse Call, that doth what he may do, and can do; He doth not improve, nay, nor use that natural strength that is in him: (I do not say) to spiritual good things;

things; for ſo he hath no natural ſtrength, but to ſuch objects as by nature he might: He willfully runneth himſelf in the committing of ſins, againſt his conſcience and knowledge; he doth with delight and joy, tumble himſelf in the mire and filth of ſin: Now God calleth by theſe naturall ways, to curb and reſtrain him, to put a bound to theſe waves: For if there were not theſe generall convictions, no Societies, no Commonwealths could conſiſt.

3. In the third place, *take notice of a twofold ſaving calling*; The one is onely external and ſaving, in reſpect of the ability and ſufficiency; the other is ſaving effectually, and in reſpect of the event. Now when the Apoſtle ſaith in the Text, *As many as God ſhall call*, it comprehends both; thoſe that are called effectually, as well as outwardly: they have not onely the outward adminiſtration of the promiſe, and the priviledges thereof, but all the inward profit thereof; on the other ſide, thoſe that have onely the outward call, they have onely externall priviledges: And as *Iſmael* had many gifts from *Abraham*, but not the inheritance; ſo have theſe many favors and priviledges from God, both for themſelves, and their poſterity, but none of the inheritance it ſelf. Now you may underſtand the Doctrine of both theſe Calls: Not all of mankinde are called with ſo much as an outward call, and of thoſe that are called with an outward Call, not many, but few are called with an inward call; according to that Text, *Many are called, but few are choſen*: So then, behold the wiſe and dreadfull ways of God herein; not the greateſt, but the leaſt part of mankinde are called with this outward invitation; and of thoſe who enjoy this outward invitation, not the greateſt, but the leaſt part partake of the inward power and efficacy thereof.

III. That God doth not effectually call all men, proved.

Thirdly, That God doth not call all men with this ſaving gracious call, will evidently *de facto* appear, if you conſider the ways of God, even ſince there was a Church, till now. In the beginning Gods call was onely among ſome few, ſo in *Noah*, and afterwards to *Abraham*, and ſo to his poſterity; and although we read of ſome ſtrangers, and a few Proſelytes, yet they were but as gleanings, to thoſe thouſands and thouſands that never heard of God: And in the time of the Jewiſh Church, God there ſeemed to incloſe his Vineyard; among them onely was he known, *Salvation was of the Jews*, they were the Children to whom meat did belong: So that no man can ſay, God did then hold out the Scepter of his grace to other Nations. Well, if we deſcend to Chriſts time, we muſt confeſſe the partition-wall was broken down; all nations then might be made clean: *Peters* ſheet of beaſts, clean and unclean, taught him that; but yet even ſince the preaching of the Goſpel, there are many nations of the world where Chriſt and the Goſpel have never been preached; indeed their voyce is ſaid to ſound over the whole world, *Rom.* 10. becauſe its not forbidden to be preached to all men, as heretofore; yet many remote corners of the world have not enjoyed the beams of this Sun: That as they ſay, the vertue of the Sun doth ſcarce ever come to ſome parts, but it is alwayes winter, and moſt part night; ſo it is with many nations in the world, and the Jews who once were the children, now ſeem to be the dogs: The Apoſtle doth at large conſider, Gods goodneſſe to the Gentiles, and ſeverity to the Jews, the natural branches, *Rom.* 11. Its here with them, as it was with *Gideons* fleece and the floor, one while the dew was on the fleece, and the floor was dry; then the dew was on the floor, and the fleece was dry: Thus it is here, One while the Jews was a pleaſant garden, and the Gentiles a wilderneſſe; now the Gentiles a garden, and the Jews a wilderneſſe; and if you ask, why is it thus: Its not for Reaſon to diſpute, but Faith to adore; *Iſta mulier taceat*, Let this woman, this Reaſon, hold her peace in Gods Church.

IV. God cleared from injuſtice.

Fourthly, *Its no injuſtice in God, though he do not give this univerſall call of grace to all men*: For this hath been the ſtumbling block at which many have fallen: How can God (ſay they) be proclaimed ſo merciſull, an ocean of all honey, in whom is no gall? how can he be ſo compaſſionate, and full of tender

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der bowels, yet not give the greatest part of mankinde so much as a saving call outwardly: especially how are all those Texts made true, *God would have all men to be saved*; and, *I delight not in the death of a sinner, but that rather he should be converted and live*; especially this may serve to take off all fault and blame from man, and to lay it wholly upon God, as if they would have readily come to God, but God would not invite them. To remove this stone:

1. First, Consider, That if we could not satisfie the reason and disputes of men in this divine dispensation, yet if the Scripture be clear and peremptory in this point, we must all stop our mouthes, and not gainsay: Doth not the Apostle, *Rom.* 9. expressly bring these carnall reasonings? *Who hath resisted his will? and why then doth he finde fault?* But see how he rebukes this unrulinesse in man, *Who art thou, O man, that disputest against God?* If then Scripture and experience saith thus much, we must conclude, Gods ways are just, though hidden to us: *Even so Father, for so it pleased thee*, said Christ, *Mat.* 11. upon the consideration of Gods revealing things to babes and Children, but hiding of them from the wise men of the world: The Doctrine of the Trinity, of Christs Incarnation, are they not transcendently above our reason, though not contrary to it? *Prorsus credibile quia impossibile*, said *Tertullian*: And thus all the great things of God cannot be perceived by us: *Quicquid de Deo dici potest eo ipso indignum est, quia dici potest, & periculosum est de Deo, etiam vera dicere*, said the Ancients.

2. But Secondly, Even reason inforced out of Scripture, may satisfie us in many things; for its no injustice in God, if he had not called any men in the world with a gracious call; for seeing man by his fall had broken the Covenant with *God*, all things became forfeited into his hand; he was not bound to set up man with a new stock, after his first breaking, and this is evidently manifest, if you compare this with *Gods* dealing and dispensation to the Apostate Angels; they fell from their habitation, and what became of them? they all are chained up in darknesse, reserved for eternal torments; Now this judgement is executed upon all, *God* did not spare one of them; to none of them was it said, Believe and repent for the remission of sins: See here, it was no injustice in *God* to damn all the Apostate Angels, and then it could not be injustice to damn all Apostate men: This certainly may quiet thy heart.

3. Thirdly, There can be no injustice, where all that is done, is done wholly out of grace, and meer favour. Injustice is, where a debt is denied, not where a favour is bestowed: now the Scripture attributes this call of *God*, to whomsoever it is, wholly to the grace of *God*: Why then are thou murmuring if *God* call no more? rather admire the grace of *God* that he calls any; Is thy eye evil, because *God* is good to save? The Devill he thinks *God* is gracious too much, and calls too many; he is tormented with malice, because so many escape out of his jaws.

4. Fourthly, Although *God* doth not call every man with this immediate call of grace, yet no man is damned meerly because he wants this: The Apostle saith, *That those that are without the Law*, viz. *Written and revealed to them*, *shall be judged without the Law*: And thus those that are without the Gospel, that have not the means of grace, they shall not be judged because they did not believe in Christ, because they did not submit to him, but because they did not walk in the practice of those things they did know: Thus because the Heathens did not glorifie God, according to the knowledge they had of him, therefore they are condemned, *Rom.* 1. Infidelity, meerly negative, doth not damn; He that believeth not, the anger of *God* abideth on him; *viz.* Where the word is preached and rejected, so that *God* doth not reap where he soweth not.

5. Fifthly, *God* is not unjust, no not to those that are afar off, because none among them have done what they might do, in a natural and morall way: for although no man hath power in a gracious manner, to any spirituall good thing,

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yet they may restrain from the outward actings of many grosse sins: The very light of nature would teach a man to abhor many things, which yet the Heathens committed; so that God hath a just controversie with them, and will be cleared when he judgeth the world.

6. Sixthly, Though God do not call all men, and thereby they are wholly impotent, and unable to any good; yet they do not sin so much, because they want power, as because they have a willing delight in it; and this indeed doth mainly remove all objections; for its not a mans impotency, so much as his wilful consent to sin, that damneth him: his *non posse*, is in some sense, his *non velle*. *Bernard* saith well of mans necessity that is now brought upon him to sin; The necessity doth not take away the voluntarinesse of it, nor the voluntarinesse the necessity: There is no man can say, O Lord, I had a will, I was very ready to come to thee, but thou didst not give me power: No, the will in every man is the grand enemy and adversary unto Christ in all his ways: Damnation is to man, because unwilling, not because unable.

Use of Exhortation, Come and behold the severity and goodnesse of God, as *Paul* in the like case; the severity of God, in that he passeth over so many persons and nations in the world; and his goodnesse, in that he draweth nigh to you; you are in the Land of *Goshen*, when others are in *Egyptian* darknesse: This hath amazed and astonished all the wisest men in the world, they have not been able to know what to say at this difference God makes; yea, many times God doth not vouchsafe the offer of grace to such a people, who in all probability would be more affected with it, and giveth it to such who refuse and reject it: *How unsearchable is his wisdom, and his ways past finding out!* Doth not our Saviour tell the men of *Capernaum*, that had the wonderfull means of grace, *Mat.* 11. 21. *If those things had been done in Tyre and Sidon* (two Heathenish places) *they would have repented in dust, in ashes*; Its thought, true repentance and conversion is not here meant; but palpable and sensible demonstrations they would have made of some sorrow and humiliation; and therefore Christ threatens to take away the Kingdom of heaven from the Jews; *viz.* The Gospel, and give it to a nation bringing forth fruit better then they: Oh consider then, whether the very Heathens and Pagans would not give more respect, and shew more joy at the word preached then thou doest: Take heed, for there are none further off grace, then those that have been called, and yet reject it: There is more hopes of those to whom the Gospel was never tendered; for those heavy judgements of an eye blinded, an heart hardened, do onely belong to those that have refused this word of life: Thensuch are onely fatted to destruction, who have been fed in these pleasant pastures of the Ordinances.

FINIS.

Reader, if notwithstanding all the care that hath been used in the printing of this book, thou meet with some faults, as thou wilt (for no book, if but a quarter so big as this, can be printed without) I pray impute it not to the Reverend Author, but to the Printer.

Tho. Underhill.

Spiritual Refining:

PART II.

OR, A

TREATISE

OF

SINNE,

WITH ITS

Causes, Differences, Mitigations, and *Aggravations*,

Particularly of the desperate *Deceitfulness* *Of Mans Heart*, of *Presumptuous* and *Reigning Sins*, and of *Hypocrisie* and *Formality* in Religion.

Also occasionally handling the *Uprightness* and *Tenderness* of a *Gracious Heart*; and therein discovering the nature of a *misguided Conscience*, as also of *secret* and *unknown sins* that the best men are guilty of; with Directions to the godly under their *fears* about them.

Shewing withall, That a strict scrutiny into a mans heart and ways, with a holy fear of sinning, doth consist with a Gospel-life of faith and joy in the Holy Ghost.

All tending to { *Unmask counterfeit Christians.* / *Terrifie the Ungodly.* / *Comfort and Direct the Doubting Saint.* / *Humble Man.* / *Exalt the Grace of God.* }

In XLII. *SERMONS*,

By *Anthony Burgess*, sometime Fellow of *Emanuel* Colledge in *Cambridge*, and now Pastor of *Sutton-Coldfield* in *Warwickshire*.

LONDON,

Printed by *Jo. Streater*, for *T. U.* and are to be sold by *Thomas Johnson*, at the *Golden-Key* in St. *Paul's* Church-yard, 1658.

THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

THeſe Sermons were prepared as part of that former Treatiſe ſtiled, *Spiritual Refining*, but that Book ſwelling in bulk, made theſe draw back, yet becauſe of their perpetual uſefulneſſe, as long as men have hearts, and are ſubject to temptations, it was thought fit not to hide this light under a buſhel: So that although in the former Book there was delivered the Subſtantials of true Grace and its Counterfeit, yet this will much conduce to a further Diſcovery and Illuſtration of that Subject, and ſo in reference to that Treatiſe may be ſtiled *Coronis* as being added for further adorning and amplifying that matter. *The main ſcope of this work is to bring not onely the ungodly, but a believer alſo into more acquaintance with his own heart*; for a man may, though of very long ſtanding in Chriſtianity, yet by frequent ſearching in to this Book of his heart, find more errours then ever he thought of. So that I may here commend a new ſtudy, and a new art to the world. This Treatiſe is *De Arte Cordis*, which may well be called liberal, for if rightly managed, it will ſet a man at liberty from that entanglement and bondage, the luſts of ſin have over him. It's true, this Subject hath been ſearched into by many practical Authors, yet it's good to have ſeveral Tractates about the ſame matter (for we doe not bring new matter in Divinity, no more then there is in Philoſophy, *Materia eſt ingenerabilis*, it is the ſame matter under a multitude of forms;) Not only becauſe one Book of ſuch a Subject may come unto a mans hands, when another may not, but alſo becauſe every man hath his ſeveral gift to prepare and dreſſe up the matter treated of, and one mans gift may prevail more then another mans. No doubt, it's with Books, as it is with men and their preaching. There is a wonderfull diſpenſation of Gods providence herein, for as ſome men, though they have not eminency either of gifts or graces, yet are bleſſed with more ſpiritual ſucceſſe and acceptance in their labours, then men of greater name and renown: So it is with Books, Not alwaies that which is the moſt learned, the moſt exquiſite and elaborate doth finde the chiefeſt place in mens affections, but the ſucceſſe is as God in wiſdom and mercy doth vouchſafe to it. Hence though the Miniſters of Chriſt plant and water by writing as well as preaching, yet ſtill it's God that giveth the increaſe. A two-fold advantage may come by this Book through Gods bleſſing, Firſt, The true Chriſtian may come to further Aſſurance and knowledge of the work of grace in his heart, and accordingly walk more thankfully, joyfully and fruitfully. And Secondly, The mouths of malicious enemies, and ſuch as blaſpheme the way of purity may be ſtopped; for whereas they are prone to accuſe the godly as deceivers and hypocrites, they may at laſt be aſhamed, beholding the upright and ſincere converſation of the godly

mingled with an holy feare: Though the world miſ-judge their perſons, and miſ-conſtrue their actions, yet they have the teſtimony of a ſincere and upright heart within. Now leſt this ſelf-examination ſhould degenerate into ſlaviſhneſs and be thought to keep men alwais in a ſad howling wilderneſs, I have therefore ſhewed that a deep ſearch into the hearts deceitfulneſs is amicably conſiſtent with the Aſſurance of Gods love in Chriſt: So that it's a Chriſtians weakneſs, when the holy feare about his heart ſhall diminiſh his faith and joy in the unſearchable riches of Gods grace, or a full enjoying of theſe, ſhall abate his tenderneſs and diligence in heart-examinations; yet becauſe ſuch is the tender heart of many who fear God, that they think they do never *ſatis cavere etiam cum maximè cavent*, and they are eaſily tempted to believe that there is no grace at all in their hearts, becauſe they do experimentally diſcover more falſhood and hypocriſie in themſelves then they thought of; I ſhall therefore by way of Antidote direct to theſe following Diſtinctions, which if attended unto they may be ſufficiently armed for all thoſe objections that commonly do on the right hand moleſt the godly: and I do it the rather in the Preface, becauſe they are not ſo fully mentioned in the Book. And 1. *Let the heart ſearching Chriſtian diſtinguiſh between grace in the Idea or definition of it, and the real exiſtence of it in it's ſubject.* When Divines do write or ſpeak about grace, they commonly deſcribe it in it's abſtracted and exact nature: even as *Tully* deciphers his Oratour, or *Plato* his commonwealth. Now becauſe the people of God reade and hear ſuch rules and definitions, they conclude they have not grace becauſe not according to ſuch a deſcription. But grace in a definition is one thing, and grace in the heart is another thing: The participation of grace is not as perfect as the deſcription of it. 2. *Let them conſtantly conſider the difference between truth of grace, and perfection of grace.* Not attending to this, many times breedeth perplexing doubts: perfection of parts is one thing, and of degrees is another. It's true this definition is doubted of, thinking that to affirm even a perfection of parts, though not of degrees, bordereth too much on Pelagianiſm, & that no man hath perfection of parts, but is to grow therein, as much as in degrees. But certainly if there be not a perfection of parts, then believers could not be ſaid to be regenerated, to be new creatures, to have the image of God repaired in them? for theſe expreſſions do neceſſarily ſuppoſe the eſſence, though not the perfection of godlyneſs. Let therefore the humble ſoul aſpire and breath after perfection but take comfort in the diſcovery of the truth of grace though in a low degree. 3. *Let them make a difference between truth of grace, and the evidence or aſſurance of it.* It's no good argument to conclude they have it not, becauſe they perceive it not: Some diſeaſes take away the ſenſe of natural life, and no wonder then if there be ſuch obſtructions that do ſometimes hinder the perceiving of our ſpiritual life: and although it be a known ſaying of *Auſtin, That whoſoever doth believe, doth perceive and feel he doth believe*, yet that is to be underſtood of a potential aptitude if there be no ſtrong impediment, otherwiſe grace and the aſſurance of it are many times ſeparable; hence the Promiſes are made to him that hath grace, not that knoweth he hath it. 4. *Let them yet further diſtinguiſh between the having of grace abſolutely, and the enjoying of it according to our deſires.* The godly man ſometimes ſtaggereth, queſtioning whether he hath grace, becauſe he hath not as much as he would have and prayeth for: Even as ſome covetous men think not themſelves rich, becauſe they have not ſo vaſt an eſtate, as they have inordinately propounded to themſelves. 5. *Let not the godly man make the work of grace upon another mans heart the Rule upon his own*; yet how often will the tender heart be making ſuch compariſons, becauſe they have not been wrought upon in ſuch a manner, and to ſuch a degree as others whom they know, therefore they are apt to doubt of all. But we reade in the Scripture of different converſions of men to Chriſt, and therefore we muſt not limit God

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to one way. 6 *Let them not fail to distinguish between partial hypocrisie, and total.* There is no godly man but he hath hypocrisie in him, as well as other sins, and that sin is ready to put it self forth, as well as other; but the presence and the predominancy must be distinguished, else woe be to the most upright man that liveth. 7. Lastly, This must not be forgotten, that even in hypocrisie or any other sin predominating, there must be difference made *between a violent resisted prevalency, and a constant, total, and quiet submission to it.* *David* in the matter of *Uriah* had hypocrisie and guile of heart, even prevailing over him, but it was contrary to the principles of grace within, and therefore sin did not always keep durable and quiet possession. Insomuch that a difference is to be made about a godly mans sins of infirmities; some are ordinary, but some (such as *Davids* we mentioned) are extraordinary; in these sin hath more reigning power, yet it can never obtain a full and quiet possession. These Observations I commend to that Christian, who shall with all care fall upon that duty of searching the deceitfulness of his heart. By this light his holy trembling will not interrupt his joy, nor will his Evangelical joy abate his godly trembling. But as it is in matter of Doctrine to be believed, it's our duty to try and search, yet for all that we must not be sceptricks, but hold fast the truth; so in matters to be practised, we are to discern and make a difference between truth and counterfeit, yet we must not be always inconstant, neither perswaded in our hearts.

I shall conclude, when I have advertized thee that some corrective alterations and additional explications might conveniently be applyed to some passages in the Book, but my remote distance from the Printer, did absolutely prohibit it. Therefore what is presented to thee, improve it practically, remembring that of our Saviour, *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them*, John 13.17. I rest,

Sutton-Coldfield,
Decem. 9.
1653.

Thy hearty Well-willer,

ANTHONY BURGESSE

THE

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The Properties of a gross Hypocrite in matters of Religion.

SERM. XL.

Setteth forth the great Aggravations of gross Hypocrisie, to deter men from that sinne.

SERM. XLI.

A Discovery of close Hypocrisie, with the Causes of it.

SERM. XLII.

The Grounds or Reasons why all should take heed of Hypocrisie.

A Treatiſe of Sinne.

SECT. I.

Of the Deceitfulnſs and Guile of Man's Heart.

SERM. I.

The Ingredients and Demonſtrations of the Deceitfulneſs of the Heart.

JEREM. 17. 9.

The heart is deceitfull above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?

IN the former part of this Treatiſe, I finiſhed my Diſcourſe concerning the work of Grace in the hearts of God's people, under the ſeveral Notions and Titles it hath, *viz.* Regeneration, Sanctification, Converſion, *&c.* Now my intent is, to ſhew the contrary or oppoſite to all theſe. For although it be a generall Rule, that *Rectum eſt index ſui & obliqui*, Truth at the ſame time diſcovers its ſelf and its contrary errour; yet it is as generall and known a Rule, That contraries ſet together do more illuſtrate one another. That this work may be the better managed, I ſhall firſt treat on the Deceitfulneſs of man's heart in the generall, and when that is clearly diſcovered, then all the particular and partial hypocriſies of it, may the ſooner be manifeſted.

Come we then to our Text; and for the Coherence of it, know the Prophet in this Chapter propheſieth of *Judahs* Captivity and Calamity: But ſhe is not made a Captive to men, before ſhe had made her ſelf a Captive to ſinne; Other Lords ruled over her, becauſe ſo many luſts ruled in her. And the prophet doth therefore declare the cauſes of their punniſhment, that God might be juſtified, and that in their own Conſciences: Hence *ver.* 1. he ſaith, *Their ſinne was written with a pen of iron upon the table of their heart.* The guilt of their iniquities was indelibly upon their own conſciences, they could not but be convinced of it, they could not hide it from God. Now the ſins that were the cauſes of their judgment, or the vapours that made this thunder and lightning, were ſeverall:

1. Idolatry, *ver.* 1, 2.
2. A carnal confidence in humane ſtrength; forſaking the Lord; *He maketh*

fleſh

fleſh his arm. And this ſin of carnal confidence is excellently deſcribed by the curſed effects of it, as alſo by the oppoſite grace, Truſting in God, and the bleſſed iſſue thereof. Upon this the Prophet taketh occaſion to go to the root of all wickedneſs, and that is the Heart of a man, which is the poiſoned fountain from whence all theſe infected ſtreams flow. So that in the Text you have,

1. A Propoſition, *The heart is deceitfull*; And in that obſerve, 1. The Subject, *the heart*, that which is the chief and principall part of a man, the fountain of all knowledge, affections, and reſolutions: ſo that as ſome Philoſophers made the Head the chief ſeat or mettropolis of the ſoul in all her operation; ſo the Scriptures make the Heart the chief place of all. Thus you ſee, it is not Eye or the Tongue, but the Heart, the beſt, the moſt inward part of man. As the Pſalmiſt to expreſſe the high impiety of ſome men, ſaid, *their inward parts were very wickedneſs* Pſal. 5.9. or as in the Hebrew, *wickednesses*, the abſtract for the concrete, & the plural number for the ſingular, to expreſſe the exceeding ſinfulneſſe thereof.

2. You have the Predicate, *it's deceitfull*: The Hebrew word comes of a root to ſupplant, and therefore *Jacob* had his name from it, becauſe he ſupplanted *Eſau* about his birthright. Thus the heart of a man is full of deceit and guile, whereby he coozens himſelf of his own everlaſting happineſſe.

3. There is the aggravation, *above all things*; There is nothing in the world hath ſo much deceit.

4. There is the conſequent effect, *deſperately wicked*: The deceitfulneſſe of it makes it incurable: As thoſe parts of the body, *viz.* the Lungs, which are ſo placed that no remedy can eaſily come at them, are more incurably diſeaſed: thus, the heart of a man, having ſo many ſecret and falſe windings, it is very hardly healed.

5. This deceitfulneſſe is aggravated by the inſcrutability of it, by any but God alone; *Who can known it? I the Lord ſearch the heart*, &c. ſo that the Lord only who made the heart, he knoweth all the depths of it. Obſerve;

Obſerv. *That the heart of every man naturally is full of deceit and guile, and therefore deſperately wicked.*

Solomon ſpake of four things hard to be found out, The going of a Ship on the ſea, a Snake upon the rock, *&c.* Prov. 30. 19. becauſe theſe leave no ſteps to trace them by; but you ſee an harder thing then all theſe to find out, *viz.* the heart of a man, and that not only in reſpect of others, others cannot know what is in a mans heart; but of our own ſelves, we are not able to dive into thoſe depths: there is an abyſſe a deep within every mans heart, whereby he knoweth not the bottom of his wayes: Who thinks not but that he repenteth, he beleeveth, he loveth God, when (alas) his heart deceiveth him all the while? So that as this is a large ſubject to preach upon, ſo its a very profitable and neceſſary point. Indeed this is the beginning of our converſion, when a man comes to be undeceived: Till this deceitfulneſs of the heart be in part removed, there is a great gulf between thee and true repentance.

The Ingrediens of a deceitfull heart. 1. It implieth a great depth in every mans heart.

To open this let us, conſider firſt, What goeth to make up this deceitfulneſſe of the heart, for there are many ingredients in it. As

It implieth a great depth in every mans heart: That as your deep waters are hardly fathomed, men cannot diſcern what is in the bottom of them, ſo mans heart hath an abyſſe. As God is ſaid to have his deep things; *The deep things of God* ſaith *Paul*, 1 Cor. 2. 16. and Satan his depths, *The depths of Satan* in the *Revelation*, Rev. 2. 24. ſo man hath his deep things alſo, inſomuch that no man can ever be acquainted with his own heart, that doth not ſearch deep, dive deep into the ſecret things of his ſoul: oh, men would not ſo eaſily perſwade themſelves that they do repent, that their wayes pleaſe God, that they have good hearts, if they would ſearch to the bottom: Inſomuch that the Scripture preſſeth this as a great and neceſſary duty, to ſearch our hearts, *to examine our ſelves, to commune with our own hearts*, and that *on our beds, and to be ſtill*, Pſal. 4. 4. We are to do it moſt exactly,

exactly, and to take the most quiet and fittest time; for there are thousands and thousands of lusts lye in the bottom of the soul that do not appear at first.

2. *It implieth the crookednesse and unevenesse of the heart.* Even as the Serpent that goes in a crooked and uneven manner, is said to be *more subtile then other beasts of the field*: Gen 3. 1. Thus it is with a man's heart, it hath many crooked turnings in it: when you would think you are going in a way towards God, presently it hurries aside to the world, or to some lusts; therefore *Psal.* 18. 26. to the pure and upright man, is opposed the man that is *unto the froward*, or crooked; and therefore God is said to be *froward with such a man*; the Hebrew word signifies to wrastle with a man, so as by art to throw him down; and the same word is attributed both to God and man: so that while the deceitfull man doth like the wrestler, turn himself this way and that way into many motions and gestures to obtain his end, even as *Jehu* and the Pharisee, God on the other side will overthrow him, and be above him in all his craft. The heart then is deceitfull, because it hath many crooked turning wayes, sometimes to God, and sometimes to the world and Satan.

2. The crookednesse and unevennesse of the heart.

3. *There is implyed the divers concavities and secret recesses of the heart:* That as the Labyrinth had many secret hollow places and windings, out of which a man could never expedite himself; thus it is with a mans heart: its like a vast wildernesse where there is no troden path or way, like some deep vaults were are many horrid cells and holes: This the Apostle excellently expresseth, *Heb.* 4. 12. where Gods word is said *to pierce even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joynts and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart.* How many concavities, secret lurking holes, wheels within wheels, are there in a mans heart? so that, only by the light of Gods word, are we ever able to come to the *intima* and *minima* that are in our souls.

3. The divers concavities and secret recesses of the heart.

4. *To this deceitfulnesse, inconstancy and mutability* is a great cause: The heart of man is therefore deceitfully, because it can be so suddenly put into several and contrary shapes; it will hate what it loved; it will loath what it desired; it will appear in fits as if really looking towards good, and then presently cast off all again; no Polypus; no Camelion hath more colours then the heart of a man will have. This vertibility and unstedfastnesse is a grand cause of all that guile within us, and the Scripture compares this deceitfulnesse to a deceitfull bow, *Hos.* 7. 16. that as the archer stretching out his bow, and even ready to deliver out the arrow at a mark, at the very nick the bow breaks and falls upon the archer. Thus it is with a people, you would think they had set their hearts for God, they were pitched on him, they were now approaching and drawing nigh unto him, but presently all breaks and falls to the clean contrary. Hence the Scripture brands every man with being a lyar, *Rom.* 3. 4. Every mans heart is a lying heart, till it be sanctified, there is no believing of it, no trusting of it. Now if you would set this down for a principle, O Lord, how is it with me, now shall I know when I am godly, when I have done my duty, this I conclude on, that I have to do with a notorious lyar, branded by God for a lyar, and that is my own heart. Oh let me get out of this deceit, let me beleeve lyes no longer.

4. Inconstancy and mutability.

5. *Another cause of the deceitfulnesse of the heart is, the horrible ignorance and darkenesse which covers the whole soul.* He that walketh in darkenesse, knoweth not whither he goeth, *Joh.* 12. 35. no wonder if such a one be alwaies out of his way. They cannot but erre or fall into the ditch, who are blind? Now that is it with a mans heart, for like that deep created at first, *and darknesse was upon the deep*, Gen. 1. those depths of thy heart are covered all over with darknesse, with ignorance and blindnesse of mind, *Eph.* 5. 8. Hence converted men are called light, and unconverted, darknesse. Now then can it be otherwise, but that every man should deceive his own soul, for he hath no light to discover or to discern all that filth that is in him? Thou art in a dungeon full of noisome vicious lusts that rise upon thee, and filthiness as so many Egyptian frogs, yet thou knowest nothing

5. The horrible Ignorance and darknesse of the soul.

thou thinkeſt all is well. Come out of the dark then if thou would'ſt be no longer deceived.

6. Self-flattery and ſelf-love. 6. *Self-flattery and ſelf-love*, this doth in a great manner make the heart deceitfull. An over-weening of a man's ſelf. *Every man's way is right in his own eyes*, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 21. 2. Who would think this were poſſible? yet if you ſingle out man by man, Every one would judge his own waies right. Therefore judging and condemning of a man's ſelf is that which every true convert firſt ſets upon. He doth no longer juſtifie himſelf, no more flatter & delude himſelf; yea he cryes out, Wo be to me that I called darkneſſe light, and good evil. Thus the convert bewaileth himſelf, but till this work of grace come, every man is a Pygmaleon, he is in love with himſelf, he will never be convinced that he is undone, that his eſtate is damnable, that he is out of Chriſt and ſo hopeleſſe: Oh no, he is too much in love with himſelf ever to be thus perſwaded. *Thou thoughteſt*, ſaith God, *that I was ſuch a one as thy ſelf*, Pſa. 50. 21. Thus a man through ſelf-love being deceived, imagineth ſuch a mercifull God to himſelf as he would have, and judges of God according to his own diſpoſitions, as that Roman Painter being to paint a Goddeſſe, drew it after the image of that woman he was in love with: thus ſelf-love fills a man with ſpiritual drunkenneſſe, ſo that he is altogether deceived in what he thinketh or doth.

7. Man's heart the devil's throne. Laſtly, *The deceitfulneſſe of the heart is not only from innate cauſes, but wonderfully increaſed by an outward, which is the devil, who hath his throne and ſeat in every man's heart*: that as we read of bodies poſſeſſed by the devil, ſo every man's ſoul is ſpiritually poſſeſſed by Satan. *Epheſ.* 2. the devil is called *the Prince of this world*, and is ſaid *to rule in the hearts of the diſobedient*. Hence he is called *the ſtrong one that poſſeſſeth the houſe, till Chriſt a ſtronger than he come and conquer him*, Luk. 11. 21. Now the devil he is *the Dragon*, Rev. 12. 3. *and that old Serpent* full of craft and ſubtilty, and ſo the heart of a man being his inſtrument muſt needs partake of his guile. The devil at firſt uſed the ſerpent becauſe more ſubtil then other beaſts of the field; ſo he delights to uſe the hearts of men, which are the ſeat of their wiſdome and underſtanding; and where there are the beſt parts, greateſt abilities, ſtill he deſires them more then others.

Thus you ſee how many wayes this deceitfulneſſe comes to be in every man's heart. It was the voice of the heathen Oracle, *Noſce teipſum*, Know thy ſelf, they thought this the beginning of wiſdome, and certainly he is in a ready way to ſalvation, who begins to diſtruſt his own heart, that begins to think, I have given too much credit, I have eaſily believ'd what my heart hath told me, and there is no greater folly in the world than this. What ſaith the Wiſe man, *He that truſteth in his own heart is a fool*, Prov. 28. 26. Certainly not in the world only, but even in the Church are ſuch fools that put a vain confidence in their own hearts, that they are well, that they repent, that they love God.

Signs and demonſtrations of the deceitfulneſſe of the heart.

In the next place we ſhall give you ſeverall Signs or demonſtrations of the ſame, that the heart of Man is thus deceitfull.

1. Men will acknowledge generally the neceſſity of godlineſſe in the generall, but will not be ſo for their own particular.

As firſt, *In that a man will generally acknowledge the neceſſity and duty of godlineſſe, but then come to his particulars, that he muſt live ſuch a godly life, he muſt thus ſtrictly watch in all the particulars, that he cannot endure to*. What a groſſe deceiving of a man's ſelf is this! It is to be godly in the generall, to walk holily in the abſtract, be ſo good and neceſſary, as is not alſo for thee in particular? We read of a young man, that came with much voluntary readineſſe to Chriſt, and Chriſt ſeeing him ſo confident, to diſcover the deceit in his heart, bid him to obſerve the Commandements, he replieth, he had kept all from his youth, *Matth.* 19. 20. whereupon our Saviour gives him a perſonall command to diſcover the falſhood of his heart, *Go and ſell all that thou haſt, and give to the poor*, which preſently was like the poiſonous water to the adulterous woman, made his thigh to rot. *He went away ſorrowfull for he had great poſſeſſions*. I bring this inſtance to ſhew, that doſe all or any qualifie generall commands, upon generall

generall duties people approve of, but then when it comes to their particular, they fly back and discover their nakednesse. Is not this a palpable deceit, for a man to commend godlinesse, to admire an holy life, and yet when it comes to his particular, he no wayes to endeavour after it?

So secondly, on the contrary, *The deceitfulnesse of the heart appeareth, in that men will discommend, yea and condemne sinne in the generall; and yet, in their particular, practise, and wallow in it.* How can men come to be thus grosselly deceived? They will acknowledge drunkennesse, lusts, oaths are grievous sins, that God is offended by them, and hell belongs to such; yet for their particular you shall finde them committing such sins. Thus as *David*, when the Parable was of a man in the generall, that had stolen his neighbour's Lamb, his wrath was kindled and he must have severe punishment, 2 *Sam.* 12. 6. but he did not know, he was the man. Oh thou that readest and heareſt every day, *sweare not at all*, and that thinkest not, I am the sweerer, *James* 4. that heareſt, *be not drunk with wine wherein is excesse*, Ephes. 4. and that thinkest not, I am the drunkard, and so of every sin. Oh were it not for that abysse and depth of guile in thy heart, thou couldst never practise that in particular which thou condemnest in generall.

2. They will condemn sin in the generall, and yet will live in it.

3. *The deceitfulnesse of the heart appears, in that there is no kind of grace or duty required by God, but the heart of a man will do the counterfeit of it.* It will do that which is like it, and yet differ from it as much as earth from Heaven; This, Doth not *David* humble himself upon the Prophets admonition, so doth *Ahab*. Doth not *David* finde gladnesse in his heart by the word? so the temporary believer receives the word with joy, *Matth.* 13. Whatsoever the godly do in the truth and real power of grace, that the heart even of unregenerate men have sometimes a faint imitation of: as it was with *Pharaohs* Butler and Baker, they both dreamed, and their dreames were very like, insomuch that when *Joseph* interpreted the Butler's dream, that his head should be lifted up; the Baker he was encouraged and told his dream also, but that was to signifie his head should be lifted up, not to heaven, but dishonour, to be hanged. This in Christianity, both seek to believe alike, to repent alike, but the principle, the manner and the end have a world of difference. Even as the waters of the sea and of the clouds, though both are water alike, yet one is brackish and salt, the other sweet; insomuch that there is scarce any grace which some unregenerate men are not said to have, as to believe, to repent, because they have the outward resemblance of it, so that as excellent Painters have drawn the image of things so lively, that the spectators have almost been deceived, thinking the it self to be in them: thus it is with the hypocrisie and falshood in our hearts.

3. In that there is no grace, or duty required by God, but the heart of a man will do the counterfeit of it.

4. *This deceitfulnesse doth appear, not only in that they can do those things that are like Graces, but they have such a sense and a perswasion upon them that they are indeed the very graces.* And oh the woefull tragedy that this deceit hath made; men being perswaded of themselves, that they have the Spirit of God and his graces, when they are nothing, but the deceitfull motions of their own hearts. Did the foolish Virgins perceive any defect in themselves? did they not go out as confidently to meet the bridegroom as the wise, *Matth.* 25. Were not our Saviour mean by this, but that many Christians would live and die with this confidence, that they are going to Christ their bridegroom, and not have the least thought that they want the main. Oh that this such [illegible]

4. And be perswaded that they are indeed the very graces.

5. *The*

5. In that men will seem to love and honour those godly men that lived in former times, but cannot abide those that now live and follow their steps.

5. *The deceitfulnesse of the heart appears, in that men will seem to love and honour those godly men that lived in former times, but now cannot abide those that live with them, though following such mens steps.* This is a deceit in mans heart: observe it in the Pharisees; oh how religiously & devoutly do they speak! If we had lived in Prophets dayes, we should not have killed or stoned them, and therefore they built up famous monuments for their memory: yet they killed the Apostles who lived in their dayes, who walked in the steps of the Prophets. From thence one of the Ancients well exhorteth; If you hear a man praising the ancient Doctors and Teachers of the Church, see how he is affected to his present Teachers: Thou that commendest *Paul, Peter, Austin, Chrysostom*, their zeal and courage against wickednesse; if thou dost not love the present zeal and godly fervor of thy teachers, its from the deceitfulnesse of thy heart. The other demonstrations of this guilfull heart, I shall insist on the next day.

To conclude, Let this suit such thee in the fountain and rise of all our calamity, this deceitfull heart as the root of of all thy spirituall evil: therefore thou thinkest not of repenting or turning to God, therefore our preaching and your hearing is in vain. So we say, its impossible to cure the Church of *Rome* because she hath *Iesum principium*, she holds, She cannot erre; so it's here; Therefore thou art not perswaded to change thy heart, thy life, because thou art deceived as if all were already; Oh if our hearts were like white blanks, as *Aristotle* said the soul was, then we might the more easily write the Law of God in your hearts; but it is all over bloached and blotted. There are deceitfull principles in you, against which there is no disputing, no preaching till God remove the very fundamentall principles in you. Begin then with this truth; I have been a miserable, blind, deceived wretch all my life time; I verily thought such a way would leade to heaven, my heart told me all was well, I need not be troubled: but oh how am I confounded, how greatly was I out of the way till God opened my eyes.

SERM. II.

More Signs and Demonstrations of the deceitfulnesse of the Heart.

JER. 17. 9.

The heart is deceitfull above all things: Who can know it?

THere remain further Signs and Manifestations of the deceitfulnesse of mans heart. To which I proceed. And

6. That, though a man live in grosse sins, yet he hopes for salvation:

First, *The 6. plain sign of the grosse hypocrisie and guile of a mans heart, is, when though a man is in the grosse & open sins that are* contrary *to conscience, yet he hopes for salvation.* You would think that no such thing as delusion could reign in mans heart; but when it is more frequent then this in all places over the whole Church? *Be not deceived*, saith *Paul*, *no adulterers, nor covetous persons, nor drunkards shall inherit the Kingdom of heaven.* Observe that caution; *Be not deceived*: This supposes that they were very apt to delude their own souls, thinking they might be saved, notwithstanding the commission of such sins.

notorious sins, and oh how many do drink down this sweet poison! if not, how could so much wickednesse and ungodlinesse be found amongst Christians! or if any one sinner be questioned in this point, whether he hope to be saved, he will without any scruple answer in the affirmative, Yes that he doth, God forbid else. Now where can he have this hope? Whence can his heart perswade him? Doth not every leaf in the Scripture stand like a fiery Sword to keep him out of Paradise? Doth not every Chapter in the Word of God meet him, as an Angel with a naked Sword to *Balaam*, to stop him in the way; yet for all this he blesseth his soul, and saith, it will go well with him. Were not a man bewitched and deceived in a grosse manner, he could no more judge that his way was a way of salvation, or his life a life of happinesse, then that the Sun is a black coal, or light is darknesse. If hell ever be made heaven, if clods of earth be made stars, then he may think such as he is shall be set on Thrones of glory. Oh beloved, how do we pity poor bewitched creatures, that have lost their limbs, their senses: but here is a spiritual witchery, an heart-sorcery that is above all expression. Think of this again & again, you that live in profane courses, you need not say Who will tell me what will become of me? how shall I know whether this life of mine will be rewarded with happinesse? Alas! even the very blind may see this; The Scripture hath made & set it up like a Beacon, that all may take notice of it, *viz.* That he that *soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption*, Gal. 6. 8.

2. *Another Sign of the deceitfulnesse of the heart, is to rest contented in the priviledges and promises of Christianity, not at all regarding the duties and obligations they enforce.* They are satisfied in the Titles of Believers, of being Christians by profession, and as for the offices and duties which these to indispensably command, they do not regard them. Now what palpable hypocrisie is this, to divide those things that God hath so inseparably conjoyned? *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity*: 2. Tim. 1. 19. Those that cried *Lord, Lord*, and had prophesied, yea, and cast out devils in his name, because they had not destroied the works of the devil in their lives, but were workers of iniquity, therefore Christ bid them depart, he knew them not. Mat. 7. Every man that is baptized, that is by profession a Christian, and yet walketh not according to all that godly order Christ prescribeth; this mans heart deceiveth him: He is not what he thinks himself to be, and one day it will appear so: Thus the Apostle *Jam.* 1. 26. *If any man seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, he deceiveth himself*, παραλογίζεται; he puts a false Syllogism upon himself, he takes *non causa pro causa*, he thinks Religion in the seeming appearance of it, is enough: So we may make that of the Apostle an universall proposition, *If any man seem to be religious & bridleth not his tongue*, his eyes, especially his heart & affections from all manner of lusts & impieties this mans Religion is meer deceit and snare to him: This is a dangerous and an universall deceitfulnesse; therefore the Apostle *James* in that generall Epistle of his, spends a great part industriously to shew, that that faith is a dead faith, and he is but a vain man that cannot demonstrate the profession of his faith by the fruits of a godly life. Christ was not satisfied to see leaves upon the figtree, he looked for fruit; and because that was wanting, he cursed it with that heavy curse, *Never fruit to grow more of it*. Come then out of all thy disguises, thou art a childe of the devill, and in the state of gall and bitternesse, though with *Simon Magus* thou makest a profession of thy faith and art baptized. And observe why *Simon Magus* was so, because *his heart was not right within him*, Act. 8. 23. He did not think so, or perceive so, till *Peter* told him, and then he prayeth for pardon: Thou therefore that dost not live in duties according to Christian priviledges, lay off thy counterfeit dresses, God knoweth thee: It's here, as when the Kings wife went disguised to *Elisha* the Prophet, while she was entring in at the door: Come in thou Wife of *Jeroboam*, saith he; it was no hiding from the Prophet of the Lord: And thus may thy own heart say, Come thou hypocrite, thou false heart, bewail thy guile, thou dost mock God and man: It is in vain to cover any thing from God.

7. To rest contented with the priviledges of Christianity, not regarding the duties they enforce.

3. *The*

8. The hearts deceitfulneſſe appears in thoſe many commands to ſearch and try it.

3. *The deceitfulneſſe of the heart appeareth in thoſe frequent and many commands to ſearch it, to try it, to ranſack into the very bottom of it*: Now if the heart were plain and open, if it had no depths, no ſecret windings, what need all this? you are commanded to make a private ſearch as for theeves and ſpies in your own breaſts: How often is that Exhortation, *Let us ſearch and try our waies, Examine and prove your own ſelves*: As the Artificer is careſull to bring his gold to the touchſtone, to ſee whether good or bad: yea *Pſal.* 4. *Commune with your own hearts upon your beds, and be ſtill*; digge into them: ſome tranſlate, ſweep them diligently; others, as the woman took a candle and ſwept the houſe for her loſt groat; Oh the luſts, the corruptions of thy heart, do not at the firſt, ſecond, or third ſearch appear, The luſts may lie in thy heart, as *Achan's wedge of Gold*, covered in the earth, and hid amongſt other ſtuffe: thou maiſt live forty or threeſcore years, and yet be a great ſtranger to thy own heart, not know what ſins lie there, what corruptions prevail over thee, and therefore the Scripture as the firſt initiall and preparative work of all, commands to Search our hearts; yea, we muſt take fit times, and be ſtill; with much meditation and quietneſſe make a ſcrutiny and ſearch into our hearts, that thoſe ſnakes and worms which lie under ground may be brought to light. But how is this duty neglected! the very Papiſts will riſe up at Judgment and condemn us, who have hours on purpoſe appointed them for this examination and ſearch of the heart: and *Suarez* a Jeſuite ſaid, he more prized that time, then all the other wherein he handled thoſe voluminous Controverſies: the truth is, ſtudying your hearts, ſearching into your hearts, diſputing with them, is the moſt profitable and advantagious ſtudy that can be; Oh that you would read thoſe books more, that you would underſtand the ſenſe and meaning of your hearts, this would quickly make you a ſcholar in Chriſts ſchool.

To underſtand the motions of the Heavens and not of thy own heart; to know the natures and operations of Herbs and Plants, and not of thy own ſoul; to meaſure the dimenſions of bodies, and not the depth and length and breadth of thy own heart, is but a barren knowledge. We may ſay, Phyſician heal thy ſelf; Aſtronomer meaſure thy own heart, Philoſopher underſtand thy own nature.

9. In that it is appropriated only to God to know it.

4. *The deceitfulneſſe of the heart appeareth, in that it is appropriated only to God to know it.* The Angels, thoſe exact creatures, are not able to know what is in a man's heart, nor the devils any further then by conjectures, or ſo far as a man reveales himſelf. You ſee upon this queſtion, *Who can know it?* is replied, *I the Lord ſearch the hearts and try the reines*; ſo that the heart of a man is ſuch a deep Ocean, into the bottom whereof none can dive, but the all-ſeeing eye of God, to whom darkneſſe and light is all one. Is not the heart of a man then full of concavities and windings, when Angels and devils are not able to know what is in our breaſts? Indeed the Prophets did ſometimes know the hearts of others, as *Eliſha* knew what was in *Gehezi's* heart, but this was by God's revelation, he made thoſe thoughts known to the Prophet. Hence we prove Chriſt to be true God, becauſe he knew what was in men's hearts, yea he did *ſee what was in their hearts*, that is more then to know, for I may know another man's thoughts, if he reveales them to me, but I cannot ſee them in their hearts, yet *Chriſt ſaw what was in their hearts*. Hence the Apoſtle ſaith, *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts*, 1 *Joh.* 3. He knows far more evil by us then we do our ſelves. If we then can diſcern ſo many errours, ſo much filthineſſe, what doth the Lord know by us! This made the Apoſtle ſay, *though he knew nothing by himſelf, yet was he not thereby juſtified, for it is the Lord that judgeth*, 1 Cor. 4. 4. Oh then remember this, that God knows more by thee then thou thy ſelf doeſt; and if yet thou canſt perceive ſo much that makes thee abhominable in thy own eyes and ſo very beaſtly, how much more doth God know this by thee!

5. *This*

5. *This guile of the heart is notably manifested in this, That even a regenerate and a godly man, who is sanctified by God's Spirit, that hath truth in the inward parts, yet he hath much of this hypocrisie and deceitfulnesse abiding in him.* That rust then must needs cleave close, which such filing doth not get off. That drosse then must needs adhere, which this fire of burning will not consume. That this deceitfulnesse is still adhering, see it in *David*, though a man after God's heart: With what hypocrisie did he contrive his adultery with *Bathsheba*, and the murder of *Uriah*? how many subtle projects had he to hide and cover his sinne? Now that the hypocrisie of his heart carried him to all this, appeareth by *Psal.* 51. *Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.* Oh he feels what is the plague sore, what was the occasion of all his misery, the want of truth in the inward parts: See then by this example, what deceitfulnesse may be even in a godly man: and although *Nathanael* hath the greatest commendation that can be given, *a true Israelite in whom was no guile*, yet that is not to be understood absolutely, as if no hypocrisie at all were in his heart, but comparatively in respect of others; as even among godly men, some have more plainnesse and sincerity of heart then others. The consideration of this unknown deceitfull temper of heart, made *David* cry out, *Cleanse me from my secret sins*, Psal. 19. such as I have never yet discovered, such as I have not taken notice of. Lord, what I do not know of, what I am not convinced of, do thou pardon.

10. Godly men have much of this deceitfulnesse in them.

6. *That the heart is full of guile and unknown to a man's self, appeareth in that God many times leaveth men unto temptations, and puts them upon trials, that so they may have an experimental knowledge of themselves.* Thus God tempted *Abraham*, and it was, surely, that *Araham* might, by the exercise of grace, be more made known to himself; Of *Hezekiah*, it's said, God left him in that proud passage, or shewing all his Treasures to the Babylonish Embassadours, to try what was in his heart, 2 *Chron.* 2. 31. That *Hezekiah* might see there was that pride, that vanity, that ambition, that he would not think possible in him: Thus when God let a false Prophet come amongst the *Israelites*, and the things that he told come to passe, *I the Lord do it to try you*, saith God, *Deut.* 13. 1. Oh we see that were there not such persecutions, such heresies, such scandals in the Church of God, many would never know themselves. *There must be heresies that those who are approved and sound, may be made manifest*, 1 Cor. 11. and certainly it is good for a Christian to consider whether all God's Providences in his Church be not tempting providences to see what is in thy heart: whether it was love to God, or carnall respects have carried thee on. The shaking windes discover the root of the tree; The boiling of the water discovers what is in the vessell: Hot and busie times, or times of liberty and suffrance, make men known to themselves and their corruptions, which otherwise would not have been.

11. God leaves men in temptations that they may know experimentally what is in them.

7. *The heart's deceitfulnesse is most plainly discovered in this particular, That a man when he is under the occasion and temptation of a sinne, will commit it, though before he would have abhorred it, and thought, though all the world should be given him, he durst not do it.* This is a remarkable particular, especially to take us off from those high pinacles and lofty presumptions we are apt to fix upon. Oh if we be ever such, or do such, or fall into such miscariages they abhorre it. Oh vain man, little dost thou know the deceitfulnesse of thy heart. This made *Solomon* say, *Blessed is the man that feareth always*, *Pro.* 28. 14. If *Solomon* himself had taken this counsell, if he had feared always, in the midst of that abundance and prosperity he had, it had never occasioned that great dispute, Whether he was saved or damned? Remember that instance of *Hazael*, upon whom the Prophet looked so stedfastly that at last he wept; and being asked by *Hazael* why he did so, reply was made, because he should have power, and he would, before hell, that he should rip up the very women with child; *Is thy servant a dog that Hazael, that he should do this?* 2 King. 8. 13. He defied the fact with great

12. It appears in this, that a man under a temptation will commit that sin which before he abhorred and thought he could never be drawn into it.

great abomination, and yet afterwards he did it, here was a deceitfull heart: But no great marvell to ſee this in *Hazael*: Even in *Peter* a godly man, and very zealous for Chriſt, what an inſtance have ye of the heart's deceit? Chriſt told him, he would *deny him*: he anſwered, *Though all men ſhould forſake him, yet he would not*, Mat. 26. 34. but you ſee, when the temptation came, he did not only deny him, but did *ſwear and curſe that he knew not the man*: ſuch is the guile of our hearts, that they would betray Chriſt every day, ſhould not the Lord keep truth and uprightneſſe in the inward parts: Hence are thoſe petitions to God, that he would ſtrengthen, ſettle, and confirm us, 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. Hence alſo are thoſe promiſes from God; That he will *put his fear in our hearts, that we ſhall never depart from him*, Jer. 32. 40. for without this, the heart will fly back like a deceitfull bow. How often are the *Iſraelites* in times of temptation, ſaid to humble themſelves, to cry out of their ſinnes, *and yet their heart was not ſtedfaſt within them*. And this brings in the eighth Sign of the deceitfulneſſe of mans heart.

13. And that under Gods judgments a man will cry to God, &c but as ſoon as the rod is removed, their hypocriſie appears.

8. *That under Gods judgments, under heavy preſſures and miſeries, then it cryes out to God, then it will own ſinne no longer; then God is righteous and they have ſinned; but no ſooner is the rod off the back, but their hypocriſie doth appear.* This was the great deceitfulneſſe in the *Iſraelites*, for which God doth ſo often complain: This made one of the Ancients compare them to Graſhoppers, that leap up towards Heaven, and then ſuddenly fall down to the ground. The Prophet ſaid *their righteouſneſſe was like the morning dew*, which though it fall in abundance, yet immediately vaniſheth; ſo then here is a palpable diſcovery of the hearts deceitfulneſſe, that under dangers, in time of God judgments, then they ſeem to be much affected; then they cry out, the waters of Gods wrath overwhelme them; but like the Mill, when the waters are diverted or dried up, then they move not at all. *Pharoah* and *Ahab* humble themſelves and ſay, They have ſinned, but God is righteous, while the ſcourge was on them, but afterwards they return to their own temper; Even as the water which is radically cold, though it be heated, yet if taken from the fire returns to it naturall coldneſſe, yea, as *Ariſtotle* ſaith, it's colder than ever it was: Thus many people in mortall diſeaſes, when there ſeems to be the approaches of death; then they cry out, oh pray for them, oh comfort them, then they will confeſſe and bewaile ſuch foul ſins they have committed; but when recovered and the fear of death is over, then they return to their former wickedneſſe with greater delight. Oh then, that men were apprehenſive of this, that they would cry out; Oh, where are thoſe reſolutions, thoſe vows that were upon me, in ſuch agonies, in ſuch ſtreights! oh, what were my thoughts and purpoſes then! but this deceitfulneſſe of heart undoeth me.

14. In that lawfull comforts and enjoyments lead the heart away from God, contrary to their appointed uſe.

The nineth diſcovery of the hearts deceitfulneſſe, is in a paſſive ſenſe, thus: That all theſe lawfull comforts and objects, which God hath appointed to be inſtruments of his glory and honour, and of our exercife in godlineſſe, do tempt the heart aſide and lead it away from God; ſo that riches, honours, pleaſures, all the comforts in the world, do intice and ſeduce the heart from God. The heart is like tinder, that is ready to take every ſpark of fire that falls upon it: thus the Scripture calls it, *The deceivableneſs of riches*, Matth. 13. Why? becauſe the heart is ſo corrupt, that the profit of them doth immediately allure; and ſo the deceivableneſſe of honours, of pleaſures. Were not the heart of a man thus corrupt, nothing in the world could corrupt it. Therefore the Apoſtle *James* cap. 1. makes every man to be *inticed, and led aſide by the luſt in his own heart*. *Inticed*, that is, as the bird is deceived by the bait, and ſees not the net. Yea, the Apoſtle makes not the devil to be a cauſe of our ſinnes, much leſſe God, were it not that the luſts of a mans own heart do firſt deceive; ſo that the devill himſelf could not deceive thee, nor all alluring objects, but that thy own heart betrayeth thee: Even as in ſome invincible ſtrong holds, the enemy could never ſurprize them

them, did not ſome treacherous perſons within diſcover the weakneſſe thereof.

Laſtly, *This deceitfulneſſe of heart is ſeen, in an active ſenſe, to deceive others,* Firſt, *Even God himſelf,* it would deceive, if poſſible, by all that mock-Religion, and mock-devotion it hath; by all thoſe ſpecious and fair pretences it hath. *Be not deceived*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *God is not mocked*, Gal. 6. 7. Men through hypocriſie and fair pretences do what lies in them to mock and even deceive God himſelf. *And then in reſpect of others*, the deceitfulneſſe of the heart appeareth, in all that falſhood, lying, diſſimulation of love, and reſpect and intended good, when nothing but venome and malice is in the heart. *David* makes a ſad complaint, *Pſal.* 15. *Help Lord for the good and godly man periſheth, there is no truth amongſt them.* The beſt is an hypocrite, ſaith the Prophet *Eſay*; and another Prophet, *Keep thy ſecrets from the very wife in thy boſome:* ſo that you look only to converſe amongſt men, ſuch are the lyes, equivocations, coſenings and over-reachings, that we may ſay, Truth is baniſhed the world, and uprightneſſe hath left the earth.

15. The heart labours to deceive others. 1. God. 2. Others.

Uſe of Inſtruction, *That one main end of the word of God, and preaching, is, to diſcover this deceitfull heart.* Its to make us know our ſelves; compared therefore to a glaſſe, that will ſhew a deformed man all his unlovelineſſe, and this is a glaſſe, not to the face but the heart; all thoſe hidden and unknown luſts may there be brought to light. And the Miniſtry that is compared to light: as the Sun beams diſcover thoſe many thouſands of moates in the aire, which the darkneſſe concealed: thus the Miniſtery in a powerfull and ſoul-ſaving way diſpenſed, will make thee ſee thy ſelf to be that beaſt, that devil, yea to have that dunghill, that hell in thy heart, thou didſt not perceive: look then for this benefit by preaching, not what may fit thy ear, may pleaſe thy fancy, but what may diſcover the dark corners of thy ſoul, what may bring glorious light into thy breaſt; that thou mayeſt cry out; O Lord, how long have I lived and did not know my ſelf! I thought all was well, every thing was in quiet; but now I am like the *Syrians* Army, that being by the Prophet ſtricken blinde, and thought they were guided to their own camp, as ſoon as ever they had their eyes opened, they found themſelves in the midſt of the enemies camp: Thus thy eyes being being opened, thou ſeeſt thy ſelf to be in the power of all thy ſins, all thy enemies, and the curſes of God.

SERM. III.

An inſtance of the Deceitfulneſſe and Guile of the Heart, about Sinne.

JERM. 17. 9.

The heart is deceitfull above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?

WE have given ſeverall demonſtrations of the deceitfulneſſe of the heart; now I ſhall inſtance in ſome two or three main particulars, wherein our Salvation is greatly concerned, and by them you may judge of the heart's deceitfulneſſe about other things. And the firſt inſtance I ſhall chooſe, will be about *Sinne; the committing of it*: It's a point well worth the inſiſting upon, to ſhew the unſearchable hypocriſie, and hidden deceitfulneſſe that the heart of man hath about ſin; to do it, and yet ſo to carry it as if he did not ſinne: If there could be a way found out to make ſin no ſin, or that ſin ſhould not be damnable, this would greatly content him; but that being impoſſible, he labours what he can to delude his own heart, and to cover ſinne in his own ſoul, while he commits ſinne.

The deceitfulneſſe of the heart about ſin:

1. In bribing the underſtanding to juſtifie ſin.

And firſt, *His deceitfulneſſe whom ſinne doth appear, In that he will bribe his underſtanding to do what in it lies to juſtifie ſinne*, to make it to be no ſin, but very lawfull and neceſſary. When God reproved *Jonah* for his ſinfull frowardneſſe, he replies, *Do I not well to be angry?* Jonah. 4. 9. He pleadeth for his vice as virtue. Thus the *Iſralites* had many arguments for their Idolatry, eſpecially they plead the abundance and plenty they had, ever ſince they *offered to the Queen of Heaven*, but ſince they left that, they were purſued with all calamities, *Jer.* 44. 17, 18. Oh the hypocriſie of the heart, that can find out arguments to juſtifie ſin, and make their tranſgreſſions duties. Thus the Phariſees, they plead againſt Chriſt, out of Scripture; and Chriſt enformeth us, men ſhould think they did God ſervice *John* 16. 2. by killing the godly that believe in Chriſt. And *Paul* ſaith of himſelf once, that he thought *he was bound to do what he did*, viz. in perſecuting the Saints, and compelling of them to blaſpheme, and from thence comes that deſperate wickedneſſe and incurableneſſe that followeth in the text. *Their eye is dark*, and then *how great is their darkneſſe!* Their mindes and underſtandings are corrupted; they are become Phariſees, they pleaſe the affections, ſay what they ſay, deny what they deny. Thus the Sun is alwaies in the Eclipſe, there is alwaies ſome interpoſition of one earthly advantage or other; and then the faculty being diſtempered, or made drunk, no marvell if it judge deceitfully. Oh then be very jealous of thy own heart, leſt it plead for *Baal*, leaſt it argue for ſin: and while thou couldſt not imbrace ſin as it did appear in its ugly colours, that putteth another dreſſe upon it, and ſo makes it lovely. There is a *wo* to thoſe that *call evil good*, Iſa. 5. 18. *and good evil, light darkneſſe, and darkneſſe light.* Such is the great deceitfulneſſe of men in this matter, as if that opinion were true, That ſin and vertue were

no

no reality, but only ſin is ſin if a man think it ſo, and vertue is vertue if a man apprehend it ſo, otherwiſe not. This quite deſtroyeth the Scripture, and pulleth up the very foundations of Religion. In Popery what a load of diſtinctions are there to maintain Image-worſhip, inſomuch that one of their own Authors ſaith (as *Anania* with him) that he muſt have *ingenium valde metaphyſicum*, that can underſtand them all. Take heed therefore of thy heart, as the great Sophiſter, as the great Juggler, that will caſt a miſt before thy eyes, that will raiſe up a devil in *Samuels* clothes.

2. *The deceitfulneſſe of the heart will appear about ſinne, in that a man will venture upon the occaſions and temptations of it: yet fully reſolving not to commit the ſinne.* This is a great deluſion of the heart: how many have fallen into the brink of the pit by coming ſo nigh it? To keep off from the temptation of ſin is ſo great a matter, that we are taught conſtantly to pray againſt it; and wilt thou live againſt thy prayers ſo preſumptuouſly? Thou prayeſt thou maieſt not enter into the temptation of uncleanneſſe, laſcivionſneſs, drunkenneſs; and wilt thou go into the houſe and the company where it is? Oh wretched and deceived man! If thou art not ſtrong enough to refuſe going into the temptation, how, when thou art in the temptation, wilt thou be ſtrong enough to refuſe the ſin itſelf? for which is more eaſily overcome? If the green twig will burn, then certainly the dry will. *David* beginneth his firſt verſe of the firſt *Pſalme*, with the bleſſedneſs of that man, that *ſhunneth the company of wickednes*, that will not have to do with them: For the Heathen ſaid well, *How is he a good man that doth not hate bad men?* Therefore *Paul* exhorts us to have no fellowſhip with the workers of darkneſſe, *but rather reprove them*, Epheſ. 5. We read in the Jewiſh Law, *Exod.* 22. That if a man ſet an hedge on fire, and that burnt a field of Corn, he was to make reſtitution, though the fire was only in the hedge at firſt; and the reaſon was, becauſe he was the occaſion, it was hard to ſtop the rage of the fire afterwards. Do not then come near the occaſions, the temptations: Thoſe men that came neer the fiery furnace were burnt: *Auſtin* tells us of his Friend *Alipius*, that he would needs go to Stage-plays; but he reſolved to ſhut his eyes at any unlawfull objects; but he could not abſtain when he was in the temptation. Let not thy heart then deceive thee any more in this kind, but keep from the occaſion of ſin as hell it ſelf: Oh one day thou wilt curſe the perſons, and the companions that inticed thee to wickedneſſe.

2. In that a man will venture upon the occaſions of ſin, yet reſolve not to commit it.

3. *The heart is deceitfull, in that before ſin is committed, it preſents only the pleaſure, the profits, the delight of ſin, and afterwards comes the hook; afterwards comes the bitter Scorpions tail.* Thus *Jam.* 1. *Every man is ſaid to be led aſide by his own luſts.* There are two excellent Greek words, the firſt is δελεαζόμενος coufined, as the Bird that ſeeth only the wheat but not the lime, or the fiſh that ſeeth the bait but not the hook; As *Jael* to *Siſera*, *Come in my Lord, and ſhewed him the diſh of milk* but not the nails, that were to be faſtened to his head: and the other is, ἐξελκόμενος *violently hurried away* as one that hath not leiſure to mediate on the danger; His heart is drawn aſide from the thoughts of that hell and judgment which doth belong to every ſin. Even as the devil at firſt inticed *Eve* both theſe wayes, partly in ſhewing her the deſireableneſſe of the fruit of the Tree, and partly in perſwading her ſhe ſhould not die though ſhe did eat of it. Thus thy heart is a falſe treacherous heart to thee, it ſuggeſts only the pleaſures and advantages of ſin, but nothing of that torture and torment, that ſhall bring with it: *Judas* his heart did thus betray him as to do his Maſter, that told him of thirty peeces, and the profit thereby, but nothing of the anguiſh, and horrour that would ſurprize him for betraying the innocent? O then conſider this, you that are eaſily entired to ſin: The heart that now findes eaſe and delight, will find gnawing worms and ſcorpions: That it hath done, and thus it will do, and therefore do not thou flatter thy ſelf.

3. The heart before ſinne be committed preſents the ſweet and pleaſure of ſin and not the bitterneſſe that follows it.

4. The

4. In thinking himſelf free from guilt if he act not, though he abet the ſin.

4. *The heart deceiveth it ſelf about ſin to think it ſelf freed from iniquity, if it do not act it ſelf, though he counſell, take delight, encourage, or at leaſt not gainſay or reprove others;* & truly this is a notorious deceit of the heart, to excuſe it ſelf though it have given way or do comply with others that do ſin: It's hard to ſay whether a man's own ſins or other men's ſins, to wch he hath one way or other conſented will lie as the heavieſt burthen upon men one day: Oh it will not be eaſy to ſay, Such a ſin it was none of mine, it was not of my doing, for thou maieſt eaſily come to partake of other men's ſins; which made a godly man pray, *Lord forgive me my other men's ſins*: Thus *Pilate* deceived himſelf, for becauſe the Jews importuned him to crucifie Chriſt, and nothing would ſatisfie but his bloud, therefore he giveth way to his condemnation, and yet will waſh his hands and ſay; *I am innocent from the bloud of this man.* What deceit was this, how was he innocent when he would condemn the innocent? Therefore we read *Nicodemus* though otherwiſe a fearfull man, yet he would not conſent to Chriſt's death, but oppoſed it in the whole councill. Thus thou art a Maſter of a Family, if thou beeſt not a Swearer, a Drunkard, a prophane perſon thy ſelf, thy heart deceiveth thee if thou knoweſt of ſuch Servants in thy Family, and endeavoureſt either not their reformation, or excluſion out of thy family. Again, there are many will not be drunk themſelves, but they delight to make others, they take pleaſure to ſee men overtaken, now this is ſo far from being innocent, that the Scripture makes the taking pleaſure in thoſe that do ſin, worſe then the committing ſin it ſelf, *Rom.* 1. Who *do not only ſuch ſins, but take pleaſure in them that do them.* Yea, the Scripture goeth higher, for it makes a man partaker of other mens ſin's, if he hold his peace, and do not, as prudence and charity, and zeal requireth, reprove them; *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitfull works of darkneſſe, but rather reprove them:* Reproof is often called by Divines ſpirituall Alms: Now as in corporall alms, God at the day of Judgment will puniſh for omiſſions; *I was hungry and ye filled me not; naked, and ye cloathed me not*; ſo it is with theſe ſpirituall Alms, Such were prophane and you reproved them not, ſuch were ungodly and you inſtructed them not. As he ſaid of temporal life, *Qui non dat vitam, aufert:* He that doth not preſerve another's man's life when he may, kills him, he is a murtherer; ſo, he that doth not labour the ſpiritual life and ſalvation of another man, when he may and ought, is a murderer of his ſoul. Oh then obſerve thy heart in this reſpect; doth it not deceive thee, while thou ſayeſt, I am no ſuch ſinner, I offend not in ſuch tranſgreſſions? yet thou art a partaker and acceſſary either mediately or immediately.

5. In committing ſin pretending much good to come thereby.

5. *The heart is deceitfull in ſinne, when it will commit iniquity, pretending much good to come thereby.* This hath been a frequent deceit: Alas, they would not have done ſuch and ſuch unwarrantable things, but that there was a neceſſity, and much good will come thereby. There were ſuch even in the Apoſtles time, that would make ſuch inferences as theſe are; *Let us do evil that good may come*, Rom. 3. 8. But ſee what an heavy ſentence the Apoſtle paſſeth upon ſuch, *Whoſe damnation is juſt.* It's therefore a ſad deceit of heart, for any man to encourage himſelf to do a wicked action, becauſe its probable ſuch good may come by it. It's directly againſt Scripture, no ſuch divinity is to be owned. Hence *Auſtin* ſaid, *A man might not tell a lye, though it were to ſave the whole world*: and indeed if good come by ſinne as ſometimes there doth; all ſalvation came by Chriſt, who was crucified by the wickedneſſe of malicious men; and much good came to *Joſeph's* family, by his brethren's ſinnes againſt him; therefore he told them, *you thought evil to me, but God turned it to good*: If, I ſay, good doth come ſometimes by ſinne, this is not the genuine and proper effect of evil, but the over-ruling power of God that makes it ſo; otherwiſe, as *ex falſo nil niſi falſum ſequitur*; ſo, *ex malo, nil niſi malum*; thy ſinne of it ſelf makes more ſinne, *ſcelere ſcelus eſt tuendum*: and therefore when the godly have ſometimes through infirmity done evill, expecting ſome good, as *Jacob* in telling a lye to get the bleſſing; the good they have

have obtained, hath been ſo clogged with miſeries, that the ſweetneſſe of the mercy hath been taken away, and they have bitterly learnt this truth; Its better to wait Gods time, and go on in his way, than by haſtening good to us through evill meanes: Obſerve then thy heart very diligently; ſuch deluſions do eaſily take place, if you live not wholly by Scripture commands.

6. In thinking it ſelf very good if it commit not outward iniquities, though within it be never ſo unclean.

6. The heart is deceitfull, in that if it doth not actually commit outward iniquity though the heart be a very dunghil, a cage of all unclean luſts, it thinketh it ſelf very good. Herein the Phariſees did conſtantly deſude themſelves, none could charge them with ſuch groſſe ſins as Publicans did commit: Hence it was that our Saviour did ſo often bid them look inward, cleanſe their inſides, *Within they were ravening Wolves*, within they were *rotten ſepulchers*, howſoever painted without: and indeed this is one great difference between a true godly man and an Hypocrite. The godly man is much humbled for the ſins of his heart: Though they never break out into action, yet if they ariſe and move in his heart, it doth trouble him exceedingly, as you ſee *Paul*. Rom. 7. making thoſe ſad out-cries and complaints onely becauſe of heart-motions inordinately ſtirring againſt the law of God; But the hypocrite who doth all things to be ſeen of men, and doth not reſpect God, he is ſatisfied, if the outſide be clean: Well then, look to your hearts as that deceitfull root of all bitterneſſe, though no branches ſprout out, what a ſerious and neceſſary exhortation doth *Solomon* give, Prov. 4. 23. *With all keepings* or *above all keepings, keep thy heart.* As the heart is deceitfull above all things, ſo above all keepings and watchings we muſt watch to this, and why ſo? *for out of it are the iſſues of life*: ſinfull eyes and wicked hands are becauſe of a ſinfull heart: Do not then bleſſe thy ſelf becauſe of a civill unblameable life; if the heart be full of proud, earthly, ſinfull thoughts, thou art an abominable and lothſome ſinner before God: Hence *Mat.* 5. our Saviour preached ſtrange but true doctrine, when he informed them of thoſe traditionall errours and interpretations of the command that they had been brought up a long time in; as if it did only forbid outward ſins. No, ſaith our Saviour, there is heart-adultery and heart-murther: Let not therefore any man flatter himſelf with a fair outſide, when the heart is inwardly filthy; he is no better than a Serpent which hath a glittering outſide, but inwardly full of poiſon.

7. In finding out many excuſes about ſin.

7. The heart is deceitfull about ſin, in that it's ſubtile and crafty to find out many excuſes about it. You would wonder at all the wiles and crafts of men, in this reſpect. We had it from *Adam* at firſt, thus to cover our nakedneſſe with leaves; Even in godly men there is too much of the crooked Serpent. In *David*, what colours, what excuſes had he in the murther of *Uriah*! In *Aaron* when he joyned with the people in making the Calfe for idolatry; *I put it into the fire, and it came out this calf*, ſaith he, *Exod.* 32. 24. As if he had not intended or thought of any ſuch thing; Now this is not only a ſin, but an aggravation of ſinne: To ſeek out excuſes, to labour for lurking holes to run into: We would wonder at the guile and hypocriſie of a mans heart, What already excuſe it will have for every ſin. As theſe coverings men will get for their nakedneſſe.

1. *They will lay the blame off from themſelves to others*: They would not have done ſo or ſo, but others perſwaded them, or they were forced to it. Now this will not be any excuſe with God, for there is never any neceſſity to ſin, and ſuch a greater evil than any temporall evil. Therefore our Saviour bids us *Fear God who can deſtroy ſoul and body, and not man who can kill the body only*, Luk. 12. So *Saul* he made this excuſe for himſelf, why, he ſanctified before *Samuel* came, *The people would have it ſo*, and he could not gainſay it; but this took him his Kingdome, a little thing we would have thought, but *diſobedience is as the ſin of witchcraft*: *Adam* at firſt laid the ſin upon *Eve*, and *Eve* on the Serpent; for this is an hereditary corruption in us all: If we have offended, to lay the

blame

blame ſomewhere elſe if poſſibly: but now the godly man he judgeth himſelf moſt, he laieth the heaviett load upon himſelf: *I and my Fathers houſe have ſinned*, ſaith *David*, *but what have theſe Sheep done?* 2 Sam. 14. 17. Do not deceive your ſelves by putting it on others.

A ſecond excuſe is, *To put it off upon the devil*, to ſay, It's true ſuch and ſuch ſinnes I have committed, but the devil he tempted me. But this is no excuſe, partly becauſe the devil cannot force thee to ſin; it's thy own voluntary giving thy ſelf up to him, and therefore that is no excuſe though the devil do tempt thee. Hence we read *Peter* charging *Ananias* with that lie againſt the holy Ghoſt, ſaith, *Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie*, Act. 5. 3. Mark it, It was his ſin to let Satan fill his heart, and therefore he is not excuſed but the more blamed. And then the devil's temptation will not excuſe, becauſe the originall of all is the luſt of a man's own heart; I ſhall not diſpute that practicall point, whether there be any ſin committed that the devil doth not alſo tempt and ſuggeſt to? This is enough, which the Apoſtle *James* tells us, *Jam.* 1. who makes luſt within us to be the fountain of all evil, and ſheweth by what degrees luſt at laſt comes to bring forth; So then it's but a meer deceit of a man's heart to ſay, The devill tempted me, It was not I but the devil: for, it's a man's own luſt that ſets open the door firſt to let the devil in.

The third excuſe men deceive themſelves with, is, *the littleneſſe of the ſinne*: What need men be ſo ſevere, and keep ſuch ado? Is it any but a little ſin, a ſmall matter? Thus men accuſtomed to petty oaths, and to tell officious or merry lies, wanton and laſcivious diſcourſe, theſe kinds of petty ſins, as men account them, they do greatly deceive themſelves by; for if men would judge aright, they would account no ſinne little: for although the Scripture makes ſome ſinnes as gnats, and other as camels, yet take the leaſt ſin abſolutely, the guilt of it is greater then thou canſt bear; If thou ask, Why, the anſwer is ready, There is no little ſin, becauſe there is no little God: all ſin is tranſgreſſion of the Law, and the leaſt blemiſh in the ſoul hath infinite evil in it, becauſe it is againſt a God of infinite majeſty. And further no ſin is to be accounted little, becauſe the guilt can only be done away by Chriſt's bloud; Had Chriſt died to take away all ſin but that one petty oath, that one laſcivious word; all thy tears, thy ſighs could never have ſatisfied; Though it be but a farthing, yet if left unpaid, it will keep thee in that dungeon of hell for ever.

Fourthly, *Men deceive themſelves in ſin by this excuſe, that it's univerſal; moſt do it*: Why ſhould they be preciſe and ſingular to do contrary to all the World? This is an heavy temptation, and men think, that may be eaſily pardoned, which is univerſally committed: but this will deceive you, for God doth expreſly command, that we ſhould not *follow a multitude to do evil*; and therefore we read of *Lot* though but one man, how unſpotted he kept himſelf, *vexing his own ſoul with ſeeing and hearing the wicked deeds of other men*; yea, our Saviour makes it neceſſary for every man to be, in a good manner, ſingular; *If you love thoſe that love you, what ſingular thing do ye?* Mat. 5. ſaith our Saviour; Hence the Apoſtle commands us not *to be conformed to the faſhion of the world*, Rom. 12. 1. Univerſality then and multitude will not excuſe: *Argumentum peſſimi turba.*

Uſe of Exhortation, To ſtand upon our watch with fear and trembling. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, murthers, and all ſins*; When you are forewarned thus by the holy Ghoſt, if you yet take no heed, your condemnation will be juſt. No wonder if ſo many millions of ſins be daily committed, ſeeing ſo few watch and pray againſt their own hearts, *Libera me Domine a meipſo*, and it's a good and neceſſary praier, O Lord ſave me and deliver me from my ownſelf. How will thou in thoſe eternall flames cry out and howl with indignation againſt thy own heart. Oh miſerable deceived wretch, How are all my hopes and comforts gone! How is my Honey turned to Gall and Wormwood?

wood, Oh that I had wiſdom and underſtanding to prevent theſe torments; Thou that canſt not abide hypocriſie and diſſimulation in another, why is not that of thy own heart loathſome to thy own ſelf?

SERM. IV.

Another Inſtance of the Hearts Deceitfulneſſe in the matter of Repentance.

JER. 17. 9.

The heart is deceitfull above all things, Who can know it?

THe next conſiderable inſtance of the Hearts Deceitfulneſſe I ſhall inſiſt on, is about *Repentance for ſin committed*: As the heart is full of guile and hypocriſie in the committing of ſin, ſo it's no leſſe ſubtle and crafty to delude it ſelf about Repentance for it. Be therefore attentive and diligent, while this hypocriſie is detected, for its every mans caſe. None can ſay of this Point, as of many other. This is a good Leſſon for ſuch an one, it were well if ſuch did attend to it: but this belongs to all. Every man that hath an heart, hath a deceitfull one; and in nothing more then about ſin (as you heard); or a ſeeming repentance about it. But as it's in morrall wounds a dangerous thing to cloſe up the wound, and skin it over, as if all were well, when in the bottome there remaineth cankering fretting humours, ſo it's far more dangerous in wonnds of the ſoul, which are made by ſin, to ſalve all up with a ſhew of Repentance, or a thing like Repentance, when it is not ſo indeed, and thereby the heart is as a notable Mountebank and Impoſtor in this matter; As in Popery they take the bones of ſome beaſts, and commend them for rare effects, as if they were the relicks of ſome Saints; ſo doth the heart delude a man, as if about ſin he had done all that was required about pardon: and therefore he may go boldly up and down, as if the ſentence of condemnation were quite taken off: When alas all this is but a dream, and a meer deluſion: Even as when a hungry man dreameth of ſuch dainty feaſts, as if he had been fully ſatisfying his appetite, but when awakened he is as hungry as before.

But come we to the particulars, And

First, *The heart's deceitfulneſſe is evident, in that when ſin is committed, it labours to put out the memory of it*: To take away the guilt and terrour of it by other recreations, pleaſures, ſports, merry company, that ſo he may not hear the doleſull bowling of his ſin within his conſcience: Even as thoſe people that ſacrificed their children to *Moloch*, it is ſaid, *They cauſed Trumpets and Drums to make a loud noiſe*: that ſo the miſerable ſcreakings of their Children, and their ſad Groans might not trouble them, and work melting bowels within them, ſuch obſtinacy and inſenſibleneſſe doth a man labour to put himſelf into. Hath he been over taken with any ſin? doth conſcience begin to check him for it? away goeth he preſently to this buſineſſe, to that company, or ſets upon clean contrary thoughts, that ſo there may not be ſo much as a beginning

1. In that when ſin is committed it labours to put out the memory of it.

to repentance. Oh it's a loathing when the heart of man ſeareth conviction and humiliation for ſin, as much as the dog doth the whip, or the malefactor doth a priſon. The thoughts of hell and death are a burden to him, yet what is more ordinary? *Cain*, when he had committed that horrible murder on his brother, and begun to have a tormenting hell within him for it, To divert theſe ſad thoughts he travelleth, and ſetteth himſelf to build Towns and Cities. Thus the Scripture ſpeaketh of many prophane men, that ſay to the Almighty, Depart from them, and they will not the knowledge of the Moſt high, *Job.* 21. 14. What a terrible inſtance of this deceitfulneſſe have we in *Joſeph's* brethren, When they had thrown him into a horrible pit, where nothing but death would follow; Immediatly after this crime, which ſhould have made an earth-quake in their ſouls, the text ſaith, *They ſate down to eat bread*, Geneſ. 27. 24. Oh where were their hearts? what had they done? Could they eat and drink when the cries of their brother *Joſeph* ſhould ſtill be in their ears? But ſo our hearts will deceive us, and therefore the Prophet *Jeremiah* complaines, that upon their wickedneſſe, no man ſaid, *What have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. Oh there are few that after their ungodly actions God can ſee, as *Ephraim, ſmiting her ſelf upon the thigh*, weeping and bewailing her ſelf. Few with *Ezekiel* are ſighing with great lamentations, but all their indeavour is to keep every thing quiet and peaceable within them. Oh how much better were it for thee to have fears like ſo many worms gnawing within thee, than to ſin and to be ſo ſecure and ſenſeleſſe after it.

2. Or, to judge that to be repentance which is not; As

But ſecondly, If the conſcience cannot be put off ſo, ſin lieth at the door; it accuſeth, it condemneth, thou haſt no peace, ſomething muſt be done: Then how full are we of guile to delude our ſelves, *as if we did repent when we indeed do not.*

I. A tranſient paſſion of ſorrow.

As firſt, *We judge a ſudden and tranſient paſſion of ſorrow, with a ſhort petition, Lord forgive me, I am a great ſinner, the Lord ſhew mercy to me*, &c. we think, I ſay, this is all that goeth to repentance. We make account, all is well as ſoon as we have ſaid, *Lord forgive us*, we ſhould not do ſo. No, this is no repentance; for howſoever in ſins of daily infirmities, there is not required ſuch a ſolemn repentance; yet in great ſins that do groſly offend God, there ought to be a more fixed and purpoſed repentance. Indeed every ſin, though the leaſt, hath an infinite evil in it, in reſpect of God who is offended, and ſo requireth more grief then for any temporal evil, yea more ſorrow then ever we can expreſs, though our tears ſhould be blood; yet according to the greatneſſe of ſin, ought ſorrow to be. Thus *David* in his ſins of Adultery and Murder, manifeſted more trouble and grief of ſoul, then for daily infirmities. Thus *Peter went out & wept bitterly* for that apoſtaſie of his, which poſture he had not for every imperfection. So then you ſee for groſſe ſins of the fleſh, ſwearing, drunkenneſſe, *&c.* you do but delude your ſelves, if you think ſuch ſhort and ſudden expreſſions of ſorrow will be accepted: No the guilt of thoſe ſins ſtill is upon thee, till thou betake thy ſelf to a more ſolemn mourning, and renting of thy heart, mourning even as *Rachel*, and *refuſing to be comforted* by any worldly comforts, till Gods favour be vouchſafed to thee. Oh thou canſt take no delight in Houſes, Orchards, Cheſts full of money, till ſuch drunkenneſſe, ſuch uncleanneſs, ſuch oaths be forgiven thee. *Zach.* 12. The repentance there promiſed is ſaid to be *a ſpirit of mourning, and that as one weeps even for his only beloved ſon.* Hence a repenting heart is called *a broken heart, a contrite heart*; that as the veſſell beaten to duſt, hath no more of the former ſhape it had; ſo ſuch a man repenting, he is no more like what he was once: Oh the change upon him! he would not do as he hath done for a world! You ſee him no more in the company, in the temptations of ſin. Oh be not then deceived, Though ſin be not pardoned for the greatneſſe of our ſorrow, for they are not our tears, but Chriſts blood, that makes amends; yet God hath required ſuch a broken grieved heart for ſin, elſe there is no pardon obtained. Oh that God would

ſet this home upon you. As *Agrippa* ſaid, *Thou haſt almoſt perſwaded me to be a Chriſtian*: ſo how many do almoſt repent; they do almoſt bewail their ſin in a godly manner! Its not a Ciſtern, but a Fountain that God looks for in thy mourning for ſin.

II. Without reformation and forſaking of ſinne.

Secondly, *If the heart be greatly and in a very high meaſure afflicted and troubled for ſin, yet this laſteth but for a ſeaſon, it's not accompanied with a reformation and forſaking of ſin*: So that to weep for ſin, to ſhed many tears for ſin, and yet to run into the ſame exceſſe again, is but to waſh a blackmore; to roul a ſtone up hill, which immediately falls back with great violence. *Pharaoh's* heart thus deceived him, in the preſſure of Gods judgments, he crieth out, He hath ſinned, and he will let the people go; but no ſooner is the ſtorm over, but he returneth to his former obſtinacy. Who would think the heart of of man could be thus faſt and looſe, off and on? But deceitfulneſſe is the ground of this multiformity. *Saul*, you have alſo in ſome relenting and melting fits, he juſtifieth *David*; and yet as the ſnake emptieth her poiſon outright to ſuck it up afterward again; ſo did he. But why do we ſpeak of particular perſons, when the whole Nation of the Iſraelites, ſometimes were mourning, faſting and crying becauſe of their Idolatries; and within a little ſpace, erecting, adoring, and bowing to their Idoles? Now all this while there lieth a ſnake in the heart, there is nothing but hypocriſie: and yet how many are daily deceived in this matter. They have tears and ſighs for their ſin, but they do not depart from them: They fly not from them, as *Joſeph* from his Miſtriſs, never to be inticed by them. Oh pity your ſelves, this deceit is too univerſall. Whoſe heart doth not, as the very ſtones do at the change of weather, ſtand with ſome dew upon them, have ſome relenting on them, eſpecially under changes, from mercies to judgment, but yet there is the ſtone ſtill in the bottom! *Caſt away your tranſgreſſions*, ſaith the Prophet, *Ezek.* 20. 7. that implieth with what an heartineſſe we ſhould leave our ſins, yea we ſhould with loathing throw them away. *Ephraim ſhall ſay, what have I to do any more with Idols?* Hoſ. 14. 8. Never think then, thou haſt repented, when the ſame ſins are ſtill committed. Oh ſee a ſign, that ſorrow was not from the ſpirit of ſanctification, which notes an antipathy, and an irreconcileable hatred to ſin; but from ſome externall motives, which ceaſing, thy ſorrow about ſin is alſo dried up.

III. At moſt it ſatisfieth it ſelf with an outward and partiall reformation.

Thirdly, *The heart is deceitfull in the work of repentance, In that if it do grieve, and reform the outward acts of ſin, yet it doth it not throughly and totally.* They keep ſome degrees of their ſin ſtill; The fire is not quite put out; there are embers covered in the aſhes, which will break out again. Haply they leave off the groſſeneſſe and notorious luſts of their former courſes, but yet they are not wholly cleanſed and waſhed. As the people of *Iſrael* under many heavy judgements, they would deſtroy their groſſe Idols, but the High places were not taken away. A man parteth with his ſins, unwillingly, till he be inwardly ſanctified, and therefore he departs by little and little; as the extremity is upon him, ſo he cometh off to yeild more. You have a notable inſtance of this deceitfulneſſe in *Pharoah*; for at firſt he is very obſtinate, he ſcorneth at the Name of God, which *Moſes* mentioned, who commanded him to let *Iſrael* go. Well, when many ſore judgments had been upon him eſpecially, that ſwarm of Flies, this iron begins to be ſoftned, and he ſends for *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and ſaith, he will let the people go, only they muſt not go farre away, *Exod.* 8. 28. ſomething he will do, but not all. In the next place he is ſo terrified under the judgment of the Locuſts, that again he ſends for *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and he will let the people go, only the men muſt go, not the women and Children *chap.* 10. 11. Here you ſee he cometh a little further. The next judgment, is horrible Darkneſſe, this cauſeth a further work, *chap.* 10. 24. for now he will give leave that the women and little ones ſhall go, only their Flocks and their Heards they muſt ſtay. Still he will not come up to his whole duty, though he would fain do ſome-

thing. Then comes the laſt and worſt judgment of all, The firſt-born in every family ſtricken dead, and that at midnight, which wrought ſuch great terror on them all, that *Pharoah* riſeth up at midnight, and then will yeild to all, They and their little ones, and their flocks ſhall go. You ſee by this inſtance, what deceitfulneſſe is in every mans heart, to do ſomething by degrees, as the judgements of God do compell him: Oh this is nothing but a deluding of thy ſelf! Thy heart is glued to ſin, and Gods judgements they make ſome forcible diviſion from it, and ſomething thou dareſt not but do, thou canſt not but do, only thou doſt not voluntarily come off to do the whole Will of God.

IV. The deceitfulneſſe of the heart appears when a man thinks to make God amends by ſome voluntary way of ſervice.

Fourthly, *The heart deceiveth a man about repentance, When upon trouble for ſin he thinketh to make God ſatisfaction by ſome voluntary way of worſhip, or ſtrict penalties that he ſhall inflict upon himſelf.* When ſuch outward chaſtiſments are performed, then he thinks, here is repentance enough, and all is made up. Thus amongſt the Phariſees, all that outward worſhip which they had appointed, was for to pacifie God, but Chriſt told them, it was a vain worſhip. Eſpecially there is a notable place, *Col.* 2. 21, 22, 23. where the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſeverall commandments, *Touch not, taſte not, handle not*, ſtrict injunctions, which he ſaith had a ſhew of humility, in neglecting of the body and not ſatisfying the fleſh. There was great auſterity and a penall afflicting of the body; but becauſe by theſe they were drawn off from Chriſt, and looked upon theſe as that which would ſatisfie God, hereby they deceived themſelves. And hence it is, that the doctrine of repentance is ſo greatly obſcured by Popiſh doctours; making the chief part of it to lie in ſome extraordinary voluntrary puniſhments undertaken for ſin; ſo that faith in Chriſt, and mortification of ſin in the heart is altogether ſuppreſſed. Now you need not wonder at ſuch a doctrine, for its brought from this deceivable frame of our hearts. When we have ſinned we think not of the Scripture, we do not look to what way God would have us to take; but as if we had to do with man, we think of ſome compenſation preſently: But alas, if thoſe eternall burnings in hell be not enough to ſatisfie God (ſure if they were, men at laſt would come out of hell) how weak and conſiderable are thoſe bodily afflictions thou laieſt upon thy ſelf? Not that the Scripture condemneth faſting and afflicting of our bodies. *Paul* did it leſt he ſhould be a reprobate, but he did it not in ſuch a manner, and eſpecially not upon ſuch grounds and corrupt ends as they teach. When therefore thy heart ſmitteth thee for ſin; preſently enquire out of Gods Word, what way is to be taken for pardon, how repentance is to be managed, what ingredients go to it. We no more of our ſelves know what it is to repent, or how we are to repent, than what or how we are to pray. Let this be well thought on.

V. And when it judgeth thoſe fears and ſorrows that riſe only from conſideration of Gods wrath, to be godly ſorrow.

Fifthly, *The heart of man deceiveth it ſelf about repentance, When it judgeth thoſe tears and ſorrow, which ariſe only from the conſideration of Gods judgements becauſe of death or hell to be the true proper tears of godly ſorrow*: Whereas they differ as much as the puddle waters do from the pleaſant ſtreams. And this is the great inſtance of a mans heart-hypocriſie about humiliation for ſin, therefore do ye the more obſerve it. It may be thy ſoul is in great heavineſſe, thou goeſt bowed down becauſe of thy iniquities; yea thou crieſt out, thou roareſt out, Oh my ſins, my ſins! and thou ſaieſt, what is repentance if this be not repentance? Oh thou art greatly deceived, for if theſe cryes and tears come only from the ſenſe of judgments upon thee, or meerly for the fear of death and hell, and not becauſe God is offended, not becauſe ſin in its own nature is loathſome and abominable: I tell thee, thy heart is deceitfull in this trouble, thoſe very tears muſt be waſhed, and that repentance be repented of. See inſtances in Scripture; did not *Judas* cry out, was not he inwardly tormented for what he had done? did not he break out into that doleful confeſſion, *I have ſinned in betraying the innocent blood?* yet all this came meerly from horror and ſlaviſh fear of Gods wrath: He throweth away thoſe thirty pieces, he knoweth

knoweth not what to do: but all this, while here is no Evangelicall mourning, becauſe God is offended, and ſin as ſin was not troubleſome to him: for then deſpair in Gods mercy, and diffidence in his love would likewiſe have been abhorred. So it was in *Cain*, he goeth trembling up and down, the guilt of ſinne doth accompany him; he cryeth out; his ſins are greater then he can bear; but all this comes from fear of puniſhment. I cannot let paſſe that pregnant example of the Iſraelites, *Hoſ.* 7. 14. where God ſaith, *They did not cry unto him when they howled on their beds for their wine and oyl.* They humbled themſelves and cryed out exceedingly, while God took away thoſe temporall mercies from them; but it was not unto God, becauſe of ſin, it was not only for outward mercies; and therefore he calls it howling; an expreſſion from beaſts, who being kept from food, uſe to make ſuch miſerable howlings, being ready to be famiſhed. Thus you ſee, its not preſently weeping, crying and roaring out for ſin, that preſently argueth the heart repenting, but its becauſe thy ſenſible mercies are taken away. Oh the heart is full of unſearchable hypocriſie in this reſpect, that it is hardly known, when its the evil of ſin, or temporall evil that doth lie upon thy heart. Yet I muſt give ſome correctives to this phyſick: I do not ſay, That grief and ſorrow for ſin ariſing from this motive, becauſe God doth chaſtiſe, is wholly unlawfull, or that all that repentance which is from hell and fear of death, is altogether hypocriticall: No, it is lawfull for a man to be humbled for his ſins becauſe of theſe conſiderations, and they are inflicted by God upon us for this very end; but this muſt not be the only, or the principall motive, but the offence and diſpleaſure of God ought to trouble thee more then all the outward evil in the world: As you ſee in *David*, though in many miſeries and calamities, yet the *light of Gods countenance* he prized more then any earthly felicity. Do not thou therefore wring this truth while bloud comes, which is only for nouriſhing-milk; for many times the heart of a tender godly Chriſtian, becauſe it finds ſuch motives as theſe, doth judge it ſelf an hypocrite, concludes that it hath never yet truly repented, but this is to throw thy ſelf into the pit. And you muſt know the heart is deceitfull, as well in bearing witneſſe againſt thy ſelf, as if there were not that good in thee which God hath wrought, as well as preſumptuouſly to flatter thee, that thou haſt repented, when thou haſt not.

VI. When it puts a man upon doing duties toward God, with the neglect of duties toward man.

Laſtly, For we cannot take up all the deceitful particulars, herein *our hearts deceive us about repentance for ſin, that we are willing to do thoſe duties which belong to God, but then we fly off from thoſe that belong to Man.* This is eſpecially ſeen in the ſins of injuſtice and unrighteouſneſs that we are guilty of: have we wronged or defrauded others? this we are willing to confeſſe to God, this we can bewail in our prayers; but to make ſuch reſtitution and ſatisfaction as God requireth, becauſe this is againſt thy profit, or it is matter of ſhame, that thou wilt never do. But what ſaith God to the Jews, that faſted and afflicted their ſouls? Do juſtice and judgment, reſtore what is taken away, as if all their other duties were not to be regarded. So when there are jarres and controverſies between neighbour and neighbour, they will pray, they will be carefull to perform religious duties; but to forgive one another, to be reconciled in Love, that they will never ſtoop unto; whereas there is no true repentance till theſe things be done.

Uſe of Admonition, If thy heart hath deceived thee to commit ſin, Oh let it not deceive thee about repenting for it: for this is more dangerous then the former. To ſin, doth not meerly damn; but not to repent, that immediately deſtroyeth. To be diſeaſed doth not preſently kill, but to refuſe and reject the remedy, that will certainly carry to the grave. Firſt therefore, let not ſin after the commiſſion of it lye quietly in thy conſcience; do not labour to put it out of thy minde, to wear out the remembrance of it. It's a deadly bit thou haſt

haſt ſwallowed down, if that ſhould lie like undigeſted meat upon the ſtomack, it muſt trouble thee and make thee ſick, till the ſpirituall vomit of confeſſion hath given thee eaſe. And ſecondly, when it doth trouble thee, take the right way for repentance. The Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 7. tells us of a godly ſorrow and a worldly ſorrow, the one brings death and the other life. And to be ſure, ſin is like the ſea, it never leaveth roaring and foaming, till the winds from above ceaſe to trouble it. So thy heart will never be ſtill, till God be ſtill. *Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia, Pſal.* 32. *David* could have no reſt in his bones till he truly repented, and then he had preſent eaſe.

SERM. V.

The third great inſtance of the Heart's Deceit, is in the matter of Religion in generall, *and about* Religious Duties *in particular.*

JEREM. 17. 9.

The heart is deceitfull above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?

WE are come to the third and laſt Inſtance of the deceitfulneſſe of mans heart; and that is in matter of Religion, and religious duties. If ſo be *a falſe balance* be *an abomination to God*, and deceit in humane affairs betwixt man and man, be ſo great a ſin, condemned every where by the Scripture, how much more muſt this falſe balance in religious duties? And this deceit is then the more abominable, when it pretends to the greateſt Religion: for, if *Tully* ſaid of fraud and injuſtice between man and man, that there was none more capitall and abominable then of thoſe, who *cum maximè fallunt, id agunt ut boni viri eſſe videantur*: this holds much more in all our religious approaches to God: It muſt needs be a Belzebub-ſin, or the chief of ſins, to ſhew out hypocriſie and guile in the matters of God. Take we heed therefore that in all our religion, there be not ſuch an hand-writing as was againſt *Belſhazzar*, *Thou are weighed in the balance and numbred, thou art found too light.*

We ſhall firſt ſpeak of the hearts deceitfullneſſe in religion in the generall, and then of religious duties.

The hearts deceitfulneſſe in worſhip and Religion in the general appears,

1. In its proneneſſe to invent a worſhip, and delight therein.

In the generall. 1. *Herein our hearts deceive us, that we are prone to appoint a worſhip of our own head, to worſhip God with; and therein exceedingly to delight and applaud our ſelves.* Even as little children come to make babies to play with, ſo have men alwayes in the Church of God delighted to make Images, or ſome ſenſible repreſentations thereby to adore God. But as *Caſar*, when he ſaw Women playing with their Birds and Cats, asked if they had no children? ſo thoſe that have been taken up with an outward ſenſible worſhip, may be asked, if they ever were acquainted with that inward ſpirituall and ſerious worſhip of the ſoul? That the heart of man is deceitfull herein, appeareth, in that from the beginning of the world, men have alwayes delighted to take their own wayes, and to go upon their own thoughts in

in Gods worſhip, and not ſtrictly binding themſelves to Gods command. In the old Teſtament, how often are they blamed for this; that they went *after the imaginations of their own hearts? That they went after the way which they themſelves did chooſe?* And how often doth God even in one Chapter, *Deut.* 4. bid them *take heed to themſelves, that they did not corrupt the worſhip of God?* And that command, *not to adde or take from Gods word*, is four times repeated in the Scripture. And why is all this, but becauſe the heart of man is ſo full of guile, and very ready to make ſubtle inventions, and ſpecious pretences in the worſhip of God? In the new Teſtament alſo, the Phariſees had greatly corrupted the pure ſtreams, by throwing earth into them, as the Philiſtims did to *Iſaaks* well, *Luk.* 16. how ſeverely doth Chriſts reprove this? *Ye are they that juſtifie your ſelves*, viz. becauſe of their ſuperſtitious invented worſhip, but God knows the heart, mark that! They did not ſearch or know the grounds and motions of their hearts in all this, but God did: and ſee what a forcible reaſon is given, for *that which is highly eſteemed of amongſt men, is* Βδελυγμα, *an abomination of deſolation*, as it were, *viz.* That way of worſhip, that externall manner of ſerving God which they had brought in, was abominable before God. And in the after-ages of the Church, eſpecially when men forſooke Scripture, and appointed ſuch meanes to worſhip God by as they thought fit: Then was ſuch a famine on the Church (as I may allude) that an Aſſes head was ſold for much mony, I mean, any worſhip that a ſilly Monk or Friar ſhould appoint, was highly eſteemed: Do not then in matter of Religion let your heart deceive you; Every man hath hereſie and ſuperſtition in his heart as well as other ſins; oh that this were attended unto, then we ſhould be a people contented with Scripture-inſtitutions; commanded-worſhip ſhould be our bounds. And for want of this, we worſhip God in vain, and while we think we honour him, we provoke him.

2. And to make a politicall Religion.

2. *The heart is deceitfull, in making a politicall Religion, ſutable to thoſe carnall ends and aims that a man hath.* What is more ordinary then this, to be no further religious then will conſiſt with our temporall accomodations. How far is that from the nature of the new creature *Paul* ſpeaks of, 2 *Cor.* 5. 16. *We know no man, no not Chriſt himſelf after the fleſh.* To regard Chriſt and Chriſtianity, for fleſhly advantages and worldly ends, is to make the higheſt things, ſervants to the meaneſt: To make the end ſerve the means; to make ſervants ride and Princes go on foot, it is to pervert all order, and ſet a dunghill where the Sun ſhould be. But oh the abominable treachery and guile of heart in this reſpect: to make God and the things of God, inſtrumentall to bring about our earthly ends: Thus whereas man was made for God, he makes God for man; and whereas *Auſtin* ſaid, we may *uti* only all the good things in the world (uſe them), and *frui* (enjoy God;) theſe uſe God and enjoy earthly things. The Scripture giveth ſeverall inſtances of this guile: The *Sichemites* they would be circumciſed, and undertake that religious ſervice only upon carnall ends, that their Prince might have *Dinah* to wife, and they make advantage of the *Iſraelites*, what an horrible profanation of religion is this, to make the ſeale of the righteouſneſſe of faith, a politick deſigne to accompliſh their worldly ends? *Jeroboam* herein alſo had a very deceitfull heart, that his people might not go up to *Jeruſalem*, and thereby return to that Kingdom from which they were divided, *he ſets upon golden Calves* to pleaſe the peoples fancies, and to detain them which delight in that worſhip. *Herod* alſo, when he had malicious intent to kill Chriſt, carried it fair, as if he had a deſire to *worſhip him*. Thus you ſee, what horrible falſhood and deceit may be in mens hearts, in matter of Religion, and yet the end be only carnall and earthly: This is to make the foot after the ſhooe; and not the ſhooe after the foot.

3. *The*

3. And thoſe motions which ariſe from it ſelf to be the workings of the Spirit of God.

3. *The heart is deceitfull in making thoſe motions and deluſions which ariſe from its ſelf to be the workings and motions of Gods Spirit*; So that by one of theſe deceitfull wayes, the devil hath alwayes infected the Church. Either man's innovations or imaginations have been taken for worſhip, or the motions and deluſions of men's private ſpirits, have been taken for the inſpirations of Gods Spirit: And truly, this may be ſo eaſie a deceit, that unleſs men have *their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern between good and evil*, and keep cloſe to the word, they will be deceived. Hence is that command, 1 *Joh.* 3. *To try the ſpirits*: We muſt not believe other mens aſſertions, or our own opinions, though thought to be of the Spirit of God, but we muſt try them by the Word: for as it was no diſhonour to Chriſt upon the earth, when his hearers ſearched into the Scriptures, whether he ſpake conſonantly or no: ſo its no diſhonour to the Spirit of God, to try the pretences of it, by the Word, eſpecially we being commanded thereto. Chriſt himſelf ſaid, *there ſhould be falſe Chriſts*, and ſo there will be falſe and lying ſpirits in the Church of God. Now the Spirit of God, is a publicke Spirit, as I may ſo ſay; that is, it breatheth and works by a publicke and known organon or inſtrument; we are to expect the Spirit in and through the Word, as healing was only to be looked for in the pool of *Bethesda*, only there and not in other waters did the Angel deſcend: ſo its here; In the Scripture, and only through that, doth the Spirit of God communicate light and heat. Oh therefore take heed of deluſions in this kind, it may be thy own Spirit, or Satan, that works in thee, when thou thinkeſt its the holy Spirit. Practical Divines give many differences, how we ſhall diſcern our own motions and deluſions from the Spirit's holy inſpirations; but that which is the chiefeſt of all, is, to examine the conſonancy of it, and the warrantableneſſe of it by the Word: There are two ſorts of men ſpeak contemptibly of the Scripture, the Papiſts becauſe of their Traditions, and Enthuſiaſts becauſe of pretended revelations, whereas if men were more ſenſible of this hearts deceitfulneſſe, they would be more humble, and modeſt, and depending on the Scripture. Take heed of the ſubtle deceits of thy heart in this particular. Thus for Religion in the generall.

Then for Religious Duties. The heart is full of guile;

The hearts deceitfulneſſe in Religious Duties, is ſeen 1. In putting them off, &c.

Firſt, *To put them off and delay, to pretend one neceſſity or other, one buſineſſe or other, or to take a better time, or when their hearts are in a more heavenly frame.* Theſe and a thouſand ſuch dilatory excuſes the heart hath, to put off thoſe holy duties God calls them unto. Thus in the building of the Temple, which was a ſpeciall ſervice unto God, how many voluntary delayes did they make! It was not time yet, they ſaid, *Hag.* 1. 2. but the Prophets awakened them: *Is it time to build your own houſes and to let Gods houſe lye waſte?* they had time for every thing but that. Thus you may obſerve your hearts deceiving of you; You have no time for family-prayer, or private prayer morning and evening: Have you not time for the world? you are ſure to neglect no worldly occaſions, neither wouldſt thou heavenly opportunities, but that thy heart deceives thee. Its a great ſtratagem in Military affaires to put the enemy to diverſions, and thus the heart when its importuned to holy duties, then it ſuggeſts other buſineſſes, other occaſions, and ſo by this means the prize put into our hands is loſt: If men did practically obſerve their hearts, they would finde great hypocriſie herein. How often are they ſeduced as the Levite was, to ſtay a little and a little, to their inevitable ruine!

2. Or performing them with corrupt aims.

2. *In religious Duties, if our hearts by no ſubtle pretence can put them off, then there are corrupt and ſelf-ſeeking aimes which the heart is full of.* Oh in nothing is mans heart more deceitful, then in his aimes & ends: carrying it as if it were Gods glory and Gods honour they only propounded, when its only Self ſtill in all that they do: The duty may be an high ſpirituall duty, when the end is a low, vile, carnall end. Now while I am on this Point, I am in the very bowels of

of the hearts deceitfulneſſe: *Jehues* heart did notoriouſly deceive him, he carrieth it as if he were a great reformer, a deſtroyer of *Ahab's* idolatry; and thus ſo he ſaith he, *Come and ſee my zeal*, 1 *King.* 20. 18. *Is thy heart right as mine is?* yet in all theſe great and wonderfull works that he did, ſo that nothing was able to ſtand before him; yet the core of all this glorious fruit was rotten, he was a painted ſepulchre; It was not God nor his will he looke at; but his own temporall advancement: and therefore *Hoſ.* 1. 4. God threatens to puniſh him for all that he had done; for though he had done all that was in God's heart, yet he was not a man after God's heart in doing of it. The Phariſees are alſo a pregnant inſtance; how devout in religion, how zealous for faſting, for prayer, for the Sabath? but what was the root of all this religion? ambition, a deſire to be ſeen and applauded of men. Oh then ſee to your heart in this matter: Thou thinkeſt all is well, God muſt not only ſee leaves, but fruit on thee; but which ſpoils all, thoſe worms of vain-glory have ſpoiled thy chieſeſt duties; this is that ſweet poiſon which deſtroyeth inſenſibly.

3. *If the guile of the heart cannot hinder thee from doing religious duties, and that from pure grounds; then it labours to ſpoile all by pride and ſelf-confidence, after the duties are performed.* When the Diſciples had healed the ſick, and caſt out devils, ſee what pride tickled their hearts when they came boaſting to our Saviour of it: But our Saviour corrects them, *Luk.* 10. 10. *Rejoyce not in this, that the devils are ſubject unto you; but that your Names are written in Heaven:* while they caſt the devil out of men's bodies, diveliſh pride entered into their own ſouls: Thus thy heart doth often deceive thee; Haſt thou preached, haſt thou prayed, with much enlargement, with great aſſiſtance; how doth the heart begin to pleaſe and tickle us, Oh this is excellent, this is more then others can do? No wonder then if we are ſo often exhorted to watch and keep our hearts, ſeeing there are ſuch ſecret ſubtle wayes of deſtroying us; thou maiſt have ſailed proſperouſly through the wide Ocean, in the midſt of tempeſts and waves, and yet ſuffer ſhipwrack in the very haven.

3. Or elſe to ſpoile all by pride and ſelf-confidence after the duty is performed.

4. *The heart deceiveth us about religious duties, in thinking all is well ſo that they be done, though not in that fervent, lively and effectuall manner which God requireth.* No ſacrifice could be without fire, neither is any duty of religion well pleaſing to God, which comes not from fire in the heart; *Fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord*, Rom. 12. boiling over: and Chriſt ſaid, *The zeal of God's houſe had conſumed him.* And *Rev.* 2. How ſeverely is the Church rebuked, not for groſſe ſinnes, but cold, negligent and decayed duties? hence *the fervent prayer of a righteous man is ſaid to prevail much*, Jam. 5. Prayer and all duties without zeal, are like a meſſenger without feet, a bird without wings; but whole heart doth not groſſely deceive him in this matter? I have prayed, I have heard the Word to day, he ſaith; but if aſked, with what zeal, heavenly mindedneſſe, with what unity of affections, , with what ſtrength of grace? his mouth is preſently ſtopt. Now is not this lukewarmneſſe in religion the great ſinne of all people? their hearts are not prepared, their ſouls not fitted and enlarged for heavenly communion with God. Its good to obſerve, that the ſame word is uſed often in the Scripture for *deceitfully* and *negligently*: *Curſed be he* (ſaith the Prophet) *that doth the work of God deceitfully* or *negligently*, Jer. 48. 10. as ſome tranſlate it, and ſo in many other places: And in a two-fold reſpect, negligence in holy duties may be called deceit; partly becauſe God is hereby defrauded of that honour and glory which is due to him. If thou waſt to ſpeak to a great Emperour, wouldſt thou not diligently attend to what thou ſayeſt, and to what carriage thou expreſſeſt? how much more to the great and mighty God? for that thou haſt defrauded God, as much as lyes in thee, in many duties. And then ſecondly, Negligence is deceit, becauſe it depriveth a man of all that ſpirituall benefit and heavenly advantage, which may be had by duties: great and glorious things are promiſed to every duty performed in an holy manner; but negligence in them, loſes all this ſpiri-

4. Alſo it appeares in duties, in thinking all is well if they be done, though not with that fervour, &c. as God requires.

mall benefit: They are so far from helping, that they endanger and double sinne upon the soul.

5. And by roving distractions in duty,

5. *The heart of man doth wonderfully deceive him; by roving distractions, and unseasonable thoughts that come in at those times:* Our hearts are upon other pleasing objects, while our bodies present themselves before God: Thus God complained of the *Jews*, that while they heard and offered sacrifice, *their hearts did run after covetousnesse*, Ezek. 33. 31. And thus some thought the *Sabbath a burthen*, that so they might be selling and buying again, *Amos* 8. 5. How doth the heart please it self, and lull it self even asleep, and that while in these holy performances!

6. In taking enlargement of parts, Intellectuall gifts, or transient affections for the pure workings of Grace.

6. *About religious duties the heart doth often deceive it self taking inlargement of parts, intellectual gifts, or sudden transient affections, for the true and pure workings of grace.* And no wonder if a mans heart doth often deceive him in this respect, because things are so alike; and if so be Divines be so much perplexed to give a difference only doctrinally between gifts and graces, how much more difficult is it for the affectionate part to make any such distinction? They that prophesied, prayed, and wrought miracles in Christs name, thought every thing well, and therefore confidently called *Lord, Lord*, not doubting of acceptance; yet Christ giveth them a repulse. Thus the temporary believer, that heareth the word, and receiveth it with joy, wonderfully deceives his own heart; as if those heavenly affections *David* speaks of, were now burning in his breast. And certainly this lying deceit is very much in many mens hearts; how could such grievous scandals and apostasies be abroad in the world, but that men took religious parts and abilities for graces? they having the appearances, but not the substance, did soon vanish into nothing: Look then for better and more enduring things, then those of the minde only: There may be great gifts in thy prayer, when there is no grace in it, and so it is a sacrifice without salt.

7. And are most damnable when made a covering for ungodly actions.

Lastly, *The guile of a mans heart about religious duties, is then most damnable, when they are made a blinde or covering for carnall and ungodly actions.* This hath been so common, though so horrid, that it gave occasion to that Proverb, *In Nomine Domini incipit omne malum*: *Judas* covetously desiring money, made a fair pretence; *Why was this ointment spent? it might have been sold and given to the poor.* *Absolon* intending that unnaturall treason against his father, pretends a vow upon him, which he must perform. The Pharisees that condemned Christ, pretended their great grief, because of the blasphemy they said he spoke: This is high hypocrisie, to make any thing of Religion, a cloak for impiety.

Use of further Exhortation; Let not this truth go from your mindes, ears, and hearts; till, as *Elishaes* body upon the dead Child, it hath produced spiritual life and vigour in you: Let this word preached, be as the womans leaven hid in three pecks of meal, which leavened the whole; in thy understanding, will, and affections, leavening the whole man: Oh, whose heart doth not need this fire to purge out all his drosse! To be deceived in religious things, is as much above all worldly things, as the soul is above the body. Dost thou not hear the damned in hell, cry out in this particular, more then in any thing else? Oh we miserable deceived wretches! oh our hypocrisie! oh our fraudulent and cozening hearts! Thy heart hath deceived thee, the devil hath deceived thee, the world hath deceived thee, sin hath deceived thee: All these promised hony, but gave thee gall; and these, held out a baite, but an hook was swallowed down.

SERM. VI.

The last great Instance of the deceitfulnesse of the Heart, is on the right hand, and proper only to the Godly.

JEREM. 17. 9.

The Heart is deceitfull above all things, &c.

IN three Instances you have heard of the Deceitfullnesse of Mans Heart, and we may say, those *tria*, are *omnia*, for all things may almost be reduced to them; they being like the *tria principia* of three Principles in Philosophy. Yet there remaineth one Instance more of the Hearts Deceitfulnesse, which is in the clean contrary way to the former, and that is a deceitfulnesse of heart on the right hand, which is not common to all men, as for the most part the former were, but only to the godly. They do in some things very much deceive themselves; now its Gods command that we should *not turn either to the right hand or left*, Deut. 17. 11. The left hand the godly are carefull to avoid, but many times, they decline too much on the right hand: Not that a man can be indeed too godly, or exceeding in holinesse, but he may, in using or heaping up more meanes as he thinks for godlinesse, then God hath appointed, seem to be so: *Solomon* hath a saying, *Be not just over much*, Eccles. 7. 16. Its not his intent to forbid the heighth and exactnesse of godlinesse, for we are commanded to love God, with all our heart, and minde, and strength, *Cum omni valde tuo*, as they translate it: here you see nothing will serve, but all of every thing a man hath, and *nihil est extra totum*, no thing is more then all: *but overmuch righteousnesse is either to go to the* summum jus *not observing that equity and condescension as in some cases is required*: This *Joseph* avoided, when seeing *Mary* to be great with childe, he thought to put her away privately, *Mat.* 2. and because of this condescension, he is said to be righteous, that is, equitable; *or else it is in a rigid and superstitious observation of things unessentiall to piety and justice which indeed are not.* The hearts then of the godly being full of deceit this way, I shall take notice of some particulars therein: and the rather, because this text is much pressed by *Bellarmine* and Papists, That no man can be assured when he is in the state of grace, because the heart is deceitfull: and truly the godly many times when they hear so much of the hypocrisie and guile of the heart, are ready to be beaten out of their confidence: *first they begin to fear, then from fears come doubts, from doubts come direct perswasions and cals of any grace in them.* But let not any godly hearer, while we preach of this guile of the heart, think we commend doubting of all that God hath done for them: do not run upon one rock while you seek to avoid another. When *John Baptist* was to prepare a way for Christ, he was not only to level the mountaines, but to raise up the valleyes; therefore on the right hand, thy heart may deceive thee thus:

1. *When under this pretence of deceitfulnesse, thou doubtest of all in thee:* and so whereas this text vouchsafeth good milk, thou wringest it till blood come. Now this

1. When under this pretence

of deceitfulnesse thou doubtest of all in thee.

this is impudent couzening, to cheat thee while thou art complaining of cheating: to deceive thee, while thou art a complaining of the deceitfulnesse thereof. When our Saviour did in so many places discover how far men might go in religious duties, and have religious affections, yet have no root, be but on no sure foundation; this was not to make all his hearers be in a continuall doubt and agony, whether ever they were sound at heart or no, but to make way by diligent examination, for a good established assurance: As our Saviour at another time brought arguments by way of tryall to prove he was not the Messias, or the sonne of *David*; but when he argued thus, it was only *tentative*, not to make them question it, but seeing the objection removed, to be the further assured of it. Thus *Paul*, Heb. 6. when he doth so fearefully speak those thundering words, concerning men enlightened, *and being partakers of the holy Ghost*, and yet revolting; he did it not that the truly godly should be upon perpetuall uncertainties, and daily torments of conscience whether they be so or no; *for* saith he, *I hope better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speake.* Take heed then that thy heart deceive thee not in this point, even whilst thou heares of the hypocrisie that is in all we do, that therefore thou question all; this is great weaknesse yea and unthanksfulnesse, not to take notice of what God hath done for thee. It was great injudiciousnesse in the Academicks of old, that because every thing might be disputed, so probably, to hold nothing was wholly known; as in these dayes, of those who are called Seekers, who because of Arguments rosted on all sides, think there is no true Church, or Ministry, or Ordinances any where, in the world: and therefore as the Jews look for a Messias, so they for a Church to come that they may joyn unto. Thus, it is as great weaknesse in a godly man to question his repentance, his faith, his graces which God hath wrought in him, because the hypocrites heart tels him he hath such, when indeed he hath none. Even as if a man awake, should doubt whether he be awake or in a dreame, because men in a dreame are sometimes really perswaded they are doing such things, which indeed they do not. Why is it thou hast such complaints and groans in thee, if there be not spirituall life in thee? Whence are those hungrings and thirstings in thee, but still from God's Grace in thee? Because a man may be deceived, it doth not follow, that in every thing he is deceived. A *Cretian* Poet said, the *Cretians were alwayes lyars*, Tit. 1. 12. yet that *Cretian* did not lye in that saying, for the Apostle saith, *that witnesse is true*. The heart therefore may be considered as the fountain of all rationall and animall actions, and so its not deceitfull; for we can tell, what we think, what we love, what we desire. 2. As sanctified principle of supernaturall and spirituall actions, and so a man may perceive when he hath faith as he said, *Lord I believe*, Mark. 9. 24. or when he loveth God, as *Peter* to Christ, *Thou knowest I love thee*, Joh. 21. 15. for this deceitfulnesse and guile is in its predominancy taken away. Though deceit be in a godly man's heart, yet it doth not reign there. 3. As corrupted originally, and filled with self-love and self-flattery, and thus it is alwayes either deceived, or deceiving of a man: So that the consideration of the heart of man, in these three respects, naturall, supernaturall and corrupted, may take away all doubts.

And when a godly man judgeth himself when he is under temptations or dissertions.

2. *Even the godly man's heart deceiveth him on the right hand, when he judgeth himself, in the black temptations and misty clouds that are upon his heart.* This is necessary for some godly persons to consider; Oh they can with sad tears and bitter sighs tell you, The heart is deceitfull, when you tell them, God hath wrought great and good things in their souls, That they do repent, and do love God. But then they never think that the heart is also deceitfull in telling us, that we are not the Children of God, we have not his Spirit, his gracious comforts do not belong to us; oh they never think their hearts may deceive them this way; whereas in the tempted soul, nothing is more ordinary. As thou must *not bear false witnesse against thy neighbour*, so neither against thy

own

own self: It's not pride, but thankfulnesse, to acknowledge that grace God hath wrought in thee. Oh then say, all that heavy judgment thou passest upon thy self, all those hard thoughts that are against thy own self come from a deceitful heart: You dare not judge another man to be an hypocrite; you dare not have hard thoughts against others, why then against thy own self? Its said in Philosophy, That sense is not deceived about its proper object, that is, if it have a fit and proper medium. Therefore, because the water is not a disposed medium, the eye judgeth streight a stick crooked, and so it is here. Thy heart looks upon all thou hast or doest, through water, and therefore thy upright heart seemeth crooked.

3. *The godly mans heart deceives him, by making false consequences*, especially after this kind of way. 3. By making false consequences.

First, Because the heart perceiveth much sin, and great filth; therefore it argueth, I may not lay hold upon Christ, I may not come neer the Promise, no more then *a beast neer the Mount*: Thus *Peter* he said, *Lord depart from me, for I am a sinner*: Here was a false consequence, a *non sequitur*; The more sinfull and miserable thou art, the greater need of Christ: Its fit a *Lazarus* should be laid before the rich mans gate: the *wounded man* of *Jericho* was a fit object to have *oyl into his wounds*. Sinne humbled for, and groaned under, should not drive from Christ but to Christ. See how Christ holdeth out that Scepter of grace, *Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden, & I will give rest to your souls*, Mat. 11. There is no rest or ease for thy turtle dove, thy soul, till it come into this Ark. Oh then let not thy heart any more deceive thee, by such arguments as these, What? that such a sinner! so great an offender! dare thou think Christ will own such as thou art? Thou canst not abide thy self, and will Christ abide thee? but rather argue the clean contrary: If I were not a sinner there were no need of Christ: if God were not angry with me, there needed no Mediatour: therefore because I feel my self thus desperately sick, I will go to the Physitian. It's good to observe, that the wayes which were made to the *City of refuge*, were made even and ease by speciall direction from God; that so the *manslayer when pursued*, might the more easily run thither: This City of refuge is Christ, and God hath so graciously provided that no difficulties, no arguments, no doubts or scruples should be in the way for thee to be made partaker of him: Away therefore with thy deceitful heart, when thou findest it diverting of thee from Christ. 1.

Secondly, The heart of a godly man is deceitfull in this argument it makes; That they have no true grace in them, they do not love God, or delight in holy things, because they find more sensible affection to wordly things then they do to God: The Scripture say they, requires that we should *love God with all our heart and strength*, yea that we *love Christ better then father, or mother, or children*: Now saith the godly heart, I do not find such love, I do not take such delight in approaching near to God, as in earthly comforts. Now here is also a defect, for want of the knowledge of a necessary distinction: There is a twofold love; a sensible love, which consists in the sensitive part, and is drawn out by sensible objects; and there is a rationall love, which they call *amor appretiativus*, whereby in our rational part we set an high esteem, & do judge such an object to be enjoyed before all, & we would lose all things rather then that: Now there is no godly man, though he may find sensible love moving of him to sensible objects, but yet in his inward judgment & esteem, if he were put to his to part with God or Christ, rather then those earthly mercies, he would choose to leave all, as *Moses* did the treasures in *Pharaoh's* Court rather then to have any pleasures of sinne for a season. Therefore it was not a good argument which *Joab* used to *David*, when he saw him so passionately bewailing the death of his son *Absolom*, and refusing all comfort: He bids him leave off mourning: and *now I see thou lovest thy enemies better then thy friends*: 2 Sam. 19. 6. if all we had died, so that *Absalom* had lived, thou wouldst not have cared. This was II.

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no good argument, nor though *David* did passionately as a father, weep for *Absolom*, yet in his judgment he thought it was better, if it must be, to have him destroyed, then to have his whole Army and Kingdom lost, and for that end did he take up arms against *Absolom*. So then, let not thy heart deceive thee, as if thou hast no grace, when, because thou canst not find such sensible affections as thou desirest, yet its good to labour and pray for these; as *David* said, not only *his soul but his flesh*, his sensitive part *did long after God*: and commonly where that apprehensive love is, there it overflowes all the inferior parts of the soul, even as the oyl on *Aarons* head descended downwards.

III. Thirdly, The heart of a godly man deceiveth it self in making this consequence: I do not feel my self in the state of grace, I have no assurance that I am sanctified and regenerated, I do not find Gods favour upon me; yea I feel the clean contrary: therefore they conclude they are not in the state of grace, or in the love of God. This is also a frequent deceit, tender hearts are fallen into; they argue from the appearance of things to the reality; Even as the Disciples thought Christ a spirit, and so were greatly afraid. But (alas) the godly as soon as ever they are put into a state of grace, must know this, that there is a life of faith, and life of sense; now according to sense we are many times, in our own feelings, a barren wilderness, a very hell, as that good man cried out, *Gehenna sum, Domine, gehenna sum*; but things are not therefore so, because men feel so; *We walk by faith, not by sense*; 2 Cor. 5. 7. Take a godly man, for his outward condition in the world, he is so opposed, so hated, meets with so much misery, that of all the men in the world, you would think he were not the man whom God loved; so saith the Apostle, *If we had hope only in this world, we were of all men most miserable*, 1 Cor. 15. And *we are as sheep appointed for the slaughter*. It was so in the old Testament, and the Apostle confirmes it in the new: thus it is according to sense; but it is far otherwise according to faith. But the godly mans heart deceiveth him, he speaketh according to sense, *Zion hath said, the Lord hath forsaken me*, but it was not so, *Isa.* 49. 14. And thus it is in our inward condition: The godly are many times in the dark; they are like *Paul* and his fellow passengers in the sea, that had been many daies in sad tempests, and had not seen the Sun; and they say, according to sense, *God hath forsaken me*, *I am wholly left*, I am become a firebrand of hell, there is no more hope for me. Oh pity me, all you that know me, for God hath filled me with bitternesse; now all this while thy heart is deceiving thee: Thou judgest as thou feelest, whereas you should judge according to the principles of faith, as *Habakkuk* did, *Though the figtree do not blossom*, &c. *yet I will rejoyce in the God of my salvation*, Hab. 3.

IV. Fourthly, This false consequence the heart of a godly man is deceived with, because it doth not find that it can do the things God requireth, with so full and perfect a heart as they desire, but they find so much backwardnesse, dulnesse, listlesnesse, that they are so many lumps of earth; therefore they think they do nothing as they ought to do, not distinguishing between the truth of grace, and the perfection of it; or the presence of sinne, and dominion of it: In this particular the people of God do much delude themselves. Whereas the Promises are made to the truth of grace, not to the degrees of it: If there be true faith, true repentance, they may claime the promise, though they have not so much grace as *Paul* or *David* had. A childe hath as truly mans nature in him as a Giant: A drop of water is as truly water as an ocean, and the least Starre is of a celesticall nature, though it be not the Sunne. We read of the incestuous person, that he was almost *swallowed up*, 2 *Cor.* 2. 7. with grief about his sinne. His heart deceiveth him, as if he were not to moderate his sorrow, and to keep it in an happy consistency with faith and joy in the holy Ghost.

Thus

Thus you have heard, how the heart of a man doth deceive him on the right hand, by making falſe conſeq ences.

I proceed to a fourth Inſtance of the deceitfulneſſe of a mans heart, and that is, *Out of good affections and inventions, as we think, to paſſe by the rule we ought to walk by.* No doubt, when *Peter* heard Chriſt ſpeaking of his ſufferings, and ſaid, *Maſter ſave thy ſelf*, he thought it was love and affection to Chriſt: but how ſeverely did Chriſt reprove him, telling him, *he ſavoured not the things of God, but of man*, Mat. 16. 23. So when the *Samaritans* would not receive Chriſt, the Diſciples preſently would have *fire called from Heaven to conſume them*; but our Saviour tells them, *They did not know what ſpirit they were of*, Luk. 9. 55. They thought it had been zeal and love to Chriſt, but it was indeed raſhneſſe and carnall revenge.

4. When, out of good affections and inventions (as they think) they paſſe the rule they ought to walk by.

Laſtly, *The heart of a man deceiveth him on the right hand, when he affects or expects ſuch an high way of perfection in any Church, either for doctrine, Diſcipline or converſation, that is above the Scripture direction, or promiſe for any ſuch thing.* For as, ſometimes a godly man is apt to conclude he hath no true grace in him, becauſe he diſcerneth ſome failings; ſo he is ready to think, no Churches are true Churches wherein any defects are. Now the Apoſtle bids, *not to be wiſe above that which is written*; not to affect higher wiſdome then is revealed: In the Parable, when the tares were ſown with the wheat, the ſervants asked their maſter, if they ſhould go and pluck them up; Not ſo, ſaith the maſter, *leſt ye pluck up the wheat alſo*, Mat. 13. 29. and concludes that at the end of the world, and not till then, God will remove all ſcandals. Purity of Ordinances, and reformation of Churches, is alwayes to be prayed for and endeavoured: *I pray God you do no evil*, ſaid *Paul*, viz. ſuch evil as ſhould infect the Church and deſerve ſevere diſcipline; but to think to have a Church conſiſting of perfect members without ſinne, as ſome have dreamed of, is to make a ſpirituall *Utopia*, as he did a civill one.

5. And when he affects or expects ſuch perfection in any Church, that is above the Scriptures direction or promiſe.

Uſe of admonition to the godly, That their hearts do not deceive them on the right hand, as wicked mens do on the left. Indeed becauſe the number of the godly are few, therefore the neceſſity of this doctrine is not of ſo generall an extent; but if this Sermon be a means to undeceive any godly man, to help him out of the depths and whirlpooles he is ſunk into, its labour well ſpent: Thy heart deceived thee while thou wert a ſinner, and now it doth while thou art a penitent: then it deceived thee in thy duty, now in thy comforts and thy way to them: Never conſult with thy own heart, how to have peace, joy and aſſurance, *Tolle te à te, impedis tè*, ſaid *Auſtin* well. All the while thou haſt rejected the promiſes, refuſed comfort, thou haſt been a deceived man: Grace was in thy heart, Chriſt dwelled in thee, and thou didſt not know it: Therefore let all ſorts of men, the wicked and the godly, take heed of this deceitfull heart.

SERM. VII.

The wofull aggravations of the Deceitfulneſs of Mans Heart.

JER. 17. 9.

The heart is deceitfull above all things, &c.

WE have inſtanced in three eminent particulars, wherein the Deceitfulneſs of the Heart doth manifeſt it ſelf, I now come to ſhew the ſad *aggravations* of this. For it ought not to ſeem a light thing unto you while you hear this truth, yea you are to accompany the hearing of it with fear and trembling, with ſadneſſe and deep groans. *Jacob* did ſeriouſly expoſtulate with *Laban*, Saying *Why haſt thou deceived me thus often in changing my wages?* But this was in an earthly matter only. Thou mayeſt cry out, and ſay, Oh my wretched and ſinfull heart, why haſt thou deceived me, not this ten times, but this thouſand of times, and that about my everlaſting happineſs! Its a rule that ſome give. *When a man hath once deceived you, never to truſt that man again*; Yet thy heart doth daily deceive thee, & notwithſtanding this, thou doſt daily believe it. Well, let the aggravation of this dreadfull condition in many particulars make thee bewail it, and if thou art once well inſtructed about it, thou wilt never be deceived again. When thou haſt warning given thee, and thou doeſt believe it, it muſt needs be unpardonable folly to truſt it again: When *Paul* was informed that ſpies were laid in wait to kill him, he preſently prevents their malicious deſign: Thus when thou art informed how deceitfull thy heart is, alwayes lying in wait to deſtroy thee, if thou haſt any care or love to thy ſoul, thou wilt be diligent to prevent it. What was ſaid of a certain people, that lay skulking up and down in ſecret places, it was *difficilius invenire, quàm vincere*, harder to find them out, then to conquer them; ſo its here, Its harder to find out the ſecret and ſubtil luſts of thy ſoul, then to mortifie them: get them out of their holes, as you do Moles or Worms out of the ground, and then you may eaſily take them.

The heart is ſo deceitfull, that it takes away all ſenſe and ſuſpicion of any ſuch thing.

First, *Therefore this deceitfulneſſe is ſadly to be aggravated, becauſe it takes away all ſenſe and ſuſpicion of any ſuch thing.* The deceitfull heart is accompanied with ſenſleſneſſe and ſtupidity: If there were any ſuſpition or fear, then it would not do ſo much hurt; but the heart being deceitfull, there is no holy fear or trembling, no jealouſie at all. Experience in all mens hearts doth teſtifie this: Come to any man in his naturall eſtate, Hath he any ſuſpicion of himſelf? Doth he ever think, what if I be not yet in the right way? How if I bleſſe my ſoul when God abhorreth me? Doth not every man as *Agag*, delude his own ſoul, ſaying, *The worſt is over*; He will not ſo much as begin to queſtion any thing; Whether he doth truly repent? whether he hath a ſaving faith? whether his life be a Scripture-life? So that herein our deceitfulneſſe is very deſtructive, becauſe it takes away all ſenſe and perceiving of any danger. Now as thoſe diſeaſes are moſt dangerous which take away all ſenſe and feeling,

ing, or which are like health, that the diſeaſed man promiſeth himſelf, he ſhall be well for all this; So the heart, though groſly polluted and obnoxious to Gods wrath, yet taking away any fear or ſuſpition of it, this doth the more certainly kill and deſtroy.

2. It puts a man into a ſelf-flattery,

Secondly, *It's ſaid, becauſe this deceitfulneſſe doth not only thus deprive of all holy fear, which is the beginning of all wiſdom, but it puts a man into a ſelf flattery, even into a contrary diſpoſition thereunto*: So that in ſtead of trembling, it's full of ſelf-juſtification, of ſelf-excuſe; it applieth all comforts, all hopes to it ſelf. That as the devil, in a great lie, ſaid, *All the glory and the Kingdomes of the world were his*; ſo they ſay, All the glory and promiſes do belong to them. The Phariſees, how ſtrangely were they deceived in this particular, *that they were Abraham's ſeed*, Joh. 8. and *that the promiſes did belong unto them*; therefore *John* Baptiſt, knowing the root of all their deſtruction did ariſe from ſuch a deceitfull principle, he layed his Ax to it, when he ſaid, *Think not to ſay within your ſelves, We have Abraham to our Father*, Mat. 3. 9. Think not to ſay within your ſelves; Their hearts did often ſpeak this. And thus (Beloved), could we ſee into mens hearts, or hear what they ſpeak, this would be the great talk within: Tuſh, what matter is it for what the Miniſters of God, threaten us with; they would trouble us and grieve us, they would caſt us out of the quiet poſſeſſion we have had a long time; But we will not be feared, we have good hearts, and we doubt not but to do as well as any of them all, Oh herein is the bloudy aggravation of our deceitfull hearts, That they bid us *take our eaſe, eat, drink, and be quiet*, when yet every night or day, our ſouls may be arreſted for hell. The Church of *Laodicea* was thus deceived, when ſhe ſaid, *She was full, and rich, and lacked nothing*: Alas, what a contrary ſentence did God give? *She was naked and miſerable, and wanted all things*. Thus it is with thee; Thou ſayeſt, My heart is good, I repent of my ſins, I am reconciled to God, when as God affirms the clean contrary.

3. And ſo is made thereby incurable.

Thirdly, *This aggravation is heavy, becauſe hereby the heart is made incurable.* There is no poſſible way, in reſpect of humane power, to cure this diſeaſe; Hence it followeth; *And deſperately wicked*. So this conſideration ſhould be *jaculum in corde*, a very ſharp arrow darted in the heart: For what is more miſerable, than to be incurably miſerable? Now in two reſpects the hearts deceitfulneſſe makes it *deſperately wicked*:

1. Becauſe *hereby the initial and preparative work to converſion is wholly extinguiſhed*; For in this doth the antecedent or initiall work of repentance lie, to diſlike and abhor our former ſins, to deteſt and cloath our ſelves, to judge our ſelves with a ſevere indignation and revenge: How can this be while the heart is poſſeſſed with deceitfull thoughts of its own goodneſſe and happineſſe? Hence the Scripture doth ſo frequently exhort them *to ſearch and try their wayes, and ſo to turn unto God*: Thus *the fear of God is the beginning of wiſdom*, Prov. 17. Oh then wonder not to ſee men ſo far from *Ephraims* holy deportment, bewailing themſelves, ſaying, *What have they done?* While they are thus confident of all things to be well within them, *Timor facit conſiltantes*, fear makes men prone to ask counſell, and to enquire what is fit to be done. Hence the *Pſalmiſt* prayeth, *Put them in fear, (O Lord) that they may know themſelves to be but men*, Pſa. 9. 20. Thus mayeſt thou pray, Put me, O Lord, in an holy fear and godly trembling, that I may know how great a ſinner I have been, and wherein I have gone aſtray.

2. The incurableneſſe of it doth appear, becauſe of the difficulty there is for the Miniſtry to come at it, and to ſearch into all the dark corners of the heart; for although the word of God be *a light*, yet there are ſo many ſecret windings and dark holes in the ſoul, that the Word doth not ſo eaſily reach it: Hence the Jews in the Old Teſtament, and the Phariſees in the new, were not cured, notwithſtanding thoſe powerfull and piercing Sermons which they conſtantly

heard because through the deceit and guile of their hearts they repelled all? They would not apply threatnings to themſelves: Howſoever it was with others, yet ſtill they inſtilled themſelves: Indeed *the Word of God* is ſaid to be *a two edged ſword, and to pierce through the moſt inward and ſecret thoughts and intentions of the heart*, Heb. 4. 12. Even as the Sacrifice was opened, and all the entrails were made manifeſt: Thus ſometimes God bleſſeth the Word that it diſcovers a mans ſelf to himſelf, it makes him know all the ſecret and hidden wickedneſſe of the heart, which he never was convinced of; but for the moſt part, therefore his Word doth not profit, becauſe it cannot reach to the heart. As thoſe diſeated parts can never be cured which cannot have the medicine in its vertue come to them if you ask them, Why do ſo many Sermons miſcarry? Why hath the word of God no better effect? All may be reſolved to this, the hearts deceitfulneſs: If mens conſciences were true to them if their hearts did not delude them with many a lie, the ſoul could no longer withſtand, but cry out: I am the ſinner you ſeek for, I am the tranſgreſſor, I cannot hide my ſelf any longer.

4. This deceitfulneſſe is aggravated in that it is, of the heart.

Fourthly, *This deceitfulneſſe is heightned in that it is of the heart, the whole of a man*: Howſoever ſometimes the word [*heart*] is put as diſtinct from the mind and ſoul, yet when it is alone, it ſignifieth all the parts, abilities, and powers of the ſoul: ſo that [*heart*] here in the text, is as much as, the underſtanding is deceitfull, the will is deceitfull, the affections are deceitfull, the conſcience is deceitfull, a man hath not one faithfull friend in his heart. It was the ſaying of an Heathen, *He that would be good, muſt have either a faithfull friend, or a bitter enemy*. He will never know his faults, but by one of theſe two kindes; now thy heart is neither a true friend, nor a ſevere enemy, but a crafty flatterer, that ſayeth and ſpeaketh all things as thou wouldeſt have it. All the hope in a man, might be thought to be his Conſcience, that that is not deceitfull, for how often doth that accuſe and condemn even againſt mans will? How often doth that tell the truth, and doth not ſpare thee? Can this therefore be thought to be deceitfull? Yes; To the unclean, even his very conſcience is polluted, *Tit.* 1. 15. for many mens conſciences are bribed and taken off from their duty: Theſe doggs will not bark, theſe ſpies are corrupted, and bring no true intelligence: It bleſſeth when it ſhould condemn; it excuſeth when it ſhould accuſe. Beſides how often is it erroneous, and being deceived it ſelf, deceiveth the whole man? Thoſe that thought they did God *good ſervice* in *killing Chriſt's Diſciples*, their conſciences deceived them: *Paul* when he thought he was bound to do what he did in perſecuting the Church of God, his conſcience deceived him, inſomuch that his conſcience which we would think, was the only faculty left in man, that like *Job's* Meſſenger had eſcaped, and brought the ill tidings of all that evil that had befallen us; even this alſo, is corrupted as well as the reſt: our Counſellour, our Monitor, is become unfaithfull to us; ſo then, how much is this deceitfullneſſe to be bewailed, when it hath infected the very whole of a man, nothing doth eſcape this defilement. The *Pſalmiſt* cried out; *Helpe Lord, for the faithfull man is periſhed*, Pſalm. 12. Every one ſpake this to his neighbour: And thou mayeſt alſo cry out, Help (Lord) for all truth and faithfulneſſe is periſhed from within me; I have nothing in my heart or Soul that ſpeaks truth unto me.

5. And that it is about matters of the greateſt concernment.

Fifthly, *This deceitfulneſſe may be aggravated from the object matter in which we are thus deceived, and that is the matters of the greateſt and the higheſt concernments, even in things of eternity and everlaſting happineſſe*. Oh then be awakened, and come out of thy ſelf, for here thou art not deceived in matters of thy worldly and outward advantages, but about heaven and ſalvation. In all humane converſe, how careful are men not to be deceived; concerning their Evidences, and ſetling of any eſtate? How deſirous to take advice?

Now

Now how unreasonable then will it be, to suffer that *Delilah* within thy heart to deceive thee and betray thee in matters of eternall concernment? Oh fouls bowed down to the earth, and carelesse about all heavenly things? Oh this will be no excuse at the day of judgment, to say, The world, or sin, or thy own heart hath deceived thee; for God in this word hath given thee warning of this hypocrite in thy heart; Do not then sit and hear these things, as if they did not belong to thee. Thy heart it may be is deceiving thee at this very time, it's flattering and deluding thee, telling thee its well, when its not well, *calling evil good, and good evil*; and truly were this in fading and dying things, it were no such great matter, but being in things that continue and abide for ever, this should much trouble thee.

Sixthly, *This deceitfulnesse is heavy, because it makes our confusion the greater, when we see our selves frustrated of all our hopes, and the good things we promised our selves in earthly comforts.* How was the Church confounded, when she said, *She looked for salvation, but behold destruction*, but greater horror and amazement will surprize thee, when thou shalt cry out, I looked for heaven, but behold hell; I looked for happinesse, but behold eternall torments. If thou had never hoped, or promised better things to thy self, thy confusion would not have been so great: but for thee to live and die, speaking nothing but hopefull things to thy soul, and then be frustrate of all, this will cut to the very heart. As the foolish Virgins that hoped for immediate entrance into heaven, and looked for the smiles of the Bridegroom, but finding no access for themselves, and that they were wholly shut out, this made great amazement. Who can expresse the inward wounds and indignation *Haman* had, who hearing *Ahasuerus* enquiring, *What glory should be put upon him whom he should honour*, and *Haman* not doubting but he was the man, reckoneth up all the highest degrees of glory that could be; but when he saw it was not himself but *Mordecai*, he was deceived in his expectation, this could not but be daggers and words in his bowels. Oh then think what strong confusion will fall upon thee, when thou in thy life time, in thy sicknesse in all thy fears & calamities hast judged thy self one whom God will honour, whom God would save, and at the last be cast out from his presence, as the man whom God abominates. Do not deceive thy self, this may be thy case, though for the present thou doest not believe it, or much regard it.

6. This deceit frustrates men of all their hopes.

Seventhly, *This deceitfulnesse is the more to be aggravated, because hereby we are taken off from all spiritual watchfulnesse and diligence in our way to heaven.* We see the Scripture doth very frequently enjoyn this duty of watchfulnesse and praying, as being encompassed with many enemies, as being in danger from within and from without; Now the deceitfulnesse of the heart doth wholly neglect this duty, and these little thieves within, do open the door for the greater ones without: The devil, and the world, and sin, do so easily deceive thee, because thy own heart doth deceive thee; thereupon there is no strict watch kept, there is no constant and daily praying, and attending against all temptations; And thou mayest say, If it were an enemy or an open adversary that did work my ruine, it might be better born, but it's thou, O friend, my heart, that is alwayes with me, that liveth and moveth within me.

7. And hereby we are taken off from all spirituall watchfulnes.

I shall conclude with an Use of Instruction, concerning these Corollaries, or main necessary particular Points. *Use.*

1. Is the heart thus deceitfull, *Then how necessary is it to keep close to the Scripture which cannot lie or deceive us?* When in matters of Religion we go after our own hearts, or our own imaginations, which the Scripture so often forbids; or when we believe our own spirits, or other mens spirits, without the word, this is to follow an *ignis fatuus*. In religion and piety, it is a dangerous argument to say, Me thinks this is piety, and me thinks this is fit worship, when we have not the Scripture command: There are no such lying and false Books,

as that of thy own heart is; and therefore wander not from the Word for better believe affections, enlargements, or strong impressions upon thy spirit, though obtained by prayer, unlesse warranted by the Word? This deceit is *dulce venenum*, sweet poyson, and many have greedily swallowed it down.

2. Is the heart deceitfull? *Then believe not thy self in such reasonings as these are*, If I had such power, if I had such authority, if I had such an estate, or so much wealth, I would do this or this. Herein many do greatly err, for when God many times gives them their heart's desire, they do no more good then others, they grow as proud and earthly as others, *Magistratus virum indicat.* It was said of one *Roman* Emperour, *Dignus imperio*, in all men's judgments, *si non imperâsset*; Thus thou thinkest before thou hast honour, wealth, thou wouldest be so righteous, so just, so holy, but when thou art raised up to such a pinacle, thou throwest thy self headlong into such sins as others do. So men concerning their outward estate, they are apt to set bounds; If they had so much, if they could obtain but to such an estate, they would desire no more, whereas, alas their hearts deceive them; for when they have so much, then still they desire more, and so addition doth not quench but increase the thirst.

3. Is the heart thus deceitfull? *Then wonder not, to see men practise those sins which they condemn in another.* Though the Apostle *Rom.* 2. 1. saith, *Such a man is inexcusable that condemneth another man, and yet doth the same things.* He that teacheth another should not be wicked, yet he is wicked himself; so the cause of all this is evident, *viz.* the deceitfulnesse of a man's heart? Even as the eye doth see other things, but it doth not see it self; so the heart of a man condemneth the pride, worldlinesse, self-seeking in another, that it doth not behold in it self. So wonder not to see a man speak against those sins in the generall, which yet he in his particular will daily commit; for as long as men have these impostures within them, it cannot be otherwise.

Lastly; Is the heart deceitfull? *Then we see great reason, why the Scripture doth so much command watchfulnesse, sobriety, mourning, fasting, prayer, and all such religious exercises*; For all is too little, seeing our hearts do easily seduce: If you be not alwayes on your watch-tower, if you do not constantly observe what thines come in, and go out of thy heart, it will be betrayed, and thou know nothing.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of Vprightneſſe of the Heart, or the Heart without Guile.

SERM. VIII.

Opening the Scripture words that hold forth Uprightneſs of Heart, and ſhewing which are the Characters of a Heart without Guile.

PSAL. 32. 2.

Bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no Guile.

THE excellency of this Pſalme is notified in the inſcription, *Maſchil*, which is as much as, A Pſalme to give inſtruction, and the two firſt verſes ſeem to be a doctrine breathed out from the inward agonies and ſad combates the Pſalmiſt had in his ſoul, becauſe of the guilt of ſinne within him; Its a truth woven out of his own experience from his inward parts, as the Silk-worm ſpins her excellent materials from her own bowels.

In the words we have a deſcription of Bleſſednesſe, which is the chief end of Man, though they wander from the way and meanes to it. And in this conſider firſt, The ſubject who are bleſſed: and ſecondly, The ſpecification of the bleſſing. The ſubject deſcribed to be bleſſed, are not ſuch whom the world doth account bleſſed, for ſome ſay, Bleſſed are the Rich in this world; ſome, Bleſſed are the Honoured in this world, others, Bleſſed are the Powerfull and Mighty in the world; but none of theſe things are named by the Pſalmiſt: he found by his own experience that all the Kingdomes and Honours in the world were nothing to the having ſin pardoned: Oh no, the troubled heart for ſin, would give a world, if it were in his power, for the light of his Gods countenance; for then you ſee what is Bleſſednesſe: and though man ſenſeleſſe of the wrath of God, that never found the ſhakings of this foundation within through ſinne, is not apt to be affected with this bleſſednesſe, yet when once you come to be ſpiritually wounded, you will then cry out for this oyle to be powred into you. Now the ſubject deſcribed, is one that hath theſe two qualifications, which are the ſumme and epitome of all true Chriſtianity, *Juſtification* and *Sanctification*: Juſtification, is in thoſe paſſages, which contain *remiſſion of ſinne*; and *Sanctification*, in that of my text, *in whoſe ſpirit there is no Guile.*

Its

ſelling my birth-right to Eſau for one morſell, only to ſatisfie the hunger of the nature of blindneſſe is called to be in Remiſſion of ſinnes: which is amplified by three emphaticall expreſſions. 1. *Whoſe ſinne is forgiven*: in the Hebrew it is, which is lifted up; and thereby is excellently ſhewed, That ſin lyeth like an heavy burden and a weighty load upon man, as one that is to be preſſed to death, now forgiveneſſe is an eaſe or a taking off this burden. 2. It ſaith, *whoſe ſinne is covered*: That denoteth the loathſome and foul nature of ſinne, how abominable and provoking it is in the Lords eyes againſt our own ſouls. 3. *Whoſe iniquity is not imputed*; and that implieth ſinne to be a great debt which we owe to God; and being not able to diſcharge it, God he doth graciouſly forgive it, and blot it out; ſo that when thy ſinnes are forgiven, it is as if thou never hadſt been a ſinner, as if never any ſuch iniquity had been found in thy hands: This is very comfortable to meditate on; for the true godly man is apt to think, Oh if I had never been ſuch a ſinner, if I had never defiled my ſoul by ſuch abominations, I could then have rejoyced as well as others. Think of this, When ſinne is forgiven, it is as if it had never been committed by thee.

But I come to the ſecond qualification, which containeth the inward reall Property of thoſe that are bleſſed, (as the other was externall adherent, juſtification being without us, though received by us,) and that is deſcribed in theſe words, *In whoſe ſpirit there is no guile*: He doth not ſay, in whoſe mouth, tongue, or hands, but in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile. The ſpirit of man doth ſignifie in the Scripture, the chief, ſublime and moſt excellent part of the ſoul, and he ſaith, *in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile*, becauſe that is a generall to all ſinne, as *uprightneſſe* is to all graces: or elſe more particularly to his own guile, becauſe as followes in the Pſalme, He kept ſilence, would not confeſſe his ſinnes, would not take the right way for pardon; and this made his heart like a very hell, this made the guilt of ſinne burn like tormenting fire in his conſcience, till at laſt he began to deal plainly and ſincerely with God, in confeſſing his iniquity, and then his ſoul began to have peace and enjoy pardon.

Obſerv. Guileſſe men the only pardoned and bleſſed men.

Obſerv. *That thoſe only have bleſſedneſſe in pardon of their ſinnes, whoſe ſpirits are without guile.* Not that any man living can be wholly without ſome degree of this leaven in his heart, but we ſpeak of the *conſtant predominant and ſtiled power of it.* *David* was bleſſed in the pardon of his ſins, yet he had graduall and partiall guile or deceit in his ſoul; the Greek word δολος from whence is the Latin *dolus*, comes from δολοω, to hurt and diminiſh, becauſe deceit uſually doth ſo; and from this root alſo *dolor* doth come, becauſe it wonderfully hurts and conſumes the body, grief being rottenneſſe to the bones.

Now becauſe its a rule that contraries do illuſtrate one another; let us take notice of thoſe words that are oppoſite to this guileſull heart: and the firſt is, that of *an innocent heart* commended to the godly by Chriſt, *be innocent as Doves*, Mat. 10. 16. Doves are far from all guile and craft, the Greek word ακεραιοι, ſome make it to be from α privative, and κερας an horn, as much as without an horn, not to be offenſive and malicious againſt others; but it's better deriving it from α privative and μισγω to mingle, as much as that which is without mixture, for this is an heart without guile, that doth not debaſe it ſelf by mixtures with any inferior thing to it, as gold is debaſed if it be mingled with braſſe, or any other inferior metall: and thus the ſoul is greatly defiled, when it doth inordinately love and delight in theſe things below.

Another word is *Phil.* 1. 10. ειλικρινεις, I pray God, ye be *ſincere*; ειλη are the ſun-beams, and ſome make it an alluſion to the Eagle who doth try her ſpurious young ones by beholding the ſun-beams; but that ſeemeth to be a fable. Others expreſſe it thus; that as by the ſun-beams we diſcern thoſe little motes in

in the eye which before were not diſcerned, ſo it's here, an heart without guile being inlightned by God's Spirit, doth diſcover thoſe hidden and ſecret corruptions which it never took any notice of before.

The laſt I ſhall inſtance in, is, *ἁπλότης, ſimplicity* or plainneſſe of heart, when there are no folds as it were upon the ſoul, but all is made manifeſt.

Notes of a heart without guile.

In the next place let us conſider, what things are either conſtitutive of, or conſequentiall unto, this heart without guile.

1. Godly plainneſſe and ſimplicity of ſpirit.

And 1. *It lyeth in a godly plainneſſe and ſimplicity of ſpirit*; not delighting in falſe coverings, and ſubtle excuſes for ſin: This *Adam* wanted, when he laid all the blame on *Eve*, and *Eve* when ſhe put all upon the Serpent; *David's* heart likewiſe did run over with his guile, when in the ſubtle murder of *Uriah*, he made many pretences and fair excuſes for ſo horrible impiety: on the contrary we ſee *Paul* greatly rejoycing in that godly ſimplicity he uſed about preaching of the Goſpel: *This Scripture-ſimplicity though ſcoffed at and condemned by the crafty foxes of the world, will at laſt appear true wiſdom, when all worldly craft will be ſo much folly*: *Jacob* is commended to be *a plain man*, a perfect man, as in the Originall, and he had preheminence above *Eſau*; and truly ſimplicity in man's converſation, makes all his actions more noble and divine; for as creatures, the more ſimple and unmixt they are, they produce the more noble operations; as gold the leſſe it's mixed with droſſe; fire, the more pure it is the more lively in operation; ſo it's here, the more ſimplicity in any exerciſe of grace, in any religious duty, the more acceptable it is to God: God forbad all leaven in Sacrifices, now 1 *Cor.* 5. we are told what the leaven did ſignifie, hypocriſie and guile; hereby God did require ſincerity: ſincere is *ſine cera*, pure honey, that is ſeparated from the wax, ſuch ſincerity and ſimplicity ſhould be in our hearts, in our lives, pure hony; no mixture of ſinne, of earthly affections, ſo that an heart without guile is a plain, ſingle, ſincere heart.

2. When in our religious Duties we are in our hearts what we expreſſe in our words, &c.

2. *An heart without guile, is when in our heart we are towards God, what we expreſſe in our duties and in our religious performances*: For indeed, this is the very definition of guile, when there is one thing in the heart, and another thing in the mouth; ſuch guileful hearts God doth often complain of in the people of *Iſrael*, *They drew nigh with their mouthes, but their hearts were farre from him*: And *They ſit at my people and they hear thee*, and do nothing, *Ezek.* 33. 31. ſo then whenſoever thy duties, thy performances are not done out of the abundance of thy heart, this is guile; as our Saviour ſaith, *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*, ſo it ſhould be, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth prayeth, the ear heareth, the body draweth nigh to God: Thus *Paul* expreſſeth an heart without guile, when ſpeaking of God, he ſaith, *whom I ſerve in my ſpirit*, Rom. 1. And *Joh.* 4. the Father is ſaid *to ſeek ſuch who worſhip him in ſpirit and truth*: ſo then here is a good touch-ſtone; to ſee whether thy heart be without guile or no: Is thy heart agreeing with thy mouth in all duties? Is the heart the fountain, the mouth a ſtream? Is the heart a root, and duties ſo many branches ſpringing from it? Then we may ſay, *Behold a true Iſraelite, in whom is no guile*. But (alas) how many ſacrifices do we offer without an heart, which among the *Romans* was an ominous thing. The Church ſaith, her *eyes ſlept*, but *her heart watched*, Cant. 5. 2. Now (alas) thy mouth is open when thou prayeſt, thou heareſt, but thy heart ſleepeth; this is guile.

3. When we propoſe holy ends in what we do.

3. An heart without guile, is not only when there is ſimplicity (as you heard) in reſpect of the nature and exerciſe of our graces, that they are ſeparated from corrupt mixtures of ſinne, *but alſo in reſpect of our ends*; when we do purely, and in an united manner, ſtedfaſtly ayme at thoſe holy and godly ends, which are required in all we do; for certainly if our eating and drinking muſt be to the glory of God, how much more muſt our more ſolemn actions, whether religious or civill? Thus the heart is ſimple either in reſpect of graces and

and the operations thereof, as when a River runs purely, without any mud or filth in it; or when our ends are ſo heavenly, that we can, with thoſe excellent *Benjamites*, hit the mark we are to aime at, and not *ἁμαρτάνειν*, ſinne, or tranſgreſſe; for want of this, *Iehu* was not bleſſed, though he had many temporall mercies, becauſe his heart was leavened with this guile. The Phariſees duties, prayers, almes, and whole religion had this ſowr leaven in them, and therefore could not be accepted. Mark the concluſion of that Epiſtle, *Grace be with all thoſe that love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity*, Ephe. 6. 25. or in corruption, *ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ*, which ſome underſtand perpetually even to the end, but that is a conſequent only: incorruption is, when we love Chriſt for himſelf, not for corrupt ends, *viz.* any carnal advantage or earthly emolument we hope for by him; when we do not follow Chriſt, as *Judas*, hoping to have the bag and enrich our ſelves thereby. A heart then without guile, *doth hourly and conſtantly look upon the good ends held out in the Scripture*, doth not ſquint awry to temporall profits; but beginneth, continueth and endeth all in reference to God. Hence the godly are ſaid to be *of him, and through him, and to him*: As Chriſt is indeed the *Alpha* and *Omega*, ſo he is to the ſoul, to honeſt gracious hearts. The diſtinction of the Schools, about a twofold love, *amor amicitiæ*, a love of meer friendſhip, when we love any party for his own ſake, his own goodneſſe and excellency; as alſo *amor concupiſcentiæ*, when we love another for our own ends not for the parties ſake, but our own ſake. This is to be applied alſo in ſome reſpect to God; its one thing when we love him becauſe of his own worth and goodneſſe, another thing when for ſome temporall mercies only we expect by him: this latter is not unlawfull, ſo that it be not principall; let it be *Hagar* the maid, not *Sarah* the Miſtris; yea if this *Hagar* at any time bear up too high, then curb her and throw her out of doors. Oh then labour for this bleſſed eſtate, to be able to ſay, O Lord, I have ſerved thee with a ſingle eye and a ſingle heart, I have not had other lovers beſides thee, my love hath been pure and chaſt: and truly here is a greater reaſon, for there is enough in God to ſatisfie thy end: It's no marvell, if the beſt creature in the world cannot ſatisfie, becauſe its a finite and limited good, it's a drop not an ocean; but of God only may the ſoul ſay, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and on earth but thee?* We ſee the Moon and all the Starres are not able to diſpell the darkneſſe of the night and to make day, only the Sunne can do that; ſo though all the creatures ſhould arile in their full glory, they cannot make a day, a full bleſſednеſſe: That, the Son of righteouſneſſe muſt only do.

4. A heart without guile, hideth it not, concealeth not ſin, but confeſſeth it, &c.

4. *An heart without guile, is that which doth not hide and conceale ſinne, but confeſſeth it heartily, and with great ſhame and confuſion of ſoul before God:* And this indeed is the main particular of guile to which the Pſalmiſt doth here relate; for you ſee what *David* ſaith of himſelf, how that he kept his *ſinne cloſe* within him, and that was like the winde, got in the bowels of the earth, that had no vent, it made him tremble and quake, yea even roar out, and he had no eaſe, till he confeſſed to God and bewailed it; yea when he did but ſay, he would *acknowledge his ſinnes*, that is, reſolve and purpoſe effectually to do it, immediately he had great eaſe: For this you muſt know; it was with *David* as it is with many a man, he had guilt of ſinne within that ſtung like a Scorpion, that made him reſtleſſe: but ſtill he laboured to conquer thoſe agonies, to wear them out, to juſtifie, or cover, or extenuate the ſinne, one way or other: As the Hart that hath the deadly arrow ſtuck in her, runs up and down, labouring to get it out, ſo did *David*, and ſo doth many a man, but (alas) ſtill the pain and guilt of ſin continues, till a man take the true and honeſt way, till he doth plainly confeſſe and open all his heart to God, ſaying, O Lord why do I cover my ſin any longer? why do I hide it? I am come to lay open my whole heart, to conceale nothing, to ſpread before thee all that evil that cleaveth to me; and truly this is a great guile which men wounded for ſinne run into, they

this

they deal not plainly with God, they do not touch upon the right ſore, they will let all their Children go but *Benjamin*; ſuch and ſuch ſins they will acknowledge to God, but that which is indeed the *Jonah*, that troubleth all, either becauſe of the ſhame, or ſome other conſideration, or the Devil ſecretly tempting, they never confeſs truly to God, and abhor themſelves for it; and therefore are like ſome ſhamefac'd patients, that will rather ſuffer their diſeaſe to kill them, then acquaint the Phyſitian with it: Oh then take up *Davids* way, *I ſaid I would acknowledge*, and then thou wilt find *Davids* joy and peace.

5. *An heart without guile, is really and truly that which diſclaimeth all its own worth and righteouſneſs, giving all to grace, committing it ſelf wholly to Chriſt*, And thus ſome Expoſitors bring in this qualification, by way of coherence with the former: bleſſedneſs lies in the remiſſion of ſin, a meer gracious favour of God, not in truſting to our own righteouſneſs, according to that rule, *juſtitia noſtra eſt Dei indulgentia*, our righteouſneſs is Gods indulgence; and then are we juſtified, not when we have done what we ought, but when what we have not is pardoned unto us: Chriſt bids, *Take heed of the leaven of the Phariſees, which was hypocriſie*: now a great deal of their hypocriſie and guil lay in this, that they juſtified themſelves, that they truſted to their own righteouſneſs; thus that Phariſees heart was full of guil, who ſo extolled himſelf above the Publican: On the contrary, *Pauls* heart ſtood right to Chriſt, there was no guil within, when *Phil.* 3. he accounted all things *dung and droſſe*, in compariſon of the righteouſnes of Chriſt. Now this is a great matter, to attain to ſuch ſincerity & honeſt dealing of the heart with Chriſt, to be beholding only to his merits, to give all to grace: to take *Luthers* advice, *Cave non tantum ab operibus malis, ſed etiam ab operibus bonis*, take heed not only of thy ſins, but of thy righteouſneſs and good works alſo: we may read of much ſeeming devotion and religion, even among the Jeſuites, eſpecially in *Nerembergius de adoratione Dei in ſpiritu & veritate*, where there are tranſcendent ſtrains of maſculine piety, but becauſe ſelf-righteouſneſs is in the bottom, juſtifying faith applying Chriſts righteouſneſs only, is not ſo much as mentioned or owned, ſuch religion and devotion, doth not come from an heart right within; as if that ſaying, *Its more bleſſed to give then to receive*, were true alſo in our juſtification, and reconciliation with God; its more bleſſed to give to him, then to receive from him: I ſhall put off other properties.

5
It diſclaims all its own worth and righteouſneſs, and gives all to grace.

Uſe. Of Inſtruction: What is the neceſſary way to obtain pardon of ſin? Let all thy duties be without guil, let thy heart and affections be without guil; Its not perfect faith, perfect repentance, that God doth expect, before he will pardon, but unfeigned faith, and unfeigned repentance: A drop of this water is precious, a grain of this Muſtard-ſeed will prevail admirably. It was upon this point, that the Devil thought to have made a perpetual breach between God and *Job*. *Doth Job ſerve God for nought?* *Jobs* heart (he ſaid) was a guilful heart; God had given him plenty, riches, and hedged his way in, and then it was no marvel if he ſerved God. Oh then look to this, if ever it be poſſible the Devil will break thee upon this point. Thou haſt prayed, thou haſt been a Profeſſor, but all was in guile, all was in hypocriſie: now its true, the Devil doth many times diſquiet, even the true and ſincere Chriſtian, in this very point, and its a very heavy temptation, which I ſhall direct in ere I leave this Text. I am now only upon the adviſing part; To look that all thy religious duties be thus from a plain heart without guil. This will be a brazen wall: *Hezekiah* kept himſelf up with this (that he walked in the truth) when he was ſo greatly environed with all miſeries.

Uſe.

SERM. IX.

More Characters of a Heart without Guile.

PSAL. 32. 2.

And in whoſe ſpirit there is no Guile.

6. A deſire to find out truth and to know our duty, though never ſo contrary to our advantages or former apprehenſions.

THE Doctrine gathered from the text remaineth ſtill in our hands: ſeverall other Characters of an Heart without Guile are to added, ere we can finiſh this Point: And the firſt in order we ſhall mention at this time, is, *An earneſt and hearty deſire to find out the Truth of God, or Duty required of us, though never ſo contrary to our former apprehenſions or advantages.* The Truth of God (I ſay), and then our Duties; For Truth, how many ſhut their eyes, and are afraid to come to the light, for fear their falſe wares ſhould be diſcovered! To ſhun light is a ſigne of a guilty heart. *The thief hateth the light*, ſaith our Saviour, What is the reaſon of it? *Becauſe his works are evil*, Joh. 3. 20. It's a very dangerous ſinne, yet very common, that *formido lucis*, a fear of light. When men are intereſſed in falſe and erroneous wayes, eſpecially wherein their gain, honour, and outward profits are concerned, no Owles or Bats are more afraid of the Sunne, than theſe, of the ſearching truth of Gods word. The Scribes and Phariſees are pregnant examples for this; They were intereſſed in matters of opinion, wherein their own glory and greatneſſe was much involved, and therefore *they ſtop their ears like the deaf Adder*, and would not hear Chriſt, or the Apoſtles, *though they charmed never ſo wiſely*: neither arguments to the underſtanding, nor miracles to the eye, would be any convincing way to them: Herein did plainly appear their guile-full hearts, that, as any crumb of duſt blown in the eye, preſently hinders the eye-ſight, or the interpoſition of the earth, immediately cauſeth an eclipſe, ſo any worldly or earthly conſideration interwoven with opinions in matters of Religion, doth preſently dash up the window as it were, where light ſhould come in. Therefore it's good to conſider why Chriſt gives *Nathaniel* ſuch a glorious commendation, which we never read was given by Chriſt to any other, *Joh.* 1. 14. *Behold a true Iſraelite in whom is no guile!* Wherein did *Nathaniel* diſcover ſuch an innocent and ſincere heart? Even in this particular it was, *Philip* comes and tells him, *They have found the Meſſiah*; Now *Nathaniel* being preposſeſſed with falſe principles argueth againſt it, *Can any good come out of Nazareth? Come and ſee*, ſaith *Philip*, and immediately *Nathaniel*, notwithſtanding his prejudices, takes the way to be informed, doth not deſpiſe or contemn the offer made, but is glad to find out the truth, and to know whether he be in an errour or no; and upon this, our Saviour giveth him that great commendation, *A true Iſraelite in whom is no guile.* So that when men though poſſeſſed with errors, or prejudiced by ſelf-ends, are yet heartily willing to go out and ſee, to enquire after the truth manifeſted, this argueth an heart void of fraud and guile. Conſider then, there are many excellent truths in matter of religion, whether doctrinal or practical, and thou wilt not ſo much as enquire about them, for they are deſtructive to thy carnal ends, to thy outward glory & that makes thee wilfully hood wink thy ſelf. Whereas happily we may ſay to thee, as Chriſt to the woman, *If thou hadſt known the gift, & who it is that ſpeaketh unto thee,*

then &c. *Joh.* 4. So, if thou hadſt known the truth of God, and what places of Scripture do manifeſt the ſame to thee, thou wouldſt gladly have entertained it. As it is thus for truths, ſo alſo for duties which God may require of us, we are not hearty and willing in many things to know our duties, and therefore we ſit down in the practice of many ſinnes, or conſtant omiſſion of many duties, becauſe we are full of guile, and are not attentive to ſeek out what we fail in. That is an excellent demonſtration of ſincerity, which *Elihu* adviſeth *Job* unto in his afflictions, *What I know not teach thou me*; and if I have offended, I will do ſo no more. What is my duty, Lord? wherein do I ſinne? that I am ignorant of in truſt me in, this argueth an heart without guile. As plain *Paul* had a good and an honeſt heart, when he could make ſuch a publicke reſignation of himſelf into God's hands, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* Put thy ſelf then upon the touchſtone; Art thou a man enquiring diligently, What would God have me do? Are there not many ſinnes I commit, becauſe I ſee them not to be ſo? Are there not many duties I conſtantly omit, becauſe I am not informed out of God's word? O it may be, if I made diligent ſearch, I ſhould abhorre my ſelf; I ſhould not dare to do what I do; I could not for a world ſleep in that condition I am in: but becauſe I walk in darkneſſe, I ſee not the quagmires I am ready to fall into.

7. Takes the Word of God for its Counſellour.

2. *Another Character of an Heart without Guile is, that it takes the word of God to be his counſellor in all things controverted,* and ſhuteth out all carnall conſultations, hearkneth not to carnall friends, to father, mother, or the deareſt relations in the world, in this lieth the very quinteſſence of a ſincere heart. If the Heathen ſaid, That dead men were the beſt counſellors, he meant the writings of men left behinde them after their deceaſe, becauſe they are not ſubject to thoſe paſſions of anger, flattery, *&c.* which living men are obnoxious unto, and therefore uſe to ſpeak *ad voluptatem*, more then *ad ſanitatem*. How much more muſt this be verified of the Scripture, which is left as a perpetuall rule and guide in all our affairs: *David* manifeſted the uprightneſſe of his heart herein, when he ſaid, *he made them his counſellors*, Pſal. 119. and *by them he was forewarned from ſinne*, Pſal. 19. Oh then, is thy heart wanting of advice? thou knoweſt not what to do? The counſel from the Scripture is as if God from Heaven did ſpeak to thee; here is wiſdom and faithfulneſſe in theſe things, as alſo righteouſneſſe, which are the three requiſites in all counſellors; Wiſdom, therefore thou ſhalt never do that which is indeed fooliſh, or will at laſt make thee aſhamed or confounded. Here is Righteouſneſſe, therefore thou wilt never be adviſed to any unjuſt and ſinfull action. Here is faithfulneſſe, therefore thou wilt perceive all this counſell to be given out of love to thee, and that for thy eternall good. It's obſerved of *David*, who was toſſed up and down in ſo many various conditions and ſeverall extremities, he never miſcarried when he asked counſell of God; but when at any time he conſulted with his own carnall heart, he was alwayes caſt upon dangerous rocks. Therefore *Paul* went wiſely to work, when he did not conſult with fleſh and blood, *Gal.* 1. and experience hath ſhewed what dangerous counſellors fathers, and mothers, and friends have been when Chriſt hath called us to follow him: Now truly by this it appeareth, how difficult a thing, and what a rare jewell this ſpirit without guile is: For who is there, in any matter to be done, doth ſhut out all carnall reaſonings, doth go up as *Abraham* to the mount, and leave his ſervants and Aſſes below, his earthly conſiderations, that ſo he may hear what God out of his word will ſpeak to him.

8. Ready obedience.

3. *Another property of an Heart without Guile, is readily to obey God's commands of what nature ſoever*, though wholly contrary to fleſh and blood, without any diſputes, delayes, or tergiverſations whatſoever: *Abraham* had the honour to be called *the friend of God*, becauſe of this ready and willing obedience.

That obedience of his in ſacrificing his ſonne, aggravated with ſo many cutting conſiderations in Gods command, rings over the whole world; *felix orbis ſi tales forent parricidæ*, ſaid an Ancient; Though it was his ſonne, his only ſon, his *Iſaak*, and to be offered a burnt ſacrifice, where nothing was to remain, and he was to do all this with his own hand; yet he gets up betimes in the morning to perform this command; and do not thou ſay, How ſhall I know whether my ſpirit be thus without guile, for I have no *Iſaak* to offer? Yes, every beloved ſin, every darling corruption, any inordinate affection to ſome worldly comfort; this is an *Iſaak*, thou muſt immediately ſacrifice: So then as in matters of faith we believe, *quia ipſe dixit*, becauſe he hath ſaid, *non opus eſt diſquiſitione poſt Evangelium*; ſo in matters of practiſe we are to obey, *quia ipſe voluit*, becauſe he willeth. *Abraham* from the very beginning, was uſed to ſuch a blind, or rather ſeeing obedience: when God called him out of his own Countrey, he went, not knowing whither, here *Abraham's* heart was like the Philoſophers *materia prima*, ready to take any formall impreſſion God ſhould put on it. And how greatly God ſtands upon an abſolute obedience without any diſpute, though we might bring plauſible pretences, appeareth in *Saul*, and in that Prophet who was torn in pieces by the Lyon, when yet for both theſe, a man might have pleaded fair excuſes, but an heart without guile cannot diſpute, but it can obey; as the Martyr ſaid, He could not diſpute, but he could burn.

9. Doth publick duties for publick ends.

4. *An heart without Guile, is that which doth faithfully diſcharge that publick truſt, whether in Church or Common-wealth, upon thoſe publick and holy ends that God doth require*; not aiming at ſelf-advantages, but righteous and godly things. Publike offices of truſt will greatly diſcover men's integrity, as the fire doth gold and droſſe: Thus in the Church we hear *Paul* comforting himſelf, that he had *preached the Goſpel in godly ſimplicity, as in the preſence of God:* He was not in the number of thoſe that did δολοῦν, 2 *Cor.* 2. 16. as he ſaith mingle deceit with the word of God; he did not as crafty huckſters, καπηλεύειν, mingle good and bad together, wine and water: Eſpecially you have a notable demonſtration of *Paul's* ſincerity, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 3, 4, 5. where you have the directory, for all the Miniſters of the Goſpel; Our exhortation was not of deceit nor in guile, *but we ſo ſpeak, not as pleaſing men but God; which trieth our hearts:* Here if at any time we may call *Paul*, *Corculum Dei*, and *Angelum terreſtrem*, as *Chryſoſtome:* becauſe, though in the world, yet he is not worldly; but like the Sun-beams, that ſhine upon the earth, it gathers no earthly defilements. And as it thus in the Church, ſo in the Common-wealth alſo, men that have hearts without guile, will abhorre to inrich themſelves, or injure the publike for their own private greatneſſe; its *res publica*, not *res propria*, as *Tully* urged well. Thus *Samuel* after he had governed the people of *Iſrael*, what convincing arguments did he uſe of his integrity, *Whoſe Ox or Aſſe have I taken away?* 1 Sam. 12. 3. He did not defraud them in the leaſt manner. *Moſes* how devoid of guile was he, when God, being angry with the people, would have deſtroyed them, and proffered to make *Moſes* a great man, and to raiſe up to him a glorious poſterity, but *Moſes* refuſed it; Thus; what *Tully* ſaid in a Rhetoricall ſtrain, *ne immortalitatem quidem contra rempublicam accipere*, *Moſes* did indeed, if we take immortality for a continuall, laſting poſterity. It was this upright heart that did ſo abundantly comfort *Job*, that he was an upright man; though his friends did endeavour to ſhake his very foundations, *Job.* 28. 14. Hath God then betruſted thee with publike employments, if thy heart be without guile, thou wilt [illegible]fully diſcharge it for thoſe holy and juſt ends God doth require, and not be above others; as chimneys above other parts of the houſe which receive nothing but ſmoky vapours.

10. Is carefull to attribute all to

5. *An Heart without Guile, is very carefull that it doth not take from the glory of God, and attribute any thing to it ſelf.* For ſeeing the matter wherein the guile

guile of our hearts doth manifest it self, is our selves, self-love, self-flattery, self-greatnesse, self-honours, &c. The more single and upright the heart is, the more carefull it is to deny that, and mortifie that: Hence self-denying is made the fundamentall qualification of every disciple of Christ; a word easily spoken, but a work very difficultly performed; *cessit voluntas propria & non ardebit gehenna*, it's Self that kindles all the fire in hell. Now you shall see how spirits without guile have alwayes desired to exalt God, & to debase themselves; When the people would have taken *John* for Christ, yea when his own Disciples began with some envy to repine at Christ and the esteem he had, see how graciously he allayeth their Spirits, *I must decrease, but he must increase*, Joh. 3. 30. and therefore *John* proclaimed Christ to be so far above him, *that he was not worthy to unty his shoe-latchet*: I know nothing wherein hearts without guile can more shew their sincerity, then to have their own goodly abilities, and worth eclipsed, that all may be given to God; to have all like the Starres, that do not appear when the Sun ariseth: As *Joab* sent to *David* to come to him, that he might have the glory in taking of *Rabbah*, lest it should be called after *Joab's* name if he reduced it. *Paul* shewed his plain and upright heart in this also, when he said, *Let no man think of me above what me ought to think*, 1 Cor. 4. 6. how many great Doctors and Teachers have desired the clean contrary of their Disciples, to think above what is meet of them? as the Donatists would swear, *per caput Donati*, making him like a God. But *Paul* was afraid of such outward applause: especially this heart without guile is seen, when we can rejoyce to see the work of God go on, and his name be exalted, though we be not his instruments, yea though others do it, that will obscure and overtop our glory, Oh this many times doth touch to the very quick, when others shall have all the esteem and all the glory, and thou be laid aside. But how sincere was *Paul* in this? *He rejoyced that Christ was preached, though men did it, out of contention and envy against him*, Phil. 1. And he tells the *Corinthians*, that he desireth, *they might be preserved from all sinne, though he was accounted as a reprobate*, 2 Cor. 13. Though he lost all his glory, and the false Apostles were the only men admired: Oh then see, whether our hearts be free from envy, emulation, and repinings at the gifts, abilities, and graces of others, who do promote the work of God, when thou art laid aside as of no account.

the glory of God, and not any thing to it self.

6. *A spirit without Guile, doth not only attend to those things that are glorious and of credit in the profession of faith, but what duties also are of great content and debasement in the eyes of the world*, Christ forelaw the scorn and reproach which would accompany the powerfull obedience unto his Gospel, and therefore he forewarned them against such prejudices, *Blessed is he that is not offended at me*, Mat. 11. 6. *and Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, of him will my heavenly father be ashamed before his holy Angels*. Yet there were some things that had an outward glory in Christs way, *viz.* to work miracles; this made a multitude of people run after the Disciples admiring at them: now see how this did affect *Simon Magus* his proud heart, and therefore he would *have given money to have obtained the gift of the holy Ghost as well as others*: now see with what defiance and indignation *Peter* speaks to him, *Thy money perish with thee, I perceive thy heart is not right within thee*, Acts 8. 21. This is to my purpose, because he put himself into the number of believers, and yet his whole aim was to have such great wonderful abilities to work miracles that all the world should admire him: Do not thou then think this is enough to be for Christ, while the times credit his religion; but observe how thy heart is, when it's opposed with all malice, and contemned with all scorn: *Ecce nunc episcopum Romanum & ergo Christianus*, said one. If there was any worldly advantage or glory to be had by the Christian Profession, then he would become a disciple in that way: *David* shewed great sincerity of heart, when he danced before the Ark, but see how *Michael*, regarding

II. It attends to those duties that are contemned by men of the world, as well as those that are in credit.

regarding only worldly ſtate; deſpiſed him in her heart for it: but oh the upright heart of *David*, when he ſaid, *I will be more vile ſtill*: He did not think his greatneſſe and all his earthly glory, to be too much to yeeld unto that religious worſhip of God, which made the Ancient ſay, *Miror David ſaltantem, magis quam pugnantem*: ſo then examine thy ſelf, thoſe mean and deſpicable things of Chriſt, as the world accounts them, doſt thou with much reſpect obſerve? His Word, his Miniſters, his Ordinances, that Practicall ſtrict way of godlineſſe ſo much ſlighted, doeſt thou for all this reſpect and love them? ſaying with *Paul*, *God forbid that I ſhould glory in any thing, ſave in the croſſe of Jeſus Chriſt*, This will be a good ſigne of thy ſincerity.

Uſe of Admonition, With all fear and trembling to attend to this great and neceſſary diſpoſition without which all our religion, all our duties, all our approaches unto God, are no more acceptable, then a ſacrifice full of blemiſhes and ſpots: Oh what an heavy confuſion will it be, to have God bid thee depart at the laſt day; when thou ſhall plead thy religion, thy duties, thy devotions; and all becauſe here is no truth in the inward parts: To have thee roaring out at that great day; Faith I had, but no true faith; Repentance I had, but there was no truth in it, and therefore am I adjudged to theſe everlaſting flames: Have ye no pity upon your ſouls, O ye who hear theſe things? Thou art bleſſed and not till then, though thou hadſt *Solomon's* wealth, and *Abſolon's* beauty, and *Methuſaleh's* long life, even till thou art the man, in whoſe ſpirit is no guile.

SERM. X.

More Characters of a Heart without Guile.

PSAL. 32. 2.

And in whoſe ſpirit there is no Guile.

THE deſcription of that bleſſed man, in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile, is of ſo great concernment, that I am unwilling to give over this ſubject, till you ſee him drawn in ſuch lively colours, that he who runneth may underſtand whether he be the man or no, for we hold out this glaſſe on purpoſe that you may ſee your ſelves; I proceed therefore; and the next Character I ſhall adde to the former, and will be the firſt to the following, is,

13. It makes a man willing and ſpontaneous in Gods ſervice.

13. *That a man whoſe ſpirit is without Guile, is very free, willing, active, and of his own ſpontaneous inclination, carried unto thoſe duties God requireth.* He hath a *ſpring of living water within him flowing from him.* He is a fountain, not a ciſtern, which hath no water any longer then is powred into it: This properly is built on the Greek word ἁπλῶς, or ἁπλότης, which ſignifieth both ſimplicity, or ſincerity, and freeneſſe, or liberality, and willingneſſe; Thus *Rom.* 12. 8. *He that giveth, let him give in ſimplicity*; or as others, in liberality, freely, gladly: So God is ſaid *James* chap. 1. *to give unto every man richly*, or freely, ἁπλῶς, *not upbraiding*. The reaſon why *ſincerely* is thus tranſlated willingly, and freely, is, becauſe an unfeigned heart is the only fountain of all readineſſe and cheerfulneſſe in what we do; whereas others that want this, or rather compelled and haled

haled to what they do: ſo then as God commands in *Deut.* 15. 10. that when they did lend, or give to their neceſſitous brother, they ſhould not have any grief in their heart, while they did it: becauſe *God loveth a cheerfull giver*: So in all thy duties and obedience unto God, there ought not to be any grief or unwillingneſſe in thy ſoul, but thou art with joy and gladneſſe of ſoul to ſay, *Behold Lord, here I am*; and with Chriſt to ſay, *I come to do thy will (O Lord) it is written within my heart.* Oh then conſidering this particular, let there be great thoughts of thy heart; What gladneſſe, what joy, what full delight of ſoul doſt thou find in thy ſervice of God? Does thou run the way of his Commandements? *David*, P. 119. 32. prayeth earneſtly for this, *Eſtabliſh me with a free ſpirit*; a ſpirit that ſhall readily offer it ſelf unto thy Commandements: as *Deborah* commended thoſe Worthies that *willingly offered themſelves in the high places of the field*. God never accepted of the meer skin of any ſacrifice, but would have the fatty ſubſtance and the fat offered to him: ſo here, the Lord doth not regard the skin, the outward performance of any duties, but the inward vitals, and lavory vigour of grace: Thou meeteſt him who rejoyceth and worketh righteouſneſſe, ſaith the Prophet *Eſay*. Iſa. 64. So then, if thy heart be thus plain, and without all guile, thy ſoul and all within thee will be enlarged towards God and his holy will, not for every duty without any intermiſſion; No, *the ſpirit is willing, but the fleſh is weak*: yea the ſpirit is alſo ſometimes unwilling. But the main purpoſe and chief reſolution of the ſoul is, thus gladly and willingly to ſet upon thoſe things which God requireth.

14. A ſincere man his eye is faſtned upon God to pleaſe him only.

2. *An Heart without Guile, is that whoſe eye is faſtned upon God, to pleaſe him only in the courſe of his life*; and therefore doth no more regard either applauſes, or the oppoſitions of men in the world, than the Sunne in running his race, doth ſtop his courſe, becauſe of the black clouds that riſe from the earth to cover the ſplendour thereof: This is a pregnant inſtance of a ſincere heart: for either worldly hopes, or worldly fears do commonly make men ſtep aſide into guileſull or falſe wayes. As a man that paſſeth over the waters, if he look up he will do well enough, but if he look down on the waters, he preſently becometh giddy, and cannot go ſtreight on. Thus if in thy converſation here in this world, thou look up ſtedfaſtly to heaven, to God's will, to God's glory, thy wayes will be uniform; thou wilt be the ſame even in variety of conditions, and to have an holy imitation of God, to have no change in thee: but if thou look down to the world, ſo as to be affected with their good reports or bad reports, their fawnings or their frowns, this will make crooked paths. Thus, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. *Paul* when he had affirmed his way of exhortation to be without guile, he giveth you a ſigne of this, becauſe he did not walk, *as one pleaſing men, but God*. And *Gal.* 1. *If I ſhould pleaſe men*, viz. ſinfully, in humouring of them in their ſins, *I were not the ſervant of Chriſt*. And then for the cenſures and reproaches of the world, 1 *Cor.* 4. 4. ſee what he ſaith, *It's a very ſmall matter for me to be judged by man's judgment*. Deut. 33. It's ſpoken to the great commendation of *Levies* faithfulneſſe, That he did not know his father or mother, he did not acknowledge any carnall relations in doing of God's will, in executing juſtice upon Idolaters. As then *eye-ſervice* is a ſigne of a guileſull heart in a ſervant; ſo to do the will of God, meerly becauſe of men: were it not for men, thou didſt not care for ſanctifying the Sabbath, for hearing the word, for a godly demeanour in thy converſation: oh this is a ſigne thy heart is not right within thee. That injunction which God gave to *Abraham* is remarkable, *Walk before me and be perfect*, Gen. 17. 1. We are ſo to walk as having God always before our eyes, and a concomitant of this, is ſincerity and uprightneſſe of heart. Oh then conſider, Is God always before thy eyes? is it not what men ſay, what the world ſayes, but thy eye is upon God, this is comfortable. *Paul* compares our Chriſtian converſation to running in a race; now he that runneth in a race, regards not the acclamation

tions of the ſpectators, but all his care is, how the maſter of the game will approve of him. Oh, this ſinful condeſcention, either becauſe of hopes or feares in the World, hath turned many a man into crooked pathes; ſee what ſad influence it had upon *Peter*, he for feare of a carnal diſpleaſing of the *Jews*, did not ὀρθοποδεῖν, Gal. 2. walk ſtreightly and directly as he ſhould do; inſomuch, that by his example, *Barnabas* was carried away alſo to this diſſimulation. Here you ſee eminent and godly men carried into a way of guile and diſſimulation, meerly from a carnal fear to offend men.

15. And is careful to avoid ſecret ſins, as well as publick and bodily ſins.

4. Which is a Collectary from the former: becauſe the ſincere man faſteneth his eye upon God, *therefore he is as careful to avoid ſecret ſins, as publike, and heart-ſins, as well as bodily.* The thoughts of the righteous are right, but the counſels of the wicked are deceit, ſaith *Solomon*, *Their thoughts are upright*, Prov. 12. 5. Oh its a true Argument of a ſpirit without guil, when a mans ſecret thoughts, affections, and intentions, ſuch as the World can take no notice of, are holy and godly: when not only a mans ſecond thoughts, but his firſt, all his thoughts go directly up to Heaven: *How long ſhall vain thoughts lodge within thee?* ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.* 4. 14. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts*, ſaith our Saviour, *Mat.* 15. 19. and many other ſins, whereof guil is inſtanced in, as one; therefore he did purpoſely ſet upon this, to rectifie that guilful principle the Phariſees went by, who thought *the waſhing of the outſide* was enough, but never did *cleanſe the inſide*. But *David*, Pſal. 51. did by experience find, that all painting and fair outſides were nothing, *Thou deſireſt truth in the inward parts.* Be not then a ravening Wolf within, a rotten Sepulcher, a lodge or neſt of unclean thoughts and affections; he whoſe ſpirit is right, ſetteth firſt all right within, and from thence proceeds an outward reformation: So for ſecret ſins; *a true Iſraelite, in whom is no guile*, dareth not run into ſecret wayes of wickedneſs, thinking, that becauſe God knoweth him, and God beholdeth him, its more then if men and Angels did ſee him: The Apoſtle ſpeaketh of ſome, that it was a ſhame to ſpeak of what was done in ſecret; and certainly, the timber in the houſe, and the ſtones of the wall, will one day witneſs againſt many ſecret practiſes of impiety. Our Saviour, when he bids them take heed of the Phariſees leaven, their hypocriſie, *Luk.* 12. he addeth that vigorous and ſtartling reaſon; *For there is nothing ſecret, which ſhall not be laid open, and what is ſpoken in private, ſhall be heard on the houſe top.* Why then doſt thou thus lye to God, and endeavour to mock him? who would think by the outward behaviour, that thou art the man, who will be ſuch a beaſt in private, ſuch a bruit in ſecret? and thinkeſt all is well, while others know nothing. Oh there is nothing ſecret, but ſhall be made manifeſt; yea it is already manifeſt to God, and many times he makes ſuch guilt in thy conſcience, that thou thinkeſt every body knoweth thy wickedneſs, every man ſpeaks of thy impiety: As *Herod*, when he heard of the fame of Jeſus, preſently his guilty Conſcience ſuggeſts, Its *John* whom I have beheaded.

16. Laſtly, it hath an uniform & univerſal hatred to all ſins &c.

Laſtly, *A Spirit without Guile, hath an uniform and univerſal hatred to all ſin, and an equal reſpect to all duties.* Guile and deceit doth pick and chooſe, but ſincerity is univerſal. *Hate evil, cleave to that which is good*, Rom. 12. He doth not ſay, this, or that evil, but indefinitely, which in a neceſſary matter, is equivalent to an univerſal. So that whatſoever hath the nature of evil, though little or great, though pleaſant or profitable, though beloved and a darling evil, yet hate it: the greek word is μισεῖτε, from whence comes μῦς, even hell; as if he would have ſaid, hate it as you do hell it ſelf: and indeed, the evil of ſin is worſe then the evil of hell; for though hell be *malum panale*, a general evil, yet its *bonum ordinatiſſimum*, in reſpect of Gods juſtice, hell is good juſtice, as a priſon and torment is, though nocive evils to the parties offending: ſo that every upright man hath an inward hatred, and an irreconcileable frame of heart with ſin; now *odium eſt circa univerſalia*, where hatred is, it would not deſtroy this, or that individual, but the whole ſpecies; as we have a pregnant inſtance in

Haman,

Haman, who became *Mordecaies* bitter enemie: the Text ſaith of him, that *he thought it a ſmall matter to deſtroy Mordecai, but he thought to deſtroy the whole Nation of the Jews*, nothing would ſatiſie his hatred but that. And thus it is with a man, whoſe ſpirit is without Guile; it is a ſmall matter to leave this or that ſinne, but his purpoſe is, to *lay the axe to the very root*; to mortifie the body of ſinne: God is diſhonored, and the Law is broken, and my ſoul is defiled (ſaith he) as long as any of *theſe Jebuſites dwell in the Land*: and thus, on the contrary, it hath an uniform reſpect to all duties, for *à quatenus ad omne valet conſequentia*, if I obey ſuch a command becauſe God commands it, and out of love to the Law-giver, then becauſe the ſame God commands one as well as the other, I will obey one as well as the other. Hence *James* chap. 4. arguing from this conſideration, *He that ſaid, Thou ſhalt not kill; ſaid alſo, Thou ſhalt not commit adultery*; makes this concluſion, which hath a harſh ſound in our ears, *He that breakes one, is guilty of all*: that is, ſay Divines, *quoad vinculum formale*, the divine authority and command is violated in all, if you break one: as in ſome excellent Image, deface one part and you ſpoile the whole harmony. Hence *David*, Pſal. 119. argueth, that then only a man *ſhall not be confounded, when he hath reſpect to all the commandements of God*: where obſerve, that a partiall reſpect will breed confuſion, that is, fruſtration of all our hopes and deſires concerning bleſſedneſſe: and then he calls it obedience, *an having reſpect to Gods commandements*, which doth not only denote meer ſimple obedience, but a careſull and diligent attention of the ſoul thereunto. Thus *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* have a glorious commendation, that they were righteous, *walking in all the commandements of God*, Luk. 1. They were righteous, *viz.* not perfectly and adequately to the command of God, but in reſpect of the univerſality of Parts of obedience, though not of Degreees. And theſe properties ſhall ſuffice in reſpect of an heart devoid of guile towards God: I ſhall further inſtance in ſome particulars of an heart without this deceitfull leaven in reſpect of man, and ſo ſhall have done Characterizing of it.

17. A man without Guile his love to men is reall not verball only.

And firſt, *A man without Guile in reſpect of others, is one, whoſe love is hearty and in deed, not in word, and meerly verball or complemental.* *John* the beloved of Chriſt, who ſpeakes ſo much of love, doth antidote againſt this: *Let us not love in word only, but in truth, and in deed alſo*, 1 Joh. 3. 18. And *Rom.* 12. *Let love be without diſſimulation.* This is a great matter, and few can abide this touchſtone: Mens hearts are roots of hemlock, full of gall, when their mouths run over with honey; *Joabs Salve*, and a *Judas's Ave*, are ſuch love, that we are to pray God to deliver us from: To betray with a kiſſe, is ordinary deceit in this world, where moſt men go with vizards upon them. *David* was much infeſted with ſuch kinde of deceitfull men, *whoſe words were ſmoother then butter, but their hearts were as ſharp ſwords.* This is a contrary diſpoſition to Sheep and Doves, which our Saviour compareth his children unto. Oh then abhorre ſuch a monſtrous deformity and contrariety between thy mouth and thy heart; Phyſicians uſe to judge of the body by the tongue, but that is no ſigne in morality, where men abound in all diſſimulation and falſhood. *Auſtin* once uſed an hyperbolicall expreſſion in love of a diſeaſed friend, and he thought good to bewaile it in his Retractations. Thoſe were bleſſed times, when all that beleeved, *had one heart and one mind*: and the Heathens by way of admiration cried out, *Ecce quàm ſe mutuò diligunt, & fratres vocant!* But now love is baniſhed, and we are fallen into ſo many diviſions and animoſities, that unleſſe *Epicurus* his opinion prove true, All things are made of atomes, or another's, By diſcord; I do not ſee how we can hold.

18. It abhors the way of lying.

2. *An heart without Guile, doth exceedingly abhorre the way of lying*, cannot endure any falſe or untrue ſpeeches. Thou art deceived, who ſayeſt of a godly man,

man, *He will not ſwear, but he will lye:* No; a man without guile abhorreth all ſuch wickednesſe: *I hate every falſe way*, ſaid *David*, Pſal. 119. 104. And *deliver me from the way of lying*, Pſal. 119. 29. The Apoſtle makes it an Argument, that becauſe *they had put off the old man, and put on the new*, Col. 3. 9. they ſhould not *lye one to another*, any kinde of lye, whether pernicious or officious, or a ſporting lye. The Scripture doth in many places condemn a lye; *Auſtin* wrote a book againſt it, and ſheweth that it is not lawfull to tell a lye, though it were to ſave a whole world; and exceedingly commends a man, who having hid a Chriſtian, and was ſought after by the cruell perſecutor, he returned this heroicall anſwer, *Nec mentiri poſſum, nec prodere volo*, I cannot lye, nor yet will I betray him: Though *Muſculus* condemned this, and ſaid he betrayed his friend, while he ſaid he could not betray him. And indeed a lye is intrinſecally, and in its own nature a ſinne, and can never be made good, no more then Idolatry or adultery. As there is no lawfull Idolatry, no lawfull adultery under any pretence whatſoever, ſo no lawfull lye under any colourable excuſe: and under this head we comprehend all *faithfulneſſe in promiſes, covenants, or promiſſory Oaths*, an heart without guile is careſull to keep them though to his own hurt, *Pſal.* 15. and it was part of the Phariſee's hypocriſie, by ſubtle arguments to elude their Oaths: He then that is without guile hath veracity in his affections, and verity in his promiſes.

19. Abhorreth to overreach in bargaining and ſelling, &c.

3. *A ſpirit without guile, is he, that in all contracts and bargains, abhorreth to overreach or defraud any other man.* For guile and deceit is as much ſeen in buying and ſelling, in earthly contracts and humane affaires, as in any thing; but a gracious heart loveth plainneſſe and true honeſty; and indeed it is a ſhame to a Chriſtian, that his Word ſhould not be as inviolable as an oath, *Chriſtiana fides* ſhould ſurpaſſe *Romana fides*: The Apoſtle forbides all ſuch deceitfull guilefull purloyning of others, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 6. and what a terrible argument doth he adde: *The Lord is avenger of ſuch*: Thou thinkeſt to thrive and proſper by ſuch deceitfull wayes, but God will avenge thee, or thy poſterity after thee; and ſee what weights he puts in this matter, *as we have forewarned and teſtified.* The Apoſtle was zealous and earneſt in it; and no doubt this was, becauſe they thought if they could overreach, and the world would not find it out, or queſtion him for it, all was well enough.

Uſe of Exhortation: This is the third time, that we preſſe this duty of a ſincere heart upon you, both towards God and towards man, we think that word might be eſtabliſhed by the mouthes as it were of three witneſſes. Certainly there is no ſuch comely and proper thing for a Chriſtian, as a guileſſe ſpirit; to be within and without the ſame, for whoſe copy ſhould we write after, but Chriſt our Lord and Maſter? now the Scripture ſaith, *there was no guile found in his mouth*, no nor in his heart neither. How truly and ſincerely did he love us? What ends and advantages could he have in enduring all that miſery for us as he did? It's plaine, it was us and not ours he ſought, and ſhould not we much rather return ſo to him? eſpecially conſidering we have not ſuch majeſty, and ſuch a luſtre of Deity to lay aſide for a while for his ſake, as he did for ours. Alas, what is our wealth, our liberty, our lives, to that glorious majeſty which yet he voluntarily laid aſide, and became in the *form of a ſervant, when it would have been no robbery to be equall with God*: Let us then take Chriſt for an example, let us have ſuch ſincere and upright hearts, as was found in him: and that he might the more faſten this upon us, he once took a little childe and ſet him in the midſt of others, ſaying, *Unleſſe a man become like this little childe, he cannot be my diſciple*; by that example forbidding craft, deceit and malice.

SERM. XI.

Motives and Encouragements to Uprightneſſe and Sincerity.

PSAL. 32. 2.

And in whoſe ſpirit there is no Guile.

I Shall at this time conclude this text, reſerving what other practicall matters relate to it, to their proper fit texts: and the work that remaineth, is, to conſider thoſe encouragements that the Scripture giveth to uprightneſſe, or to a guileleſſe heart; and certainly if we diligently meditate on them, we ſhall ſee that ſincerity is indeed a tree of knowledge, they are only wiſe that walk by her rules; and it is alſo a tree of life, for they only live and are happy, who walk accordingly.

Motives or encouragements to Uprightneſſe.

And firſt this may abundantly provoke it, *That thus farre only the Spirit of God doth enable us to keep his Commandements in this life.* Its truth, not perfection, in any duty that we can attain unto; the law is indeed an exact and accurate rule, binding of us to ſuch holineſſe, that by our default its impoſſible for us to do; Therefore that affirmative command of *loving God with the whole heart, mind, ſoul and ſtrength*, as alſo that negative, *Thou ſhalt not luſt*, are never fulfilled in this life: but yet ſo farre as the truth of Love and ſincerity, is required in the firſt command, and the truth of avoiding all ſinne even in the luſts and root of it, ſo in all the godly it is accompliſhed; ſo that all thoſe texts, where we are ſaid to keep Gods Commandements, and to walk unblamably in all his wayes, are only to be underſtood of the truth and ſincerity of godlineſſe: Thoſe gracious promiſes, of *circumciſing our heart, to love God with all our heart and ſoul*, Deut. 30. 6. as alſo of *writing his Law in our inward parts*, Jer. 31. 33. are thus farre fulfilled in us, that the Spirit of God enableth us truly, though not perfectly, to love him, and delight in what is good; ſo that a ſpirit without guile, is all the perfection that we can reach unto: And hence it is, that a *perfect heart*, an *whole heart*, a *ſincere heart*, are all one in Scripture.

1. Its the only perfection Gods Spirit works us into in this life.

2. *A ſecond encouragement, which followeth from the former, is, That this only is that which makes us acceptable to God*; This only hath the promiſe of the Goſpell annexed to it, *Grace be with all thoſe that love the Lord Chriſt in ſincerity*, Ephel. 6. ult. *The end of the Commandement is love out of an heart unfeigned*, 1 Tim. 1. 5. If you aſk, What faith, what repentance it is, to which God hath made his promiſe? The anſwer will be, Only faith without guile, repentance without guile. There is no promiſe to *Simon Magus* his faith, becauſe he was full of guile: There is no promiſe to the faith of thoſe perſons, *Joh.* 2. who are ſaid *to believe in him, yet Chriſt would not commit himſelf to them, becauſe he knew what was in the heart of man.* He knew there was not that plainneſſe, that integrity in them, as they outwardly profeſſed: *If thou believe with thy whole heart*, Acts 8. 37. and *if thou ſeek the Lord with thy whole heart*, &c. *Joel* 2. 12. Theſe are the conditions annexed to the promiſe. Hence *David* doth ſo often urge this as an argument in his addreſſes to God: ſo then though thy graces are not perfect, if ſincere, thou haſt a claime to the promiſe; thou haſt *a wedding garment for*

2. This only makes us acceptable to God.

the feaſt; thou haſt *oyl for thy lamps*: Let not thy heart be troubled, becauſe thy godlineſſe is not abſolute and compleat; for this God will accept of, though thou might ſtill be better then thou art; ſo that this particular hath both a ſting and honey in it. A ſting it is to the very heart of all hypocrites: To what purpoſe are the multitude of their duties? What doth God regard their offerings, and *whole burnt offerings*? it is *a broken and contrite heart*, it is *truth in the inward man*, that God looketh at: *My ſonne, give me thy heart*, ſaith God, *Prov.* 23. 26. Oh then, when will men be unbewitched in this particular? *They even load and burden God with duties*, as God complaineth, *Iſa.* 1. but their hearts were unclean, they were not waſhed inwardly; every branch will wither, and be thrown into the fire, that doth not grow out of this root. They are a ſacrifice without *ſalt*, that hath not their ſeaſoning: This truth is like *the ſword of the deſtroying Angel*, that deſtroyeth many thouſand duties of ſeverall perſons at one blow, whoſe faith, repentance, and all religious duties, are dead and without life, becauſe deſtitute of this uprightneſſe. It hath honey alſo, for thoſe who are truly godly, that yet are often in ſad lamentations, bewailing their infirmities, and are afraid to touch even *the hemme of Chriſts garment*. Alas, they dare not come to grace, they think the promiſes belong not to them, who diſcover ſo much vileneſſe and loathſomeneſſe in themſelves; they ſtand aloofe off, as ſo many Lepers, and cry *unclean, unclean*, not conſidering this bleſſed truth, That it's uprightneſſe and ſincerity, which doth intereſt them in Chriſt and all his benefits.

3. God is ready to paſſe by the infirmities of the upright.

A third encouragement; *Where there is a ſpirit without guile for the main, though there be ſometimes ſad infirmities, yet God is ready to paſſe them by.* Yea, we may ſtand and wonder at Gods different diſpenſations herein to two men, when the one hath been an hypocrite, and the other fundamentally ſincere: We read of *Saul*, that expecting *Samuel* according to his appointment, who yet deferd his coming very late, that thereupon *Saul* alledging ſuch importunity of the people which he could not withſtand, did ſacrifice; but how dearly did this coſt him, though his fact might ſeem to be alleviated by many circumſtances, yet *Samuel* tells him *that obedience was better then ſacrifice*, 1 Sam. 15. 22. and for this, *the Kingdom was rent from him and given to another*. Now on the other ſide, take *David*: Who hath not heard of that horrible murder which he committed upon *Uriah*, and that with much premeditate deceit, and bloody craft? yet for all this, which ſeemeth to be a Cancell to *Saul's* Goat, we ſee, though God in a very grievous manner afflicted *David* for it, yet the Kingdom is not removed from him: Now why is there ſuch a difference? ſurely this may be a main one; *Saul* notwithſtanding all his goodly pretences, yet he was rotten at the core as we ſay; his heart in the bottom of it was wholly falſe, as appeareth by many other diſcoveries of it: But *David* though his faults were very foul and groſſe, yet becauſe his heart was, for the main, according to Gods will, therefore God is the more indulgent to him: ſo that although ſome fruit be bitter, yet if there be a ſweet root in the bottom, this will at laſt find favour. So we may compare *Judas* and *Peter*, they both deny their Maſter; and they both repent, and are greatly troubled after for great a ſinne; but *Peters* tears come from a good pleaſant fountain within; *Judas* was like a cloud that may guſh out with much rain, but having no conſtant fountain to ſupply it, it is preſently dried up: *The Lord be good*, ſaid *Hezekiah*, *to thoſe who had prepared themſelves*, viz. in the uprightneſſe of their hearts for the paſſeover, *though they were not purified according to the Law.*

4. The uprightneſſe of ſpirit is a wonderful comfort and ſupport in the midſt of all temptations and ſad afflictions whatſoever.

4. The wonderfull comfort and ſupport it brings under all afflictions and temptations.

Satan can never overwhelm that ſoul which hath theſe Letters of commendation. *Hezekiah* had from within and without, enough to cruſh him into peeces, but his heart is like One, it's ſtrong and ſound, and all becauſe he knew he had *walked before God in truth and uprightneſſe*. This *Paul*

Paul alſo, who may be called the Chriſtians *Hercules*, were it not too low for him, became he devoured more than twelve, or twelve labours; and what was that which made him ſo bold and active? it was nothing but the teſtimony he had of his godly ſimplicity, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. that he had avoided *fleſhly wiſedom* in the diſpenſation of the Word: Hence this truth and ſincerity is ſo often compared to a girdle in the Scripture, becauſe as a man girt up, is more expedite and fit for any ſervice, ſo a godly man enjoying this truth of ſpirit, is very expedite and prepared for any employment, either to do or to ſuffer. Would you ſee a notable Champion in the field, fighting it out with the devill, yea and all his good friends falſly accuſing him, and with no other weapon but the integrity of his heart; then read over the ſpirituall warfare *Job* had. Oh beloved, this is the water of life, this is the precious cordiall, when a man comes to be either in ſpirituall or temporall agonies! Who knoweth what heavy bonds of calamities God may tye any man in before he dieth? and nothing will mollifie ſuch chains but uprightneſſe: Its not thy earthly honours or greatneſſe (alas) they are *miſerable comforters*: Not thy parts, thy learning, that thou haſt preached much, faſted and prayed often; none of theſe things, but the ſimplicity of heart in them that will be a reviving to thee.

5. *Plainneſſe and integrity of heart is a ſpeciall meanes to help us in diſcerning between true and falſe, between good and evil.* This is a choice help to any proficiency in faith or godlineſſe: *Phil.* 1. 10. the Apoſtle there prayeth for believers, that they may be *ſincere*: Now what is made a Companion to this? *That they might approve the things that are excellent*, or *that differ*, ſuppoſing one alway goeth in hand with the other; Canſt thou not then diſcern things that differ? Thou doeſt not *approve thoſe things that are moſt excellent*: This it may be is, becauſe thy heart is guiltfull and very falſe: The *heart without guile*, is in other places called *the pure heart*. Now as the pure eye not diſeaſed with humours is thereby more fit and prepared to diſcern any object, ſo it is in the heart of a man, when that is made clean and waſhed from all droſſe and filth, its thereby made more apprehenſive. *Ariſtotle* ſaid, *Thoſe that are ſoft in skinne, are more ingenious and apprehenſive.* To be ſure, thoſe that are ſoft and tender in heart, are more quick in underſtanding about what is good. This then will be a great furtherance, to know what is to be believed, and what is to be done, when thy heart is inclined by ſincerity: *Nathanael* you heard therefore came ſo quickly to the knowledge of Chriſt, though poſſeſſed with contrary principles, becauſe he had an heart without guile, and ſo was willing to have his eyes opened. Oh in many things, its not for want of knowledge, or underſtanding, but integrity, that makes us turn into crooked wayes: Think you not, and that without the leaſt breach of charity, that there are many Learned men, or convinced men, that know they ought to do otherwiſe then they do? but their guiltfull and hypocriticall hearts deceive them; ſo that either to be orthodox in judgment, or to be regular and orderly in our lives, I know no better direction, then to treaſure up ſincerity. Its not onely reading of books, and Authors which write on both ſides, but an equall poiſing or ballancing the heart: *Peters* ſinfull humouring the *Jews*, you heard it was nothing but diſſimulation, he knew he ſhould have done otherwiſe.

5 Integrity will help us in diſcovering between true and falſe, good and evil.

6. *This is a glorious advantage that ſincerity hath; viz. its the greateſt wiſedom and policy that can be uſed.* If *Tacitus*, which is called the Politicians Bible, or *Machiavell*, or any other humane writers of Civill prudence, were all trained, and their juyce taken out, it would not ariſe to ſo much wiſedom, as that which we ſee *Solomon* ſo often treats of in his Divine Politicks, and that is *integrity*. He commends it over and over again, as the greateſt wiſedom, and as that which will be the beſt preſervative againſt evill; not only becauſe God hath the greateſt care over ſuch, and they are moſt precious to him, as is to be ſhewed in a diſtinct head; but becauſe it is of it ſelfe directive to the beſt and ſureſt meanes for any good end. For you muſt know, that integrity or ſincerity is not a particular

6 Sincerity is the greateſt wiſedom and policy that can be uſed.

grace

grace ſeated in any particular faculty, as faith, hope, and love are; but it is the rectitude of every part of the ſoul, and the right qualifying of it in all its operations, ſo that uprightneſſe doth rectifie the minde and underſtanding, there is much deceit in its acts; It doth alſo rectifie the will and affections; there is horrible guile in them alſo: ſeeing then integrity is ſuch a rectification of every part in the ſoule, he is thereby much enabled to behave himſelfe prudently in all his deportments: ſo ſaid *David*, *Pſal.* 101. 1. *I will behave my ſelfe wiſely in a perfect way.* And notable is that expreſſion, *Prov.* 11. 3. *The integrity of the upright ſhall guide him.* It ſhall be a Star to lead him: Read *David's* hiſtory: you have ſeveral paſſages of his carnall policy, as alſo of his integrity; Now he was never better then when he went in Gods way, never more endangered then when he conſulted with fleſhly wiſdome. And indeed there is great reaſon, why integrity ſhould be the beſt prudence, *becauſe it doth only direct to ſure, ſafe, and lawfull meanes*; which are not onely approved of by God, but alſo juſtified in the conſciences of all men: whereas carnall policy, takes up every crooked and unlawfull way, never conſiders *quam honum*, but *quam utile*, how ſubſervient it is to the end he hath propounded, and by reaſon of this is forced to ſhift often, ſometimes to the Gods of the hills, and ſometimes to the Gods of the valleys, and by this unſtedfaſt and rowling way, it comes at laſt to fall of it ſelfe; and certainly, that integrity which only directeth to juſt and lawfull wayes, is the beſt wiſedom, appeareth, in that all men, who yet oppoſe it, do pretend to it, and no man could ever do any great thing in the world, did he not poſſeſſe people with thoughts of his ſincerity. Hence all parties make their appeal to God, as the ſearcher of their hearts: now certainly this doth wonderfully juſtifie the maxime I have laid down, *That ſincerity is the ſureſt policy.* Worldly wiſedom ſets a man upon the ice and ſlippery places, ſincerity upon firm and ſolid land; make much then of ſincerity as the maſter-piece of all wiſedome, all things in this world are ſubject to viciſſitudes and changes; the wheel runs round, and one while one part is uppermoſt, & another time another part: and therefore there will be times, when carnall and fleſhly wiſedom will be manifeſted to be folly, and true integrity will be juſtified of all men. Its recorded of *Tully*, that firſt he exalted *Pompey* and ſet him up: but when he was ſubdued, then he advanced *Julius Cæſar*. When *Brutus* and others had murdered him, then he ſets them up as the great preſervers of their Liberty. When they again were vanquiſhed, then he began to ſet up *Auguſtus*: but all this would not ſave him. And therefore we heare him in his old age crying out, *O me miſerum, O turpem ſenectutem, O me nunquam ſatis dementem*; and we know he came to a violent death at laſt, by the procurement of his moſt bitter enemy.

7 It hath the promiſe of this life annexed to it.

7. Uprightneſſe is not only a means formally enabling to outward happineſſe, *but it is a ſpeciall qualification, that hath, in a peculiar manner, the promiſes of this life annexed unto it.* *Solomon* hath many expreſſions to this purpoſe: *The Tabernacle of the upright ſhall flouriſh*, Prov. 14. 11. *The righteouſneſſe of the upright ſhall preſerve him*, &c. Prov. 11. 3. *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro, to ſhew himſelfe ſtrong in the behalfe of the upright*, 2 Chron. 16. 9. Yea *David* calls upon every man, to mark and behold the truth of it: *Mark the upright man, for the end of that man is peace*, Pſa. 33. 37. The beginning may be trouble, but the end is peace.

Obj. Now to this we have a perpetuall Objection, and that from experience: Doth it not often fall out, that uprightneſſe is oppreſſed? that falſhood proſpereth? That he who keeps his Integrity, makes himſelfe a prey? Is there not a divelliſh proverb, *That plain dealing is a Jewell, but he that uſeth it ſhall die a begger?* Though if you obſerve the generations of men, you ſhall finde, thoſe that uſe diſhoneſt and falſe wayes, die with Gods curſe upon them.

Now to anſwer this briefly: Firſt, Many of the outward calamities that befall the upright, are not ſimply evills, but marks of ſpeciall honour God puts upon them: *Job* his body was full of Ulcers, but his heart was pure; and thoſe tribu-

tribulations he grapled with, were only probatory, to try his ſtrength, to draw out his graces, and encreaſe his glory: They were markes of honour God put upon him: So the afflictions and perſecutions the godly endured were not abſolutely evil, neither did make them miſerable, but they were ſpeciall favours: *To you it is given, not onely to believe, but to ſuffer for his Name:* And the Apoſtles *went out rejoycing, that they were counted worthy to ſuffer for his Name ſake.* So then, as the good things of this life, are not ſimply good things, yea and as *Chryſoſtome* ſaith, the Scripture doth not uſually call them good things abſolutely, but with ſome limitation, the good things *of this life*, &c. ſo neither are theſe outward calamities abſolutely evill: yea ſometimes their nature is wholly altered, and they are ſpeciall favours of God, in which the godly have rejoyced with unſpeakable joy and glory, and for which they have counted themſelves bleſſed and happy.

Secondly, All theſe temporall promiſes are not abſolute, but limited, otherwiſe they would contradict thoſe predictions of the many tribulations the godly are to paſſe through, ſo that you muſt have an eye, both to the promiſes and to thoſe threatnings both together: and indeed ſeeing there is no upright man, but he either fails in the cauſe he undertakes, or in the manner of managing it, or in the ends he propoſeth to himſelfe; this may well juſtifie and cleare God, though the upright meet ſom times with ſharp corrections.

Thirdly, In the fullfilling of temporall promiſes, we muſt not limit God to every individuall perſon, nor to every moment of time, wherein he will honour and clear upright men, we muſt not deſire God ſhould break off his work, before he hath made an end of it; *The end of the upright man*, as it was with *Job*, *is peace.* The world at firſt was a confuſed Chaos, but at the end of ſix dayes, it was a curious world; ſhould a man take a text of Scripture, and make a full ſtop where there is but an imperfect one, he would make it ſpeak blaſphemy: As in that place, *Thou art not a God that haſt pleaſure in iniquity*: if you ſhould make a full ſtop at, *Thou art not a God*, and go no further, it would be heynous blaſphemy. Thus in the providence of God, its an high crime, to make a period where there is a comma onely; to think God hath done, when yet he is in his work; but this ſubject is often treated of.

Uſe of Exhortation: Let all theſe motives make thee in love with a ſincere heart: you ſee it's a rich treaſure, a ſtrong fort; and though in ill times all ſhould be loſt, yet this like *Ruth* to *Naomi*, ſaith, *where thou liveſt I will live; where thou dieſt I will die*, it will never forſake thee: a drop of this at the hour of death, is better then an ocean of earthly profits.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Resolving some practicall Cases of Conscience, about Sincerity and a Spirit without Guile.

SERM. XII.

Resolves this Case, viz. *Whether men that are not truly godly may not attain to a spirit without Guile, in matters of Religion toward God, and Duties toward Man.*

ACTS. 26. 9.

I verily thought with my self, that I ought to do many things contrary to the Nam of Jesus of Nazareth.

YOu have heard at large the severall Characters of a spirit without Guile, and the Encouragements to sell all, as it were, and to buy this Pearl.

I now proceed to handle many particular Cases of Conscience, which will serve very much to the further illustration of this Point: and the first I shall pitch upon, is, *Whether men that are not truly godly, may not attain to a spirit without Guile in many particulars; Whether, in matters of Religion towards God, and duties toward man*, they may not be unfeigned and sincere, and thereby have much peace and tranquillity of conscience? Now for the negative it may be argued, that such a thing cannot be: because the heart of a man (as we have heard) is deceitfull above all things; and it is an universall, proposition peremptorily asserted in Scripture, *Every man is a Lyar.* But yet we shall resolve the affirmative, *viz. That many a man unregenerated, devoid of true grace, may yet in severall things be without guile both towards God and man.* Though indeed, this will not amount to make him an upright man absolutely, but *quoad hoc* only, in such and such cases: and this subject I shall fasten upon the text, as being very pregnant for my purpose. And the better to know this, take notice, that my text is part of that famous Apology which *Paul* was put upon to make before *King Agrippa*: In his defence we may briefly consider his *exordium*, and his *narration*: In his *Preface*, he makes use of Rhetorick, insinuating into his Judge, and doth *captare benevolentiam*, by acknowledging it an happinesse to plead before him; not that *Paul* was

was guilty of any sinfull flattery, for the matter was true; *Josephus* commends this *Agrippa* for a prudent and wise Governour, and *Paul* giveth you the reason why he did so preface, because *Agrippa* was expert in the customs and questions of the Jews, and therefore more able to give righteous judgement. His *Narration* consists of two principall parts: 1. Of the life he lived before he was a Christian. 2. Of the wonderfull and extraordinary call he had to Christianity: by both which it might appear, that he had not vainly and rashly changed his profession.

The words I pitch upon are part of the narrative relating to his life while a Jew; which he aggravateth, 1. From the particular Sect he was addicted to. 2. The adjunct of time, from his youth. 3. His zeal in propagating of this: Which is further described in its externall actions, doing many things against Christ and his religion. 2. In the unfeigned thoughts of his conscience herein, *I verily thought I was bound to do:* It was not any carnall respect, or earthly advantage did move him, but the pure and meer dictates of conscience: He thought he was bound to do what he did, else he would have sinned grievously against God, and have damned his own soul. So that *Paul*, in that opposition against Christ and his Church, was thus farre without guile in his spirit, that he did not go against the light of conscience, he did not persecute what he was convinced in his conscience was the truth of God; but in all this, he did as he thought it was his duty to do. Not that this doth excuse him, as is to be shewed, any further then that he was not a convinced hypocrite in his oppositions of Christ, as many of the Israelites were.

Observe. *That men unregenerated, and devoid of true grace, may yet in many particulars both towards God and man, be true and unfeigned.*

This is a naturall consequence from the text, and this practicall matter will be very piercing and searching even into the deep things of mans heart. But before I come to the particulars, one or two things, must be a little insisted on, ere we can proceed.

As first, Whatsoever some have thought and wrote to the contrary, we take it as a truth cleer from Scripture, *That Paul was not regenerated, or godly, till he had that miraculous conversion from Heaven:* for if this be not made good, the Doctrine will fall to the ground. Some therefore have said, that *Paul* from his youth up was godly, and that he erred onely in the object of his faith, about this particular person to be the Messias: he believed in, and hoped for a Messias, but onely that this individuall person was the Messias, he denyed: now, say they, many good men were godly, and held out such a faith, as *Nathanael* and the Centurion. And they are the rather moved to this, because *Acts* 23. 1. *Paul* did there openly professe, *he had lived in all good conscience before God till that day*, so that it seemed he had alwayes a good conscience before God. But this assertion is no wayes admitted: For 1. *Paul* speaks of himselfe, as a *blasphemer*, and *the greatest of all sinners* till God had mercy on him, in that extraordinary conversion, acknowledging his estate wretched and damnable, till God had thus enlightened him. *Rom.* 7. he tells you how ignorant he was of the spirituall sense of the Law, or, *That when the Law revived, viz.* in the spirituall meaning of it, *he died*, he had no hope or comfort in himself: And as for that profession, of *his walking with a good conscience*, that may very well relate to that time of his life since his conversion to the Christian faith, for onely of that time was he accused of his enemies: and further, a conscience may be said to be good two wayes: Either first, Because directed and enlightened by the Scripture, as also, cleansed and washed by faith in Christs blood: so his conscience was not good. Or else secondly, Because its a quiet and comforted conscience, following that light and knowledge it hath, though it be altogether enormous; and thus *Paul* had a good conscience, and that might very well provoke *Ananias*, for if he had a good conscience, they had a bad one to accuse him.

Hence secondly, There was a great difference between *Paul*, and *Nathanael* of whom Christ said, *Behold a true Israelite in whom is no guile*, before he did expressly professe his faith in that person, Christ, as *Cornelius* the Centurion, of whom *Acts* 10. its said, *he was a just man fearing God, and his prayer was accepted of*, before he had an expresse faith in that individuall person, as the Messias; for these indeed did believe in a Messias to come; and not onely so but expected and waited for him, and as soon as there was a sufficient manifestation of him to be the Christ, they believed. But *Paul*, notwithstanding all those demonstrations and arguments to prove that person to be the Messias, yet he did not only, not believe, but did wretchedly and violently oppose Christ; and although he said, *God had mercy on him because he did it ignorantly*, yet that ignorance was not of meer negation, but affected, and of a proud or evill disposition, having the means to believe, but did not.

The two Particulars thus cleered, let us see what *Paul* though unregenerated, was unfeigned in, and without guile.

And 1. *We see his zeal was upon religious grounds, though not with knowledge out of Gods word.* Even as *Paul* giveth this testimony to the Jews, *That they had a zeal, but not according to knowledge*, Rom. 10. 2. *Pauls* love and his affections were strong and reall, moved, as he thought, because of Gods honour and glory. Hence *Phil.* 3. speaking of what things in his Judaism might before men be matter of boasting, he saith, *concerning zeal I persecuted the Church.* He was not a cold frozen piece of earth, or *a lukewarm Laodicean*, but his love did burn as hot as fire: *qui non zelat, non amat*; *no man loveth any Religion, or way thereof, that hath not zeal for it:* and zeal is such a fire, that it assimilateth the zealous person into it, as our Saviour said, *The zeal of Gods house had eaten him up*, Joh. 2. 17. as fire devoureth every thing it worketh on. Thus *Paul*, if you do consider all the labour, pains, and industry he used to persecute the Church, you must needs confesse his zeal, he said, *he was even mad against the Christians*, Acts 26 11. Now this zeal, though it was enormous, yet it was in the generall upon religious grounds: Thus it differed as much from *Demetrius* his zeal about *Dianes* Temple, as elementary and culinary fire differ: for he was so zealous, only because, if the Temple were destroyed, his trade and earthly gain would fall to the ground, because *he made shrines* for it: but *Paul* abhorred such base unworthy respects, it was the cause of God, as he thought, that did stirr up so much zeal: Thus in the old Testament we reade of many idolaters, that *sacrificed their very Children to Moloch*: Here was a religious motive, though deluded therein, and it could not be any earthly respect; for their very naturall affections would have prohibited them, had not a religious awe upon them overmastered all.

2 The ir consciences may dictate to them such worship and wayes as they follow, to be duties enjoyned by God.

2. That which was in *Paul*, and in all like *Paul* in an erroneous way, was, *their consciences, though misled, did dictate to them such duties, such worship as they followed.* Hence although they had not *a zeal according to knowledge*, viz. true, and instructed out of Gods word, yet they had a zeal according to their own knowledge: They did not live against any light within them, their consciences did not accuse them, but excuse in all that they did; and in this sense we may say, that many like *Paul*, in false and erroneous wayes, do walk with a good conscience, if by [good] be meant a quiet, peaceable and satisfied conscience in what they do; although that doth not excuse them from from being idolaters and damnable sinners before God; for there must be a just and a weighty cause, ere we pronounce against any man in any religious way, that he liveth against his conscience; for though no doubt many do, yet it seemeth very harsh to affirm of this or that particular, before great pains taken with him both in instruction and admonition. I shall not here fall upon that question, whether an erroneous conscience doth binde to follow it or no? Its certain, no man is bound to sinne: *Paul* though *he thought he ought to do many things against Christ*, yet it was nor his duty to do so, but his duty was *deponere errorem*, to lay aside his errour:

There-

Therefore some say, an erroneous conscience doth *ligare*, but not *obligare*, it bindeth that we may not do against it, but not oblige to follow it; for seeing it is but an inferior judge, if the superiour judge, speaking in his word condemn what that ablolveth, all its condemnation is void. Well, let the case of an erroneous conscience be how it will, this is certain, that many superstitious and erroneous persons have followed that light of conscience they had in the worship of God; Hence our Saviour told his Disciples, That their enemies *should think they did God good service in killing of them*, Joh. 16. 2. O it's a wofull thing to have a misled conscience in Religion, it accounts the grossest idolatry acceptable service, and the most bloody cruelty, acceptable and godly zeal; so that you see a zealous man following his conscience, may like *Saul*, run madly on toward hell, and the more fierce he is, the more desperate: we reade of a passage, *Tit.* 3. 10. *That an heretique after the first or second admonition, reject, because such an one is condemned of himselfe*; From whence some have gathered, That every heretique after means used to reclaim him, doth fight against the known truth in his conscience, and so is condemned of himselfe; Now though this be the common interpretation, yet I suppose that Interpretation of *Tertullian* more consonant, which makes *condemned of himselfe* to be this, *viz.* he is the cause of his condemnation, and this sense is very coherent; Avoid an heretique after thou hast used means to reclaim him, because he is the cause of his own damnation, Thou hast done what thou oughtest to do, do not fear that any guilt will be upon thee: His destruction is of himselfe, as God told *Israel*.

3. *Men unregenerated may yet be hearty in respect of the peace and comfort they have flowing from their zeal.* *Paul* and such as he, do not counterfeit a joy and comfort they have in their false wayes, but as their zeal was reall, and their conscience reall, so their comfort and peace was reall: not that they had true and solid joy and peace, for that comes by the Scripture, and that is wrought by the holy Ghost, it being the fruit of the Spirit, but as their zeal and conscience were reall, though not sound and right, so is their joy and peace: for when a man doth zealously follow his conscience, there doth by naturall consequence follow peace and comfort within, such as Heathens did feel, which made them so command a good conscience, as the brazen wall, and the onely happinesse: as now on the contrary, when men do any thing against their conscience, there followeth an accusation and murmuring within, as you see in *Judas*, when he cried out, *I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood.* Now when a man performeth that, which his judgement calls upon him to do, he findes great serenity of minde, and is like the upper region, wherein turbulent Meteors make no confusion; so that you must never judge of the truth of any way in Religion, by the comfort and peace of conscience you find therein; for all Turks, Jews, Papists and Hereticks have much quietnesse of conscience in discharging that traditionall religion they are brought up in, and would be much troubled in conscience to deny or apostatize from their way, untill their consciences be rectified by the word of God.

3 They may have much peace and comfort flowing from their zeal.

4. They may be so hearty and unfeigned in their way, *that they will attribute all the outward mercies they enjoy, unto that religion they walk in:* They will judge, God blesseth them, because of their zeal and devotion therein: Thus the Idolaters in Scripture attributed all unto their idoll gods, when they had any successe: and the idolatrous *Jews* in *Jeremy*, they said all was well with them, and they had all abundance, while they worshipped the Queen of Heaven, *Judg.* 17. 13. *Micah*, though making Idols and living in Idolatry, thought God would give a blessing thereupon, *Judg.* 17. 13. So that we see, people led aside in false and erroneous wayes, destitute of the true power of grace, may have a kinde of true heartinesse in all that they do; not like *Jehu*, who though boasting of his zeal for God, yet aimed indeed at nothing but earthly greatnesse.

4 They will attribute all outward mercies to the way they walk in.

5 They may heartily leave all those grosse sinnes which their naturall light doth condemne.

Lastly, In reference to God, *They may heartily leave the practice of all such grosse sinnes as their naturall light doth condemn:* They do really think such wayes of wickednesse are forbidden by God, whom they worship, and therefore they dare not commit them. Thus also *Paul*, Phil. 3. *Concerning the righteousnesse of the Law, unblameable.* So far as the Law of God forbids any outward sin, (and the Pharisees did interpret the extent of it no further,) so fart *Paul* did walk unblameably, none could accuse him therein: Thus many walk according to the morall dictates of nature, that they would abhorre any such unworthy practises: when *Abimelech* knew *Sarah* to be another mans wife, he was very carefull to abstain from her; and God giveth him this testimony, *that he did it in the integrity of his heart*, Gen. 20. 6.

And as for those duties which relate to men, its more unquestionable, that they may be without guile in many particulars. As

6 He may be a true and faithfull friend.

1. *He may be a true and faithfull friend*: love another upon pure grounds; as *Aristotle* defineth friendship, to be *a love of another, not for any good we get, but meerly for the parties sake whom beloved*; and the Heathens give us examples of such friends; and thus we daily see, men that have not the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, yet are plain-hearted and faithfull in their love.

7 They may abhor lying, &c.

2. *Men unregenerated may abhorre the way of lying, and all dishonest fraudulent courses*: We see even in humane esteem a lye is an unworthy thing, and no man knows how to bear it. The *Romans* were carefull to keep their words that it made a Proverb, *Romana fides*. To be just and plain in a mans dealing, is that which severall men, guided by no higher principle then nature, are carefull in. *Esay* saith, *Isa.* 8. 2. *he took unto him faithfull witnesses*, and one was *Uriah*, who is conceived to be the same that brought *a pattern of the Altar at Damascus*, and so let in idolatry to *Israel*, yet he had the esteem of a faithfull man.

8 They may be without guile as to any secondary ends in all publike affairs.

Lastly, *To any secondary end in all publike affairs, they may be without guile*; faithfull in their love to the publick: witnesse many Heathens; in their relations they were placed in. *Joab*, how carefull was he that the City *Rabbah* should not be delivered to him, but be taken in *Davids* name; thus, as farre as secondary ends do reach the publike good, or relation they are in, they may discharge them without guile. But the Scripture reacheth us an higher, and a more noble end, which is *the Glory of God*, and whatsoever reacheth not to this, we may call it rather *minus vitium*, then *true virtue*; and therefore to speak exactly, there are no such things as morall virtues, but Divinity would lift them up to higher motives, and that sheweth us a more excellent way.

Use of Admonition, to all such who are zealously and conscientiously affected in matters of Religion, and finde quicknesse of conscience therein, to be wary and ponder things well. It may be thou art no better then a *Paul* before his conversion; its good to be zealously affected in a good thing *Paul* said it by experience: Be then as Justice is pictured, always with a Balance in thy hand, ponder and weigh things from the Scripture; if you runne never so swiftly, yet being out of the way, you make the more haste to destruction: especially this concerneth all those that are zealous for Religion from education and custom onely.

SERM. XIII.

Sheweth, That for men to act unfeignedly according to their Consciences, without guile, in their own way of Religion, doth not demonstrate them to be such sincere men as God approves of, and unto whom the Promises belong.

A necessary Item, for these Times.

ACTS 26. 9.

I verily thought I was bound to do what I did, contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth.

THis text hath afforded us already this remarkable position, *That men, though not regenerated, may be hearty and unfeigned, in many particulars both of Religion towards God, and righteousnesse towards men.*

Their hearty and unfeigned zeal is unsufficient.

Now I come to shew, *Wherein the insufficiency of such hearty zeal doth appear*: and that although they live not against the light of their conscience, or rebell against that, yet *they have not spirits without guile, nor are these upright and sincere men, to whom the promises do belong.*

1 Their zeal is not rectified by the Word of God.

And first, *They do grosly fail in this, that their religious zeal, and hearty devout affections are not rectified by the word of God.* Though they have a zeal according to their own knowledge, yet not according to knowledge indeed, *viz.* that knowledge, which is to be had from the Word, and herein lyeth the very essence and very fundamentals of all such mens miscarriages: We blame not *Paul*, or such like men, for cold and lukewarm affections; we accuse them not that they go against their judgements, and their own light that shineth in their breasts; but herein we arraign them, that in all this they are not directed by the word of God: the Word of God hath often this epithete, that it is right: as they are exceeding true in themselves, so they are the rule of all truth: All Religion must be Scripture-Religion, all worship Scripture-worship, all zeal Scripture zeal; so that let a man have never such sublime knowledge, and such burning zeal, yet if it be not according to the Law and the Testimony, there is no light in them, *Isai.* 8. 16. It's but a vain worship of God, because God doth not require this, as our Saviour instructeth, *Mark.* 7. 7. so that the summe of all, and that into which all Religion must be reduced into at last, is the *Scriptures*, the word of God; for if you once lay this aside, why should not the Turkish devotion be as good as mine? why should not the Mahumetan zeal be as acceptable as mine, but only this makes the difference; what may be proved by Scripture is approved of by God, so that all these arguments, *In my conscience*

science, I verily think I am bound to do thus: Its upon my spirit: I find much comfort and much sweetnesse in my Religion; all this is nothing, for all false religions can and do say this. But hast thou the word of God to warrant thee? doth that justifie thee? all things else are but an empty shadow. This is the first and the main thing.

2. The motives of all their Religious zeal is but humane.

2. *Such devout hearty men are not regenerate, because the motive of all their religious zeal is but humane*, not from divine and supernaturall graces, not from faith in Gods word, but tradition, custome, and education: If you had asked *Paul* in that hot Judaisme he was in, What made him so active? why did he run thus up and down like a mad man to oppresse and overwhelme the Christians? he would have said, Zeal for God; *according to the tradition of his Fathers:* Thus Acts 22. 2. he there declareth, that he was taught *according to the exact manner of the Fathers*, and zealous, as they were to this day. Thus all the Pharisees, what were the coales that kindled such a zeal within them, but tradition from their Fathers? Thus *Joh.* 4. the woman argueth, *Our fathers worshipped in the mount.* Thus the Heathens, especially *Symmachus* their notable Orator pleaded to the Emperour for their Paganish Idolatry, to whom *Ambrose* answered, Oh saith he; *sequendi sunt parentes, qui feliciter suos sunt sequuti; contumeliosa est reprehensio senectutis*, as he goes on: Let us follow on to them, as they happily followed theirs; its a contumelious and reproachfull thing to think to be wiser then them: so that this is a plain demonstration, that all the religious zeal and devotion, which possibly can be shewed, that yet hath no better grounds then tradition, or custome, or education, cannot be acceptable to God, neither doth it argue any regeneration in us; Oh then how may this particular confound the hopes of many, who put forth some hearty devotions, in the matters of God, but the motive of all, is not a divine faith, only education and tradition; such which all the religions in the world, though never so absurd and idolatricall, can and do pretend unto.

3. Such are ignorant of the foul pollutions that are in them.

3. Such zeal as *Pauls* was, doth not argue a true upright heart, because all such, in the highest acts of such religious worship, are *wonderfully ignorant and senseless of the deep, inward, and soul-pollutions that do cleave to the heart.* Though they may be carefull to avoid all outward, grosse, and foul sinnes, yet they are ignorant of the heart-filthinesse, and so not carefull to cleanse that mudded fountain: Thus *Paul* himself all the while he ranged thus up and down like a devil or a roaring Lyon, seeking what innocent lamb, what Christian he might devour, he never reflects upon his own brutish nature, he felt not what a monster and beast he was within, as he himself *Rom.* 7. doth at large tell us: Oh that is an excellent Chapter, describing to the very life, what quiet, self-justifying thoughts such men have how ignorant of the depth and breadth of originall sinne within them! what a fountain of all poison is within their hearts, though they know it not? and this our Saviour did constantly charge upon the Pharisees: They did not know, or regard what their hearts were within: The pride, the hardnesse, the selfishnesse and self-flattery; no stones are more senseless then they are of such pollutions within them. There is no such touch-stone to discover whether a man be regenerated or know any thing experimentally of the work of grace, as the understanding of spirit-defilements, bewailing them, and breathing after an heart-godlinesse. The heart is all in supernaturals as well as naturalls; Are thy sinfull thoughts, affections, corrupt inventions and such invisible motions of the heart towards sin, an heavy burthen to thee? this argueth a life of grace within. But *Paul* in the midst of all his active zeal left not the least of this inward soul-bitternesse.

4. They are full of self-righteousnesse.

4. *Such zeal, and hearty affections are ever imperfect, because they are always accompanied with an heart-fulnesse with a sufficiency of our own righteousnesse*; *Paul* speakes pregnantly to this matter, *Phil.* 3. where reckoning up his privileges,

es, and all his zealous forwardnesse for the Law, which in an humane account were great things, no godlinesse or happinesse like that; he doth renounce all this seeming worth with great disdain, calling such things *dung and drosse for the excellency of the righteousnesse through faith in Christ*; and wherein did the Pharisee's sin more manifest it self then in self-righteousnesse? Oh then do not matter all the greatest devotions, the most humble and obsequious expressions of Religion, if there be not a deniall of all these for Christs Righteousnesse. Give me an active zealous man that yet breatheth after, and only longeth for Christs fulnesse, That cannot be without Christ, That mourneth and praieth after Christ: All the false zeal and religion that is in the world, doth lift up and spiritually inflame: It's a disease, a tumour, a swelling in a mans soul, They do not throw away all, that Christ alone may be *wisdome, righteousnesse, and sanctification*. It pleased *God that all fulnesse should dwell in Christ, and that we should be compleat in him*: Now there is no false worship or Religion in the world but it leadeth a man to a fulness & compleatnesse in a mans self, or in the zealous works he doth to God: Insomuch that this is one special mark whereby we discern the divinity of the Scriptures, and their immediate inspiration by the holy Ghost, that contrary to all Philosophy and humane reason, it teacheth a righteousnesse without us, and not in us, so as to be wrought by us. The great Masters of morality, *Aristotle*, and others, knew no such way, nay would as much have derided it, as at a crucified God, or the resurrection from the dead: when then you see a man diligently and devoutly acting for that Religion he thinketh the true, enquire, how he is affected with Christs righteousnesse, whether his inward thoughts are of all things as drosse in comparison of him; whether he be constantly in his prayers, as the lame man at the pool of *Bethesda*, earnestly longing to be put into this fountain of living water; all the prayers, all the zealous worship *Paul* was busied in, was wholly destitute of Christ; and we see in Popery, whatsoever descriptions the Learned men use in their books, as if they would exalt Christ, yet the practised devotion is wholly ignorant of a spirituall application or improving of him; but their works, their devotions accomplished, are the Christ they make to themselves.

5. *Even this hearty and conscientious zeal is insufficient, because all this religion and worship, though done according to our conscience, is yet Idolatry and blasphemy.* Its not the error of our conscience, or our ignorance that will make those sinnes no sinnes; Indeed if God did not regard one way of Religion more then another, or that truth were not any such thing indeed, but as men have thought and imagined, so truth should be (even as the colours in birds or soul, appear according to the light that shineth upon them) then something might be said in defence of this. But we see the Scripture pronouncing of all those Idolaters, who yet lived according to their education and knowledge, that they were Idolaters howsoever; and, as such, were punished by God. And our Saviour said; That which was highly esteemed amongst men, *viz.* in respect of worship and religion, is an abomination before God, *Luk.* 16. Thus likewise you see *Paul* when converted, doth acknowledge those wayes of his, to be full of blasphemy and bloody persecution, though he thought he was bound to do what he did. And by this you see, what little refuge there is in the plea of those who maintain *damnable heresies*, and whose doctrines spread like a Cancer, because they do according to their Conscience, They think, they ought to do what they do. For all the Idolatry that ever was in the world, all that ever the Heathenish persecutors, or the Jewish enemies to Christianity have done, came in many of them from a seduced and erroneous conscience; neither can there any solid reason be given, why the Idolatry in the old Testament should be lesse indulged then blasphemous damnable heresies in the new, that overthrow either the divine nature of Christ or the holy Ghost, or the authority of the Scriptures, which

5. Their worship is Idolatry and Blasphemy.

which are the fundamentalls of Religion. Certainly the honour and glory of God is as precious, as dear to him now as ever, and by the word of God, eſpecially the new Teſtament, the teſtimonies are as clear for the divine nature of Chriſt (I ſpeak not of the ſublime queſtions or manner of explication of it, but onely the exiſtency, that he is truly God) to them that believe Scripture, as that there is a God, is or may be clear to them, that have nothing but the book of nature to prove it from: Its not thy ignorance, who enjoyeſt the means, or the error upon thy conſcience which ſeduceth thee, that will acquit thee before God. Chriſt from Heaven ſaid to *Paul*, *Why perſecuteſt thou me?* Acts 9. 4. though he replied, *Who art thou Lord?* although, as was hinted before, God had mercy on him, becauſe he did it ignorantly, yet that ignorance was wilfull and affected, becauſe he had means to the contrary; Inſomuch that a learned Critick *Tarnavicus*, thinks it ſhould be tranſlated, [*although*] *I did it ignorantly*, as the Hebrew *Chi*, often in Scripture: Howſoever, that this ignorance did not excuſe, is plain, becauſe *Paul* makes God's converſion of him ſuch an extraordinary inſtance of the riches of Gods grace, that makes himſelf an inſtance, that all the ages to come may wonder at: and there is no man ſo affected with, and paſſionately magnifying the grace of God to ſinners, as *Paul* is, from his own experience, which he could not have done, if his ignorance, and erroneous conſcience, had acquitted him for his former ſins. Thus you ſee, how eaſily it may fall out that men, though hearty and devout, according to their knowledg and way in matters that relate to God may yet be wholly deſtitute of the work of grace in their own ſouls, and are like a field of fat ſoile, which becauſe not rightly husbanded, brings forth much indeed, but of weeds and unprofitable briers fit for burning. Do not therefore run to thy perſwaded conſcience, as a ſafe ſanctuary, for many horrible idolaters and blaſphemers have been hereby miſled: and of all Hiſtories in this kinde, that is moſt remarkable, which *Voetius* in his diſputes of Atheiſm, relateth, concerning one *Vanirius*, who once wrote a book to prove there was a God, calling it *Amphitheatrum divinæ providentiæ*, yet afterwards apoſtatized into a mere ſpeculative dogmatizing Atheiſt, and did indure burning to death at *Paris*, profeſſing this blaſphemous aſſertion. Shall his deluded and cauterized conſcience plead for an abſolution? But you will ſay, Do not ſuch zealous men as *Paul*, deſerve ſome pitty? or is there no way to be mitigated? *Anſw.* In ſome reſpects their condemnation will not be ſo great, as ſome other kinde of men in the world, whereof there is too great a number; As

1. Thoſe who are active and violent for a religious way, oppoſing the truly Godly, contrary to their conſcience and knowledge: This made *Lyrinenſis* of old; and latter Divines diſtinguiſh between the heads or ſeducers in heretical wayes, and the followers or ſeduced, who many times went in the ſimplicity of their ſpirit, no doubt a great deal of difference is to be put beween ſuch, for if any go againſt light and knowledge, its likely thoſe who have the moſt underſtanding, and are the chiefeſt in parts: therefore *Pauls* caſe was farre more excuſable, then thoſe malicious Phariſees, whom our Saviour charged with ſinning againſt the holy Ghoſt: Oh this is a bloody aggravation, and ſuch fire as this is like that of hell: Thou art a devil incarnate in this particular.

2. They are more excuſable than men Atheiſts or Atheiſticall men, that make the matter of conſcience or Religion, to be meer notions or niceties; *Paul* was farre more commendable then that *Gallio*, who cared not for theſe things of Religion then on foot: This is the carnall policy that reigneth in the world, to account the name and repute of Religion profitable for many deſignes, but the thing it ſelf a burden.

3. They are better then cold, lukewarm profeſſors, though of the truth; how odious ſuch frozen neutrall men in Religion are to God, appeareth by Gods expoſtulation, *I would thou were either hot or cold, becauſe thou art lukewarme*

warme, I will ſpue thee out of my mouth. This expreſſion ſheweth how loathſome and abominable ſuch are to God.

Laſtly, When mens zeal for a way of Religion, becauſe apprehended to be of God, is therefore drawn out: it is farre more excuſable, then when men are hot and violent onely for carnall and earthly reſpects; I make a great difference of *Paul*, from thoſe other Phariſees that did all things to be ſeen of men; or from *Jehu*, who boaſted of much zeal for God, but it was to get an earthly Kingdom; or *Demetrius*, whoſe heat was wholly ſeavouriſh from inordinate love to theſe things below.

Uſe of Inſtruction, To bewaile the wofull neglect of that zeal and fervency which ought to be in Chriſtians, walking in the truth: Oh how do Idolaters, and hereticks, and erroneous perſons go beyond us and ſhame us! Did that good man *Jambo* weep when he ſaw a whore curiouſly decking her ſelf to pleaſe her enamoured lover, becauſe he could not be as diligent and as circumſpect to pleaſe God: what rivers of tears then, may run out of our eyes, to ſee the Papiſt, the heretick, ſo active, ſo forward, ſo devout in their falſe wayes, and we ſtand ſtill? They worſhip Idols, that have eyes, hands and feet, but uſe them not: we on the contrary do not worſhip an Idol, but we that are worſhippers are like Idols. *Paul* thought he was bound to oppoſe and perſecute the way of Chriſt, and he did it with all his might. Thou knoweſt thou art bound to be more diligent in ſanctifying the Sabbath, more frequent in prayer, reading, and in all other religious duties, but thou mindeſt them not, neither art careſull for them.

SERM. XIV.

Shewing whence it is, that even a godly man may be greatly troubled and perplexed, fearing he is an hypocrite.

PSAL. 19. 12.

Who can underſtand his errors? cleanſe thou me from ſecret ſinnes.

IN the former part we have the Pſalmiſt commending two Books to be ſtudied by all, as being made by the moſt wiſe and holy Author that ever was, *viz.* God himſelf. The firſt Book, is that of the whole world, eſpecially the Heavens, the glory of the world; and the Sunne, the glory of the Heavens. There is one Philoſopher, *Eudoxus*, thought he was born for no other end, but to behold the glory of the Sun: but the Pſalmiſt teacheth us better and more divine Philoſophy, to admire the glory and majeſty and wiſdome of him that made the Sun: and that devout man ſaid better, *Si tanta pulchritudo in creaturâ, quanta in Creatore!* If a creature be ſo glorious, how much more is the Creator! Now the Pſalmiſt ſets forth the excellency of the Sun;

1. From the place where it is ſet, *He ſet a Tabernacle in the Heavens for it*: There is the throne erected for this King of the earth. If *Solomon* in all his glory, was not like a Lilly of the field, much leſſe can earthly glory be like that of the Sun in the Heavens; yet the ſpirituall and heavenly glory, which the godly ſhall enjoy, is compared to this, yea it is farre above it.

2. *The Sunne is commended for its beauty*, a bridegroom coming out of his chamber: *solem è mundo tollere*, is to make the world a Cyclops, a huge body without eyes.

3. *The velocity and swiftnesse of the course: It rejoyceth as a strong man to runne its race.* This text overthroweth that fancy of the Sunnes standing still, and the earths moving; and let them not think to put it off, with, the Scripture speaks according to our sense, for the assertion is so peremptory of its motion, that if we give way to this, we may overthrow the whole Scripture upon this distinction. Then those that held, Christ had only a phantasticall body and not a reall, may come in at this hole; the circular motion of it, his going forth is from one end of Heaven to the other.

4. *From the vivificall influence thereof*, nothing is hid from the heat thereof. The Hebrew word for the Sunne, comes from a root, that signifieth *ministravit*, because its the servant of the whole world. And observe here by the way, that the Scripture commending the Sunne and the Starry Heavens, for all its properties and ends that we should make of them, saith not the least word of *Judiciall Astrology*, or foretelling future events in the world by them: whereas if that were true, which is said, That God by the Heavens, as by a Book, hath revealed what he would do, it would have commended the study of the Heavens for this end to all; for if God hath manifested his will by it, then certainly he would have commanded us to search for it there, as he doth command us to find out his will in the Scripture. But the Scripture is so farre from commanding such a study, that it expresly forbids it as a grievous sinne. *Deut.* 18. 10, 14. and *Jer.* 10. 2. and truly that, Judiciall Astrology is a vanity, appeareth by this reason; They undertake to foretell contingencies, for the most part from the portion of the seven Planets; now these being so vast a number of fixed Starres, which have influence in earthly things in some proportion as well as the Planets, how is it possible that they should foretell any certain truth? *Albumazer* the Chief of that Astrological superstition, foretold, *that the Christian Religion, should not continue above a thousand four hundred years*, but experience hath discovered the wicked falshood thereof. Nor to tell you, that God makes it his property onely, and the Prophets he immediately upbraids, to predict things long before they come to passe.

The second Book the Psalmist commends, is that of the Scripture, and that onely is distinct and clear, giving a soul-saving knowledge, so that we are more to rejoyce in the Word of God, and to account that a more necessary and precious treasure, then Heaven and Earth: The Word is commended from excellent adjuncts and properties, as also most blessed and gracious effects: Now when the Psalmist had described these two Schooles, he seeth they are nothing without a third, the School of grace; That God would teach him and pardon his sinnes, especially considering the exactnesse of Gods word, and what holy obedience that requireth; he doth in a most sad and bitter manner utter the complaint of his soul in my text. In which words consider. 1. An expostulatory exclamation. 2. A vehement postulation. The exclamation, *Who can understand his errors?* That is, None can. The Hebrew word for errors signifieth all those crafty and subtle wandrings of the soul: the hidden counsels and secret lurking laths that are in the heart. Even as crafty beasts they have their holes and their dens to lye in, and it is very hard to find them out. O mark it! Even *David* a godly man complains thus; That he doth not know himself; that there is more evil in him then he can find out, and thereupon you have his cautelous and jealous prayer, *Cleanse me from secret sinnes*: what sinnes Lord, I do not know, I do not discover in me; Oh here may be much unknown wickedness in my heart, do thou cleanse me from it.

So that the first Doctrine I shall observe is,

That godly men may be greatly troubled, and afflicted under this meditation:

That

That there is more evil in them then they know. All the hypocriſie and naughtineſſe within themſelves, they cannot fathom. Oh then what ſhall they do?

Doct. That godly men may be much troubled and afflicted from fearing they are hypocrites.

Whence it ariſeth that a godly man may be in great fear he is an hypocrite.

Now upon this text and doctrine, I ſhall come to a ſecond practicall caſe, concerning a ſpirit without guile: *viz. What a Godly man ſhould do that is afraid he is an hypocrite*, that thinks his ſoul is full of guile. He diſcovers and findes much evil, and then he knoweth not what depths of ſin may be in him beſides all this, and therefore his ſoul is troubled, and he hath no reſt in his bones becauſe of this ſpirituall diſquietneſſe. To pour oyl into this ſpirituall wound, let us firſt by way of preparation, conſider whence it doth ariſe, that a godly man may thus ſadly be troubled, fearing himſelf to be a hypocrite and a caſtaway: and the grounds are many.

1. That depth of corruption which cleaveth to every man.

1. *That unſearchable depth of corruption, which cleaveth to every man.* This is the fountain of thoſe hid and ſecret ſins *David* prayeth to be cleanſed from. As the graces of the Goſpell are unſearchable, and the riches thereof are paſt finding out ſo, that naturall corruption we carry about with us is exceeding deep; we never came to know the worſt of our ſelves; our hearts are like *Ezechiels* viſion he had, ſtill there was more abhominations, and yet more: when we have diſcovered ſo much as ſhall make us a noyſome dunghill to our ſelves, yet there remaineth ſomething to be diſcovered: As they ſay, all the parts of the world are not yet diſcovered, ſo nor all of that world of ſinne within us. *Gen.* 6. when its ſaid, *the imaginations of the thoughts of our hearts, are onely evil*: The Hebrew word, for imagination, ſignifieth, that the heart is a conſtant forge or ſhop of evil, wherein do conſtantly ariſe evil thoughts, corrupt affections and imaginations, as from ſome bitter fountain flow conſtantly ſome bitter ſtreames: No marvell then if the godly man be in ſuch ſad perplexities, ſeeing there is ſuch an unknown gulf of ſinne within him.

2. The ſpirituall exactneſſe of the Law.

2. *Another ground of this ſpirituall perturbation is the ſpirituall exactneſſe of the Law, which doth ſtrictly oblige to every Iota or tittle, to univerſall and perfect obedience*, curſing all failings therein: and this ſeemeth to be the occaſion of *Davids* complaint in the text, *To thoſe that keep his commandements, there is an exceeding great reward*: but who are they, thinks *David*, I am none of thoſe, I cannot underſtand, or bewaile all the evils of my doings: Therefore we ſhall alwayes obſerve, that thoſe who are filled with a Phariſaicall righteouſneſſe and ſelfholineſſe, they have alwayes meaſured their duty by their power, and not by the Law; they have denied the ſtrict obligation and ſpirituall extent of the Law, becauſe their obedience hath been only external: They have not raiſed up themſelves to the Law, but brought down the Law to themſelves; as if the Heavens ſhould come down to the earth, and not the earth be raiſed up to the Heavens: Thus the Jews and the Phariſees, their perpetuall doctrine was, that the Law did only require externall obedience; and when our Saviour expounded it, *Math.* 5. of heart-ſins, it was a paradox to them: and thus it is ſtill in Popery, its their profeſſed doctrine, that the Law doth no further oblige, than it's poſſible for us to perform it in this life; and by this meanes they make many thouſand motions of the heart no ſins, which yet *Paul*, Rom. 7. doth many times call ſin, and ſuch ſin as is to be mortified; that he groaneth under, and bewaileth as a miſerable captivity. But the godly heart with *Paul*, Rom. 7. hath learnt to underſtand the Law better, and thereby is convinced of many ſins which the naturall man never regards; *The Law is ſpirituall*, ſaith *Paul*, *but I am carnall ſold under ſinne. I find, when I would do good, evil is preſent with me*, and this *luſt leadeth him into captivity*, and its *a Law in his members warring againſt the minde.* Oh then wonder not, if the people of God, who feel ſuch combates, and ſtrivings within them, of Law againſt Law, the Law of the members againſt the Law of the ſpirit, that they like *Rebecca's twinnes ſtrive in the wombe*,

and which makes the case more doubtfull, is, that *the flesh so lusteth against the spirit*, and so farre prevaileth, that the things the godly *would do, they do not*; and oh the perplexities and agonies which are then raised in the hearts of the godly. That they cannot believe, be heavenly minded, so mortified as they desire, yea they finde themselves many times foyled and overtaken, which makes them cry out, Is this to obey Gods Law? doth that command no better? Is this to love God, to serve him as the Scripture commandeth?

3 From the experience of the falsenesse of their hearts.

3. *Therefore they are apt to be thus surprised by those fears, from the experience they have of the deceitfullnesse and falsenesse of their hearts:* They have been perswaded, they could do such and such things for God, they have thought they could bear such afflictions, they could overcome such temptations, but when they have been put upon the triall, oh the base treachery of their hearts, then they murmure, then they repine, then they are impatient. As *David*, when it was well with him, he thought his mountain was setled, *Psal.* 30. 7. he could *never be moved*, but God did no sooner hide himselfe, but then he was *troubled*. Thus *Peter*, he thought *though all men should forsake him, yet he would not*, but when he comes to the triall, yea indeed before it was any great extremity, he forsaketh and denieth his Master. Now such experiences of their false and weak hearts the godly have; Even as sick men, when on the bed, think they are able to walk strongly, but no sooner do they rise up, but their strength presently faileth them; must not this therefore put them into sad perplexities, doubting what they are, and whether they are sound in the main or no?

4 The tenderness of their hearts.

4. *Another occasion of such black temptations, is, the tendernesse of their hearts, avoiding the very appearance of all sinne*: for seeing the Scripture requireth it, 1 *Thes.* 5. 22. they are carefull not so much as touch this pitch, lest they be defiled; they do not only avoid evill, but the shew and the appearance of it. Now the godly being thus tenderly affected, its hard not to degenerate into scrupulosity, and even slavish fears: As in tender and soft wood, wormes are apt to breed; thus Christians who have tender affections, have many times weak judgements, and do not fully understand that lawfull Evangelicall liberty which is allowed them, and the not knowing this breedeth many perplexities, and troublesome thoughts within them, so that it is an happy thing, when a sound minde and a tender heart are joyned together. A great judgement without tenderneſſe, many times works a sinfull largeneſſe in mens wayes, it causeth such a wide throat that can swallow down Camels: and a tender heart, without a sound judicious minde, doth many times raise fears and doubts where there ought to be none; but both these together make an excellent temperament, even ad *pondus* as it were in the scale.

5 The slothfullnesse and spirituall decayes they finde in their souls.

5. *Another cause which makes the godly thus fear themselves, is the slothfullnesse and spirituall decayes they finde upon their soules:* for, as the Apostle urged, *that the giving heed to make their calling and election sure, would be, by adding one grace to another*, 1 Pet. 1. *and abounding in all fruitfullnesse*; so a great cause of spirituall trouble, and fear of being utterly undone, is the barrennesse of our lives; That we are so unfruitfull, that our duties have no more life and fervency in them: Oh how often do the godly deserve that reproof Christ giveth the Church, *Remember from whence thou art fallen*, and strengthen the things that are ready to die, *Rev.* 3. Now then, as in Winter there doth outwardly appear no difference between a dead tree and a living, both are without fruit and leaves: thus truly, between a barren and a slothfull Christian, and another dead in sinne, there seemeth to be little outward difference; yea its Gods way to chastise his peoples slothfullnesse, by absenting himselfe from them: Even as the mother sometimes leaveth her child alone, or in the dark, to make it cry more earnestly after her: Thus when the Church was slothfull, and would not rise to let Christ in, knock-

ing

ing at the door, this made Christ withdraw himself for a while, which stirred up importunate longings after him again.

6 Because of the infinite knowledge of God, at his all-seeing eye.

6. *Therefore they are thus sollicitous about themselves, because of the infinite knowledge of God and his all-seeing eye*, which knoweth more by them then they can, and therefore they thus think; If I be so vile and loathsome in my own eyes, how much more must I be in Gods eye, who knoweth farre more corruption by me then I can by my self? The Apostle argued thus, *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts*: and *Paul* said, *Though I know nothing by my selfe, yet am I not thereby justified; for it is God that judgeth*, 1 Cor. 4. 4. This is a remarkable place, though though didst know no evill by thy self, didst not discover that wickednesse and filthinesse which thou dost, yet thou couldst not gather an inherent justification from thy own righteousnesse, because *it is God that judgeth*. And *Eliphaz* though erring in his application, yet in the generall spake right, that none could be just and pure as his Maker, *for he charged even his Angells with folly*, Job 4. 18. Oh then they think, though this be true and good in my apprehension, yet God seeth faults when I cannot.

Lastly, That which is no mean cause of the sad feares of godly men in this particular, *is the sad revolt, and desperate apostasie of those who seemed eminent for Religion*: oh this makes them quake at the very heart; such Starres fall from Heaven, what then will become of such a clod of earth as I am! such green Trees burn, what then may dry Trees expect? The Apostle *Paul* speaking of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* their apostacy, he saw how this would make the godly; he addeth therefore by way of comfort, *The foundation of the Lord standeth sure*; so then, they finding in Scripture how farre even hypocrites and reprobates may go, this works a daily perplexity in their souls: and thus you have the causes of this sad trouble on the godly mans soul.

Use is of Admonition, partly to the godly; Do not think thou art therefore undone, and no godly man was ever like thee because thou art assaulted with such doubts; Thou mayest *be a child of light, and yet walk in darknesse*, grace may be in thy heart and thou not know of it: Yea thou mayest cry out for the want of that which yet thou hast. Nothing hath been a more ordinary temptation with the children of God, then to fear themselves hypocrites and castawayes: Do not be discouraged in this thing, but wait on the Lord, and yet wait on him, he will at last cause light to shine out of darknesse. And

Secondly, Its partly for Admonition to sinfull and wicked men, who blesse themselves because they never go bowed down with such feares and doubts; They have no pangs either in life or death, all is at quiet with them; they have a good faith in Christ, and strong hopes of salvation; Oh how much better were thy estate, if it had been more troubled and shaken: Oh fear lest thy tormenting doubts and fears be reserved for thee in hell.

SERM.

SERM. XV.

Directions for a godly man that is afraid he is an Hypocrite.

PSAL. 19. 12.

Who can underſtand his errors? cleanſe thou me from ſecret ſinnes.

THE Doctrin: that from theſe words we have begun to treat on, is, *That even godly men are ſometimes ſadly afflicted under theſe thoughts, That there is ſecret and unknown ſinfulneſſe in them*; and therefore whiles they juſtifie themſelves, God may condemn them; *His thoughts are not as their thoughts*: and that obſervation of the Wiſe man, is like a thorn in their ſide; *Every mans way is right in his own eyes, but the Lord pondereth the heart*, Prov. 21. 2. The grounds of this ſad perplexity in a godly mans heart, we have diſcovered; It remaineth now, that having opened and ſearched the wound, we ſhould prepare oyl or balme: Its the art of arts, to give ſpeciall and ſure receipts for ſo ſad a diſeaſe. And

1 Conſider there is a two-fold fear. A fear of holy diligence; And A ſlaviſh, tormenting, diſheartning fear.

First, This will be no mean way to quiet thy ſoul, if thou informe thy ſelfe of a two-ſold fear or trouble, the one whereof is a duty, the other ſinfull: The firſt is *a fear of holy diligence* and holy ſollicitude in the uſe of all meanes; The other is *a ſlaviſh, tormenting, and diſheartning fear*, caſting the heart down, and enfeebling of it through languiſhing and deſpondent thoughts: This diſtinction is of excellent uſe in this temptation, and here he that diſtinguiſheth well, will quickly teach himſelf well, for the confounding of theſe two together puts a man into confuſion, and being in the dark, eateth poyſon for wholſome food.

The fear of diligence is,

For the firſt kinde of fear and trouble, *viz.* of diligence and carefullneſſe in the uſe of the meanes, with much jealouſie over our own hearts;

1. A Duty.

Its firſt, *A duty commanded by God*: ſhouldſt thou not fear thy ſelf and watch over thy deceitful heart, thou wouldeſt be guilty of a maniteſt ſin, for thus ſaith the Apoſtle *Phil.* 2. 12. *Work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling.* We do not therefore blame thee, that all thy holineſſe and religious profeſſion is accompanied with a fear and trembling; but for the ſlaviſh tormenting and diſtracting thoughts that thou giveſt way to, in this diſpoſition; Know then, that thus farre it is a duty, that in all the exerciſes of grace and religion, there ſhould be a godly trembling upon thy heart; The Majeſty of God is ſo infinitely great with whom thou haſt to do; The weight of every duty is alſo exceeding great and of eternall concernment; The miſcarriage is ſo eaſie and ſo dangerous, that an holy trembling is a moſt comely and condecent diſpoſition for every godly man, eſpecially conſidering that Treaſure of grace he carrieth about with him, is daily laid in wait for by ſubtle and craſty enemies, even thoſe ſpirituall wickedneſſes in high places: Doth not the Merchant with a carefull trembling obſerve his Ship traughted with all he is worth, while the way is laid by craſty Pirates? and thus

thus the godly being in continuall danger of open violence or ſecret fraud, cannot but have an holy jealouſie and ſollicitous trembling about himſelf.

4. This holy jealouſie and godly trouble, is not only a duty but an excellent *corrector and qualifier of other graces*, which many times through our weakneſſe and corruption, we ſtretch into an extremity. All graces both in their preſence, and mutual co-operation, are of themſelves wonderfully helpfull one to another: but ſuch is our indiſcretion and ſpirituall unskilfullneſſe, that through ill-managing we make them contradict one another. Thus how often, while we believe in a promiſe and ſtabliſh our hearts therewith, are we ready to grow ſecure and negligent? ſo while we are commanded to rejoyce in the Lord, we are apt to forget thoſe other duties of repentance, ſelf-deniall, and humility; Now an holy trembling is the ſeaſoning, as it were, of all other graces. It's the ſalt in the Sacrifice. Hence *Pſa.* 2. *Rejoyce with trembling.* And the Chriſtians did walk in *fear, and in the joy of the holy Ghoſt*, Act. 9.31. All that ſecurity and looſeneſſe, or preſumption that may be apt to breed in the godly, this doth excellently correct, this doth admirably eat out the rotten fleſh. That as the Maid who heard *Peters* voice went running in with great joy, and yet great fear and amazement alſo, ſo the people of God, by this godly trembling have an excellent mixture. Here is the compoſition of heat and moiſture, of coldneſſe and dryneſſe, and ſo there is no danger of miſcarriage. 2 A corrector and qualifier of other graces.

5. This godly trembling is not onely a duty, a corrector of exorbitances, but alſo a *ſpeciall preſerver and antidote againſt all future ſins*. *Bleſſed is the man that feareth always*, Pro. 28. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wiſedom. Be not high-minded but fear*, Rom. 11. 20. ſo that the godly trouble and fear which is upon thee, if well ordered, would be the great means to keep thee from all hypocriſie and apoſtacy. Hence the promiſe of perſeverance to the godly is accompliſhed by working fear, *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me*, Jer. 32.40. There are poiſonous things which when corrected and ordered by art, do become of ſoveraign uſe and efficacy. Thus here, all thoſe pangs and troubles of ſoul about thy hypocriſie and falſhood of heart, if wiſely ordered, would certainly keep thee from falling. Therefore make much of and encourage all godly-trembling, and jealouſie about thy ſelfe. But as for the ſecond kind of fears, which are diſtracting, deſponding, and tormenting of thee, Theſe thou art to avoid and fly from, as being the immediate products of thy own black heart, and the Prince of that black darkneſſe in hell. For 3 And a ſpeciall Antidote againſt ſinne. But the ſlaviſh tormenting fears thou art to avoid. For

First, *They are ſins*, and ſo are offending of God and endangering thy ſoul. All doubtings and diſtracting thoughts are acts of unbelief, and ſo contrary to that moſt excellent and choiſe grace of faith, and now according to that Rule *Illa privatio eſt peſſima, cujus habitus eſt optimus*, that is the worſt privation, whoſe habit is the beſt; even thus it is here, thoſe doubts and tormenting fears within thee, they are contrary to faith, *Feare not but believe*, ſaid our Saviour, *Luke* 8.18. And ſo διστάζειν and κλύζεσθαι, *to be toſſed up and down* like a meteor, or to be a two-minded man, like one that knoweth not whither to go this way or that way, are made oppoſites to believing; and thus *Jam.* 1. the δίψυχος ἀνὴρ, *the double-minded man*, the two-ſouled man is made contrary to him that believeth, and ſuch an one is ſaid to be *unconſtant in all his waies*, and compared to waves of the ſea, that ſometimes is toſſed up towards heaven, ſometimes ſwallowed up by the earth: oh, then know it's a very grievous ſin, and greatly diſhonouring of God to walk with ſuch tormenting troubles; Thou art gone beyond thy bounds, thy honey is turned into gall, when once thy troubles do thus farr prevaile over thee. 1 They are ſins.

2. *Theſe perplexing fears and troubles, they are not onely a ſin but a miſery*, and a heavy affliction, and will thou be ſo fooliſh as wilfully to keep ſuch an heavy burthen upon thy ſoul? *David* how often did he chide his ſoul when it was caſt 2 They are a miſery.

down

down and disquieted within him? He would rub himselfe to good warmth and heat, after he had been in these qualms and soundings; It's made a curse by God, *to eate their bread with fear, and to drink with astonishment*: It was *Cains* marke of Gods displeasure upon him, to go up and down trembling: *Pashur*, that malicious Priest against *Jeremiah*, was called *Magor Missabib*, Jer. 20. 3. Fear or trembling encompassing him round about; Oh then, if these perplexing feares and troublesome thoughts be such an heavy misery and burthen, do not thou give way to them; Wilt thou at the same time be miserable, and sin also? that is a twofold misery.

3 Hinderers of good things.

3. *They are not only unprofitable, but very much stopping and hindring those very good things we would have*: All fear in the immoderacy of it doth indispose and unfit for any duty: Hence the Scripture saith, it makes *weak hands* and *feeble knees*, which are the peculiar instruments of motion and operation; Take a mans hands and his feet away, he is a sluggish log, rather then a man; yet fear doth not only cut off the thumbs and toes, as was done to *Adonibezek*, but the very hands and legs; Now then, if so be these sinfull dejections and troublesome thoughts do more disorder and indispose thee, put thee farther off from all the means of sincerity and truth of grace: thou art to be the more carefull to kill these young cockatrices in the very shell. It's far better with *Esther* to venture into the presence of this great King of Heaven, then to be alwaies perplexed in doubts, Whether thou shalt be received or no. *Nimis timidus est* (said *Seneca*) *qui malles semper pendere, quam semel credere*: It's better with *Job* to say, *Though he kill me I will trust in him*, Job 13. 15. than alwaies to be complaining, *Why hath the Lord forsaken? and will he be gracious no more?* Consider then with thy selfe, what furtherance and help do these dejected fears vouchsafe to thee? They do *movere*, but do they *promovere*? There is a troubling of thy soul, but doth an Angel or rather the Spirit of God come down in them, and cause healing of thy soul? This will be of some good consequence; otherwise to spend thy strength, and to weary thy selfe in these perplexed thoughts, and to get no spirituall advantage thereby, is wilfully to keep thy selfe in the rearing briars, and not to be willing to get out.

4 And are endlesse.

4. *These dejecting fears and perplexing doubts, they are endlesse*. They become like the sands on the sea-shore, you cannot tell how to number them; you heard, a *double-minded man*, who is not the believer, *is unconstant in all his wayes*. He is like the *Dove* that went out before the waters were dried up, there was no dry place to stand upon; By what reason thou entertainest one perplexing doubt, thou maist do another, and then another, and still another, till thou have no bottome. That as it is in the doctrine of Faith, when a man giveth way to dispute sceptically of all things, and doth not believe in any thing; this man hath no center, no bottome to stand upon, he thinketh at last there is no Truth, no Church, no Ordinances, yea, and no God; so it is for the practise of godlinesse, if thou beginnest to question this work of grace and that work of grace in thee, fear at last lest thou fall into such deeps, that thou canst not swim out; lest thou be like the *Israelites*, that went backwards and forwards, and forwards and backwards, and so come short of *Canaan*: And this may suffice for the first particular, which hath severall branches in it to direct thee about this temptation.

II. Consider whether thou livest in any known sin, &c.

But secondly, Art thou cast down lest thou be an hypocrite, and knowest not the worst by thy selfe? *Then consider whether thou livest in any known sinne, or in the neglect of any known duty*, and if thou canst not upon a diligent search finde any default in either of these, then know that an habituall, or generall repentance for undiscovered sinnes, is all that God requireth; an expresse, formall, particular bewailing of such hidden sinnes, is not required by God. And this course you see *David* taking to quiet his

his ſoul; firſt he crieth out in a ſad pang, *Who can underſtand his errors?* What then (*David*)? if none can, muſt we therefore perpetually torment our ſelves with perplexing doubts, muſt we therefore be alwayes kept upon the racke? No: *David* ſhewerh us a more excellent way, *Cleanſe me from ſecret ſinnes.* By cleanſing, is meant *juſtification* and *pardoning*, as Expoſitors agree. But how can there be cleanſing or pardon, where there is not repentance? and how can there be repentance of ſinne, if it be ſecret and hidden to a mans knowledge? Yes: though there cannot be a formall, expreſſe repentance, yet a generall and habituall one there may be. If therefore thou haſt this plain and tender preparation of heart, that if any thing be found out to be a ſinne, that thou doeſt not yet know, thou would'ſt abhorre it; and if any thing be manifeſted to be a duty thou art not yet convinced of, thou would'ſt willingly embrace it; this is a good evidence and a ſure ſign for thee to gather the uprightneſſe of thy heart for the main, though there may be farre more corruption in thee then ever thou didſt yet finde out. Therefore *Elihu* expreſt a ſincere heart in theſe words, *Job* 34.31, 32. *If I have ſinned, teach thou me; and if I have offended, I will do ſo no more.* Here is but an If I have ſinned, If I have offended; and yet this purpoſed and reſolved repentance for ſinne, when made manifeſt, is enough. So then, ſuffer not thy ſelfe to be toſſed up and down, but aſk thy ſoul; Oh my ſoul, why art thou thus filled with troubles in thee, why art thou afraid thou art caſt away? Is there any known groſs ſinne thou doeſt live in, any neceſſary duty thou doeſt omit? Art thou not thus affected, That there is no ſecret or hidden corruption in thee, but thou would'ſt rejoyce to find out, and willingly to ſacrifice it? If thou canſt ſay thus, Behold I bring thee the glad tydings of ſalvation; It cannot be that that ſhip ſhould periſh, wherein Chriſt is; or that ſoul be damned, where Chriſt doth thus dwell.

Thirdly, Thou art greatly afflicted and tempted leſt thou be an hypocrite, a caſtaway, *Theſe very jealouſies and divided thoughts of thine, are a plain argument to the contrary.* Every mans way naturally is clean in his own eye; If therefore thou art foul and loathſome in thy own eyes, there is more then nature here; Every man by nature is a Pygmaleon, falls in love with himſelfe: as *Laodicea, that ſaid ſhe was rich, and full, and wanted nothing*, Rev. 3. when indeed *ſhe was naked, and miſerable, and wanted all things.* Its grace and nothing but grace that complains of ſinne; its ſincerity and nothing elſe which bewaileth hypocriſie; for out of the ſame fountain cannot come bitter and ſweet; eſpecially when thou doeſt not only bewail groſſe hypocriſie, but heart-hypocriſie and ſuch ſecret hidden ſinnes, that God only and thy own ſoul knoweth: Therefore its not the preſence of hypocriſie, makes thee an hypocrite, no more then the preſence of unbelief makes a man preſently an unbeliever, but the *dominion* and *prevalency* of it. *Let not ſinne reign in your mortall body.* Let not hypocriſie and guile reign in your heart. It will be there; do what you can; expect no more to have a ſoul without ſome defilements, then a body without ſome pains and aches; If they be in thee by way of conflict and combate, thou art not a ſervant to them, and ſo not overcome by them. This very particular is enough to ſtay the bleeding of thy fainting ſoul. If I be an hypocrite, why am I afraid of it, why do I bewail it? there was never any guileſull man in the Scripture that did ſo.

III. Thy very jealouſies and divided thoughts, argue thee to be in a good eſtate.

Laſtly, Art thou much dejected in theſe thoughts, Thou mayeſt be farre worſe then thou thinkeſt of, and ſo meet with hell at laſt, when thou did'ſt hope for Heaven. Then ſet upon theſe duties.

IV. Set upon theſe Duties.

I. Pray earneſtly to God, that he would diſcover thy ſelf unto thy ſelf, &c.

1. *Betake thy ſelf to earneſt prayer, that God would diſcover thy ſelf to thy ſelf*; that he would *create truth in thy inward parts*, that he would give thee a more plain, ſingle and ſincere heart. This fervent prayer is an antidote againſt all temptations: *Is any man afflicted? let him pray.* This is the key to open Hea-

ven gates: Resolve; Lord, whatsoever I fear, whatsoever becomes of me, I will not give over praying; though I perish, I will perish praying; and be sure, this importunate incessant prayer, will bring all to a good end.

2 Let this temptation make thee more watchfull and diligent.

2. Let this temptation make thee more watchfull, more diligent; Who knowes, but that God for this very end hath brought thee into all this black darkenesse, that so thou mayest be more watchfull, diligent, fervent and active against thy own heart, the world, and devill; than thou hast been: *What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch*, Mar. 24. 42, Mar. 26. 41. This is a duty again and again pressed.

3 Act faith in Christ for sanctifying and healing of thee.

3. *Let faith have its perfect work in applying of Christ for the sanctifying and healing of thee*: If thou canst but touch him by faith, that flux of blood will cease; Its faith makes us partakers of the Olive tree, its that which bringeth Christ to dwell in thy heart. Therefore, if thou findest thy hypocrisie, thy weaknesses and feares every thing in thee ariseth of this trembling condition clape about Christ: how can there be light in thee without this Sunne? *Christ is the truth*, and if thou wouldest have truth, fly to him; it will make thee of a spirit like his: the Dove shall descend on thee; as, in His heart and mouth, so neither in thine, will there be found any guile.

Use 1. of instruction to the godly, not to walk in such dejections of minde; Who may have comfort and peace, if thou have not? *The joy of the Lord is thy strength*, Do not cast thy self into deep gulfs and endlesse labyrinths: if thou canst not understand all thy errors, then pray, that God would cleanse thee from secret sinnes.

Use 2. To instruct us in this particular. That those (many times) who are much troubled about their estate, may be very blessed and happy: Again, Those that have much security and quietnesse of spirit, may be very cursed and miserable. Do not condemn the godly man, *who hath no rest in his bones, and who hath the arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in him*: And again account not that man happy, *who eateth, and drinketh, and riseth up to play*; and saith, *to morrow shall be as this day*. Oh stay till the day of death, till the day of judgement, and then take notice of the horror and condemnation that will fall upon such secure sinners: oh pray, Put me in fear O Lord, that I may know my selfe to be a sinner.

SERM.

SERM. XVI.

Shewing how hard it is, to be acquainted with the Corruptions and Errors of our Hearts and Lives, and the Grounds of it.

PSAL. 19. 12.

Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret sinnes.

HItherto we have handled that practicall Case, which is so apt to overwhelme many of Gods children, *viz. That there may be, yea and is, more sinfulnesse in their hearts then they can ever dive into, and therefore they are afraid they shall be found in the number of hypocrites.* Howsoever the secure and presumptuous men of the world, think this a needlesse scruple, yet those that fear God, have in this very particular great divisions of heart; and we see here *David* though a great Statesman, and blessed with mighty successe in the world, hath his private retirements about this practicall doubt; and he that did not tear the face of his stoutest enemy, is afraid of the unknown corruption of his soul; the strong holds and secret stratagems of his enemies, do not so much terrifie him, as the perfidious lusts of his own soul.

This being dispatched, I proceed further to dig out more gold from this rich mine: and the next practicall Truth I shall observe, is;

That it is a very hard and difficult thing to be acquainted with the corruptions and errors of our hearts and lives. Learned men say about naturall things, That we are ignorant of far more things then we know; but this is much more true of the windings and crafty turnings of our hearts within us. Only in those naturall they commend a *docta ignorantia*, a learned ignorance; but comparing the errors and lusts of our selves, all ignorance is sinfull and blame-worthy. Yea, it is so hard to know the errors we are guilty of, that the greatest part of men, are so far seduced, that they take contraries for contraries, black for white, darknesse for light; the worst estate which is upon the very borders of hell, for the best, as bordering upon Heaven: *Solomon* a wise man, observed it, *Every mans way is right in his own eyes, but God pondereth the heart*, Prov. 16. 2. How then can we expect repentance and conversion from men? How can we look, that men with the prodigall, should arise and go to God, bewailing their sins against Heaven and earth, when they think all is well and right; and this was the desperate estate of *Laodicea*, *She said she was rich, and full, and wanted nothing*, when indeed *she was poor, and miserable, and wanted all things*, Rev. 2. A desperate estate I call this, because *nulli sunt magis desperati, quam qui minus sunt desperantes*, None are more desperate, then those who have not an holy despair in themselves, and in their own worth: It was one of *Hippocrates* his Aphorismes, ἀσφαλὲς ἡ ἀνεξία, an high degree of excellent health is dangerous: Even as great calmes forego storms at sea, and earthquakes in the earth: And thus for a man to walk with high confidence, and great ease and quietnesse of soul, as if

Observ. That its a difficult thing to finde out the corruptions and errors of our hearts and lives.

all were well with him, argueth him neer deſtruction; theſe are ſudden lightenings before death: Oh what a woſull condition is it, for a man at the ſame time to be bleſſing himſelf, and God abhorring of him, while thou are ſaying; Soul, take thy eaſe; God to be commanding the devils to take thy ſoul. Yet in this condition, moſt live.

To open this, let us conſider, whence it doth ariſe that its ſo very difficult to be acquainted with our own errors and ſinnes.

1. Becauſe man is naturally prone to make himſelf the rule of good and evil.

And firſt, *Becauſe man is naturally prone to make himſelf the rule of good and evil:* That is good either in himſelf or others, and that is bad either in himſelf or others, which he approveth of, or diſapproveth: men judge either as they are led with love or hatred; and they love and hate, even as their corrupt wil's and luſts do affect them; *ſtat pro ratione voluntas*, and *pro juſto* and *æquo* alſo. Now this is very great iniquity, that man who is wholly corrupted, and hath no righteouſneſſe or holineſſe in him, ſhould yet make himſelf the meaſure and rule of all righteouſneſſe. It's impoſſible then that ever any man ſhould underſtand the errors of his wayes, as long as he miſtakes in this fundamentall. He doth not go to be regulated and tried by the Word, but he takes the meaſure of his own heart and meteth every thing by that. Yea this advancing of our ſelves, as an univerſall ſtandard to weigh all things by, God complaineth of, as extended to himſelf, *Pſal.* 50. *Thou thoughteſt I was ſuch an one as thy ſelf.* Oh horrible deluſion, how can man ever come to know himſelf, who is apt to make a God like himſelf? that what he loveth, he thinks God loveth; as if God were to be after his likeneſſe, and not he after Gods likeneſſe; and truly, this ſour leaven is in every mans breaſt; you cannot perſwade him that God is angry with him, that God hateth his wayes, that God will damn him for thoſe ſins he liveth in: No, he *thinketh God to be ſuch an one, like himſelf*: and as a man that looks through red or green glaſſe, thinks every object is of that colour the glaſſe is of: ſo it is here, They think every thing in God, to be according to what is in them, and hence alſo all the Scripture they make to be a book after their own heart; they put what gloſſe and interpretation they will upon it, and thus by it they encourage themſelves in their wicked way: Therefore till this rotten fleſh be eaten out, never expect that a man ſhould be healed of his dangerous wounds.

2. Becauſe in the heart are the firſt motions of ſinne.

2. *Therefore its hard to be acquainted with all the errors of his heart, becauſe there are the firſt motions of ſinne, which riſe up in our ſouls antecedently to our own reaſon, and will, and conſent many times; and therefore, like the motes in the aire, are very indiſcernable.* Theſe motions which may be called indeliberate, and in ſome ſenſe involuntary, the Schoolmen call *motus primo-primi*; The firſt products and immediate iſſues of the ſoul, which ariſe like a multitude of graſſhoppers upon the heart; that, as ſome Philoſophers ſay, *Objecta ſemper radiant*, objects do always irradiate *ſpecies*, which yet are not diſcernable: ſo the heart of a man is never quiet, but always in motions, and thoſe immoderate and ſinfull for the moſt part: As the naturall man is always in motion, ſo the heart of a man ſpiritually conſidered, is always in agitation; Its a mill always grinding. Now thoſe thoughts and motions, which are ſo ſudden, indeliberate, and before or againſt our conſent, who can reckon up theſe any more then the ſand of the ſea ſhore? The Papiſts indeed deny they are ſinnes, unleſſe conſented unto; they grant them to be the effects of ſinne, and ſometimes cauſes of ſinne, but not ſinnes themſelves: According to them, they are like the money put into *Joſephs* brethren ſacks, they were much troubled at it, but becauſe it came there without their knowledge or conſent, it was not their ſinne; thus they ſpeak of theſe firſt-motions and ſtirrings of heart: But *Paul*, Rom. 7. 7. teacheth other divinity, bewailing and groaning under ſuch motions, though not conſented to lye in him, and he calls them ſinnes very often in that Chapter, and that ſinnes formally, becauſe contrary to the holy and pure Law of God,

and

and sinnes that were to be mortified and crucified; so then, if those stirrings and motions of heart, which arise so many thousands in a moment almost, are for the most part of them sinnes (for if the fountain be polluted, the streams must be): Who may not cry out with *David*, O Lord, I cannot understand my errors?

3. *Its hard to know and to be acquainted with all our sinnes, because of that sinfull and immoderate self-love, which adhereth to every man*, as Ivy to the tree, never leaving it, till it hath consumed and damned a man. This self-love *covereth a multitude of sinnes*, in an evil sense, as compassionate love doth in a good sense: The Apostle makes self-love the first in the front of that army of rebellious sinnes against God, *There shall come dangerous times, men shall be lovers of themselves*, 2 Tim. 3. 2. Therefore our Saviour layeth it down as a fundamentall qualification to his disciple, *He must deny himself*, Mark. 8. 34. *yea he must lose himself*. Now a mans judgement, affections, aimes, interest, will and profit, these are all part of that self a man must deny. Self-love hath its dreams as well as carnall love, faining to it self such goodnesse, and such happinesse as can be desired, but (alas) both they and their goodnesse are but painted sepulchers; How then should that man believe any evil by himself, who is perswaded only of good in himself? To such as these are, the Ministery though never so powerfull, is most unprofitable, because their self-love hinders them from application of all those threatnings and cursings in the Law, which do indeed belong to them; this is the brazen wall that beateth back the strongest arrow taken out of Gods quiver; self-love hath quite besotted him, he seeth, he thinketh, he loveth, nothing but himself; even as that Antipheron *Aristotle* speaks of, who by weaknesse of his eyes, had the reflexion of himself in the ayre, as others upon a looking-glasse so that all the day long, still he saw himself. If therefore thou wouldst ever come to know how vile and loathsome thou art, root out that self-love, as the great jugler that casts a mist before thy eyes.

3. Because of the sinfull and inordinate self-love which adhereth to every man.

4. *Those sinnes which are Idolatries and heresies, and all such as are seated chiefly in the understanding, these are hardly discovered:* The eye that seeth all other things, yet doth not see it self, how much lesse when its ill affected with humours? How can a man understand his errors, when his errors are his understanding? and therefore in this respect, heresies and errors, and all intellectuall sinnes, are worse then grosse notorious sinnes (whatsoever may be said in other respects) *viz.* their cure is more difficult; its farre more difficult to convince such a man though erring damnably, then a prefent ungodly man; and the reason is, because *his eye is dark, and then the whole body must be very dark*. *Hactenus ignorantiam meam ignoravi*, said *Seneca*; Hitherto I was ignorant of my ignorance; and truly so may all those say, who are led aside by the errors of the ungodly, Hitherto I was ignorant of the blasphemy, of the Idolatry, of the damnable errors I was seduced by. Ecclesiasticall History telleth us of *Arius* surnamed the wicked, because of his many blasphemous and arrogant opinions, that this was usually his proud saying, *He knew what God was; yea he knew God as well as he knew himself*: Oh horrible impudence, its an argument he neither knew God or himself: So that the Counsell which Christ gave the Church, is admirably necessary for all sorts of persons, *To buy eye-salve*, that their understandings being enlightned, and mindes transformed, they may *know the good and perfect will of God*. Oh pray to God, that thou mayest be acquainted with every false way, that thy feet do wander in.

4. Heresies and such sins as are chiefly seated in the head and understanding, are very hardly discovered to a mans self.

5. *Its hard to understand our errors, because of earthly and worldly profit, which many times come to us by our sinnes.* Let our Saviour speak in never so convincing a manner to the Pharisees, yet they being covetous will mock and deride him, *Luk.* 16. 4. It was not for their earthly profit and outward greatnesse to believe those things Christ preached: and thus though the Ministers of the Gospel charme never so wisely to the Pope of *Rome* and his devoted party, they cannot

5. Its hard to understand our errors, because of earthly profit.

not but stop their ears, for its to throw down his worldly advantages: As therefore any dust, blown into the eyes, doth presently hinder the sight; so any earthly or worldly consideration doth easily turn a mans judgement. This clay the world puts upon our eyes, will not, like that of our Saviour's, help us to sight; but rather put it cleer out: Love to a mans profit and inordinate desire of gain, will make a man commit sad and soul-wasting sinnes, and yet, for the while at least, the party offending take no notice of them.

6. And the pleasures and delights of sin.

6. *As earthly profits, so pleasures and the delights of sin they do wonderfully bribe the judgment*; & it is very hard to perswade a man, that those things wherein his desire and pleasures are seated, are sins; A man will dispute much, and argue very many fair pretences, ere the pleasures of sinne and himself shall part so easie: Like the mastiffe dog, they have tasted of the sweetnesse of the blood, and you may as soon kill them as seperate them: Its hard keeping in the candle, when damps and moist vapours do once begin to rise, where men are digging; and its no lesse difficult to keep up the lamp of a mans faith and spirituall wisdome, when these foggy vapours, these brutish pleasures of sinne do once ascend up. To understand our errors, doth require reflexion upon our acts; now a beast cannot reflect upon its acts, it doth not know it seeth or it smells; and the more beastly any sins are, the more devoid, they make us of all understanding: Therefore the Scripture saith, *Wine and Women take away the heart, Hose 4. 11.* that is, remove all wisdome and knowledge from a man.

7. Also it proceeds from custome and universality in a way of sinne.

7. *Education, custome, and universality in any way of sinne, doth greatly hinder a man from understanding his errors*: What makes the Idolaters, what makes all superstitious and erroneous men, to account all their idolatry and corruption of worship no sinne? a great cause of this is education and universality, the commonnesse of a sinne seems to be argument good enough to justifie it: Its asserted by many learned men, that the polygamy of the Patriarchs and others in the old Testament was a sinne, because directly against the first institution of marriage, *They two shall be one flesh*: But if this be so, then the great doubt is, Why the godly men who had more wives then one, did not repent of this sinne, why did they not bewaile it? and its answered; It was the sinne of the age and the time; even all, through custome had fallen into it, and so they did not understand their errors though very foul.

8. From Satans delusion.

8. *The devil, in some part prevailing over the godly, doth many times so delude them, that even fouler sinnes are not understood by them*: We see *Adam* and *Eve*, though created with perfect knowledge, yet the devil did insinuate himself; and it hath exercised Divines to shew wherein the error or sinne of *Adam* did begin, whether in his will or understanding; so then if he could delude him, no marvell if Satan now by the subtle methods and crafty insinuations he hath, can do as his instruments: juglers and wizards do raise up apparitions, and the shew of things, for the things themselves.

9. Because of the multitude of them.

9. *Its hard to understand our errors, because of the multitude of them*: They are so great, the number of them so vast, that they can not remember all, or take notice of all; and this may be a great part of *Davids* meaning, *Who can understand?* Who can remember, know, and take notice of them, they are such a numberlesse number as we say! and therefore *David* in other places compareth them to the *hairs of his head*. Are *Davids* sinnes so many, and are thine lesse? Oh this meditation should even swallow us up with fear and trembling: There are such armies, such companies of lusts alwayes arising from me, that I am a burden and terror to my self.

10. Because of the quality of them.

Lastly, *Its hard to understand, as the quality, so the quantity of them all*, all the circumstances that do aggravate them: Oh shouldst thou sit down and aggravate every sinne thou hast committed from all the circumstances of it, even the least sin will at last arise to such a greatnesse, that it will overwhelm thee.

Use

Use of Admonition, Not to be high-minded, or presumptuously to justifie thy self: for, doth a *David*, who studieth the Law of God day and night, that often prayeth to God, that he would search and try his heart, doth he yet complain that he knows his sinnes but in part, that there is much corruption kept secret from him? With what greater grief then, and sadder fears shouldst thou utter this complaint, *Who can understand his errors?* Oh take heed of this self-love, this self-flattery, that wilt see nothing, and hear of nothing in thy self, but what is good and laudable. Well, know for all thy hidings and coverings, the day is coming, when all hidden things of the heart shall be manifested.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Of Morall and Practicall Errors.

SERM. XVII.

That all ſins and tranſgreſſions are damnable Errors.

PSAL. 19. 12.

Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret sinnes.

THe next practicall and wholeſome Truth we ſhall conſider and treat of, is, from the Title and name which *David* giveth to ſinne; He calls ſinnes, *Errors:* This is a Metaphor from the bodily motion, when a mans foot ſteps awry out of the plain way into ſome dangerous pit; or from thoſe vagabonds, who wander up and down from place to place, having no ſetled place; and truly ſuch a wandring rover is every wicked man; He hath no ſetled foundation for any comfort or peace, but ſhifteth up and down, and if he can get ſome preſent eaſe, he careth for no more, never looking to the future. The expreſſing of ſinne under the notion of *error*, doth very well anſwer the Greek words for ſinne, eſpecially thoſe two, ἁμαρτία and παράβασις; ἁμαρτία is properly in the Archer when he miſſeth the mark he ſhoots at; & to this alſo the Hebrew word anſwereth; and παράβασις, which ſignifieth, as a Critick noteth, not ſo much a going beyond the precept, as a careleſſe and negligent paſſing by, not regarding bounds that are ſet. As the Scripture doth here call them Errors, ſo all ſinnes are called, *Heb.* 9. 7. ἀγνοήματα; The High-Prieſt offered once a year for the errors or Ignorances of the people; ſo that there is no man who committeth any ſinne, but in that reſpect he doth grievouſly and dangerouſly erre, and that not in outward worldly matters, but in eternall and everlaſting concernments.

Doct. All Sinnes are damnable Errors.

Doct. *That all ſinnes and tranſgreſſions, they are the dangerous and damnable errours of men.* Though they rejoyce in their pleaſures and profits, and condemn the generation of the godly for unwiſe and fooliſh men, who will not *runne into the ſame exceſſe of riot* as they do, yet indeed they are only in an errour; and therefore the Scripture doth ſo often call wicked men *fools*; and that rich glutton, who had all the good things of this life, at laſt he is called *a fool*, and for his ſhort pleaſures is thrown into eternall torments.

To

To open this Point, consider *that our errors, which are also sinnes, be of two sorts*; some are meerly *intellectuall* in our understanding, whereby we judge falshood for truth, and truth for falshood: others are *morall* and *practicall*, whereby in our actions we turn aside from the true and right rule: now the most common application of the word *error*, with us, is to sinnes of the first kind: we in a strict sense do for the most part call them errors, which are corrupt opinions in the understanding; but the Scripture doth very frequently apply it to practicall sinnes, and to the iniquity of our wayes; so that we are not only to cry down errors of judgement, but errors of mens lives; Not only the opinion of Free-will, of universall Redemption, but thy drunkennesse, thy swearing, *&c.* these are errors also: and truly he that is upright in heart, and desireth to walk impartially, doth mourn for the toleration and licentiousnesse of both these kinds of errors; It grieveth him, that the Scripture way is not taken, to stop the course both of errors of judgement, and also errors of mens conversation.

Errors are of two sorts.

2. *Consider that there is no man sinnes, but he hath some kind of error, or ignorance in his understanding at that time*, as to speak more according to School Divinity; There are three kindes of defect in the understanding, and one of these is alwayes present when a man doth sinne, insomuch that it's a received opinion, that *omnis peccans, est ignorans*, every sinner hath ignorance in his minde; yea *Socrates* and others went so farre, as to say, that *virtus* was nothing but *scientia*, vertue was knowledge; and they called no man *doctus vir*, but who was a good man: thus they thought, that every man did sinne for want of knowledge. But *Aristotle* did well shew the falshood of this, and yet grants also some defect of the minde, in every one that sinneth.

First, *Therefore there is error*, and that is properly an act of the judgement, when we do judge such things lawfull to be done as are unlawfull, such things good, as are very bad: now this is not in all sins, for how many do judge their adulteries, their voluptuous pleasures, and unjust dealings, to be sinfull & against Gods word? yet they many times are troubled about them, and bewail them bitterly, though they cannot overcome them: This error therefore of judgement is most common, y seen in doctrinall Points, yea and sometimes men are given up to such corrupt judgements, that they do plead for and maintain such sinnes as are against the very light of nature, and the common rules of righteousnesse acknowledged by all men: This I acknowledge is an heavy judgement, when men are delivered up *to believe a lye: that have eyes and cannot see, and hearts but cannot understand*; These men have upon their hearts that *nix & nubes*, that black dark cloud the Poet speaks of: It was the Jews case, who had a vail upon their hearts.

Secondly, *There is ignorance, when we do not know the matter that is to be done*, and that is either grosse, which doth wholly darken a mans understanding, so that a man hath his eyes quite put out, or else its affected ignorance, when a man doth willfully affect and desire ignorance, that so he may not know what he ought to do; as those that did *stop their ears, that they might not hear the charmer, though he charmed never so wisely*. The Schoolmen speak of an invincible ignorance, which they say, doth wholly excuse from sinne; which is then, when all though he should use all his endeavour and power, yet he were not able to remove it: but according to Scripture, even he that *doth not know his Masters will, shall be beaten*, though he that *knew it, and did it not*, shall have *greater stripes*, Luk. 12.47. Its not ignorance or involuntarinesse that makes a sinne, but the τὸ ἀνόμον the transgression of a Law; if therefore it be an ignorance of what we ought to know, whether it be vincible or invincible, its all one, its our sinne that we do not know it; indeed a meer nescience of many things we are not bound to know is no sinne, for that was in *Adam*, while in estate of holinesse, and is still in the very Angels, because they do not know all things, but ignorance of what we ought to know is alwayes a sinne.

No man sins but from error or ignorance.

Now this ignorance one way or other, is for the most part in every sinner. His understanding is destitute of that knowledge, whereby he might be guided to better wayes; *Father, forgive them for they know not what they do*, Luk. 23. 34. especially there is notice to be taken of two more kindes of knowledge in matter of sinning: There is a knowledge in the generall, or a bare speculative knowledge, and there is a particular practicall knowledge *pro hic & nunc*, whereby we know what is to be done by us at this time. Now there are thousands of sinners, that in the generall know they ought not to do what they do; They have a bare speculative judgement, condemning those wayes they live in; but then for the particular, effectuall application of their knowledge, to make them reform; that they want. Therefore the Scripture speaks of wicked men, as those that *know not God*, and *have no understanding at all*, because the knowledge they have is only generall, it doth not put them upon practise, which is the end of all knowledge in divinity, and that which doth not attain its end, is as good as nothing at all. Again, *There is another distinction of knowledge*, its either *habituall* or *actuall*; *Habituall* is, when a man hath the principle of knowledge and understanding within him; *Actuall* is, when a man puts it forth into its proper use: Now there are many who have *habituall* knowledge, but want *actuall*; as a man in a dream, or in drunkennesse, or in madnesse, these have the principles of knowledge within them; but there is an obstruction of the use of this knowledge; and most wicked men are thus asleep in their sinnes, they are thus drunken with their lusts: You wonder, Oh how can such a man, that knowes such wayes to be sinnes, that readeth the Scripture, that heareth so much, oh how can he ever be found committing such and such sins against God? Wonder not, for he is in a sleep, in a drunkennesse, in a *delirium* or mad fit, he is out of his wits for that time; for its said of the Prodigall, upon his repentance, that *he came to himself*; and the Scripture-word for Admonition is excellent, νουθετια, as much as putting a minde and reason into a man again; so that you see even those men who have great knowledge, yet do erre while they sinne, because they want that *particular actuall* knowledge, which would not only be *lux* but *calor* also in their hearts; not light only, but heat also. And thus much for the second ground of all mens sinnes.

The third and last, is inconsideration, or want of diligent and stedfast attendance unto what we do: and truly where there is a cleer judgement, and knowledge sufficient, yet men are hurried away through the deceitfullnesse of sinne, because they do not seriously and diligently consider those many arguments, which might make them keep off from all iniquity. The Scripture layeth them down for the foundation of mens transgressions, and so their calamities. *Oh consider this, all ye that forget God*, Psal. 52. And the Apostle to *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 2. 7, *Consider what I say.* In *Ezekiel*, the first step to a wicked mans conversion is, *if he consider and turn from his evill way*: So that inconstancy, or inconsideration is that which throwes a man into ruine; yea sinne in *Adam* and *Eve* could come no other way but by *inadvertency*, for there was no blindnesse in their judgement, or crookednesse in their will, only a *mutability*. Thus if we go to the head from whence all the muddy streams of impiety do flow, it will be one of these three; either *error*, *ignorance*, or *inconsideration*; but because this may be too scholasticall a dispute about sinne, we shall therefore more popularly shew, wherein sinnes are truly called errors or wandrings. And

Reasons.
I. They deviate from the Truth.

First, *Because all transgressions do erre and deviate from their rule, which is the Law and word of God.* All humane actions, every thing we do, ought to be conformable to a rule, and that rule is Gods word. Hence *David* so often commends it, for *a light and lamp to his feet*; That by it, he was forewarned from sinne; that even a young man, whose lusts are most potent in him, may yet cleanse his way by attending thereto: *Psal.* 119. *As many as walk by this rule*, saith the Apostle, στοιχουσιν, is exactly and methodically to follow it; *Peace be upon*

upon them; wherefore the Apostle *John*, giving a definition of sinne, makes the very formall nature of it, *to be against the Law of God*, and *where is no Law, there can be no sinne*, 1. Joh. 3. 4. If then you ask, Why is any sinne an error? the answer is cause, it swerves from the rule, from Gods word, to which in all things we should conform: Oh that men would consider this, let your life be a Scripture-life, your thoughts Scripture-thoughts: you are not to live as you list, nor as others do, nor according to your own lusts, but according to this rule.

2. They carry a man out of the right way.

Secondly, Our sinnes are errors, not only because they deviate from the rule, but also *because they carry a man out of the right way*. Every mans course of actions, the Scripture delights to call a way, Now we are told of two wayes, *a narrow* and *a streight way*, and *a broad way* which leadeth to death, *Matth.* 7. In this broad way all wicked men do wander, they are clean out of the way; Well then may we call thy lusts and thy sinnes errors, because thou art carried wholly out of the way. Thou thinkest thou art going to happinesse, that thou art in the ready way to life, but all this while, thou art a wanderer: Here thou mayest truly say, A Lyon, even the roaring Lyon that seeks to destroy thee, is in the way. *Paul* would not passe by that way where spies were laid in wait to kill him; but thou fool, and hardened sinner, doest venture presumptuously in those pathes where death and damnation are sure to surprize thee. The Poet accounted it civility, *comiter monstrare viam*, to shew the right way to the wandring passenger; but we are not only out of the way through sinne, but we are angry at all those, who would teach us a better way: We think they are our enemies that cry aloud to us, O go not in that dangerous way, thou wilt at last fall into the bottomlesse pit. Take heed thy whole life be not a constant error.

3. In respect of the end which we ought to aim at.

Thirdly, *Sinnes are errors in respect of the end which we ought to aime at, and that is true blessednesse and happinesse: ἁμαρτία* is the missing of the mark: Happinesse is that which all aim at; a man cannot but desire it: The rich man would be happy by his riches, the great man happy by his greatnesse, only here is the great errour, men place happinesse there where it cannot be found; and so embrace a shadow for a substance? How blinded then and wofully deluded are all wicked men? What is or ought to be the chief end of all men? Wouldst thou not be happy when thou diest? Yes, saith every man, with all his heart: How cometh it then about, that thou livest in thy sinnes? will not these certainly deprive thee of all peace and happinesse? doth not the Scripture in every page almost, threaten eternall death and damnation to the impenitent sinners? Oh then delude not thy self with vain hopes; thou wilt at last find all thy sinnes to be damnable errors, that have deprived thee of all that happinesse and blessednesse thou didst look for: For a man to be disappointed of that end for which he was made, and to which a mans continuall care and study should be, is unspeakable misery. Though men never come to be sensible of this, till they are deprived of it, and cast into hell; then they cry out, Oh we fools and mad men, how have we erred and strayed from our happinesse!

The other Particulars wherein sinnes are errors, I put off to the next, and conclude with an Use of Terror to wicked men, that applaud and justifie themselves in their evill wayes, that will not be convinced, that such wayes which bring them in so much profit and pleasure, deserve the name of errors; for what, shall Gods word stand or thine? shall his thoughts or thine prove true? These thy sinnes are thy errors: Alas a poor sinner, that is made drunk or mad with his sinnes, he knoweth not what he doeth, what he sayeth; or if he do in the generall, yet in the particular he doeth not. Oh then be awakned out of thy errors, never think to get that pleasure or comfort by sinne thou hopest for; it may be sweet in the mouth, but it will be gravell in the belly.

SERM. XVIII.

That all Sinnes are damnable Errors, further demonſtrated, with ſome Helps againſt Sinne.

PSAL. 19. 12.

Who can underſtand his errors? Cleanſe thou me from ſecret ſinnes.

WE are ſtill improving this Doctrine, *That ſinnes and tranſgreſſions are dangerous errors.* We ſhall add further demonſtrations of this, that ſo no wicked man may applaud or bleſſe himſelfe in his way, but, obtaining ſpirituall eye-ſalve, and ſeeing all his wandrings from God and happineſſe, may ſpeedily ariſe and turn unto God.

4. Sinne is againſt reaſon.

The firſt thing I ſhall at this time pitch upon, to declare this truth, That ſinne is an error, ſhall be *from that deordination which is in the nature of every ſinne in reſpect of man as he is a reaſonable creature.* Take man as placed in an higher ſphere then the beaſts of the field, and endued with reaſon; There is nothing ſo much againſt reaſon as ſinne; by Reaſon I mean ſound rectified reaſon guided by the word of God: for though reaſon be the eye of the ſoul, yet as the eye can ſee nothing without light, ſo neither is our reaſonable faculty able to diſcover between good and bad without Gods word. But take a man in this manner qualified with reaſon, there is nothing ſo contrary and repugnant to it, as ſinne; every time a man commits ſinne, his ſoul faileth in its proper operations: As the eye when diſeaſed is hindered in ſeeing, the leg when lame in walking, or the whole body when there is a diſſonancy or diſſolving of the good temperament of the humours, ſuffereth a diſeaſe; ſo it is with a mans underſtanding; Is he proud, earthly, luſtfull? theſe are unnaturall, irrationall actions, thou art not a man: Therefore virtue is called *a vire.* Its a manly rationall thing to avoid any ſinne; ſo that as a diſeaſe is ſaid to be *preter naturam*, beſides the ſound and good nature of the bodily conſtitution hindring it in its operations; ſo ſinne, though otherwiſe connaturall to us, being from the very birth polluted, yet its preternaturall, if you do regard the true and right conſtitution of man, being made a reaſonable creature: yea ſinne is not only a diſeaſe but a monſter, for as a monſter is the aberration of nature in her naturall operations, by ſome impediments intervening; ſo the ſoul of man, which ought to do only that which is according to true prudence and the word of God, being hindred, produceth a monſter; ſo that thy pride, thy malice, thy oathes, thy wantonneſſe, are ſo many ugly and deformed monſters; *James* 1. 15. the Apoſtle alludeth to this expoſition, making the underſtanding of a man to be like a womb, and luſt to be the ſeed or ſpawne, and then at laſt actuall ſinne is brought forth, as a monſter begotten of a mans corrupt will, and the devill together. Oh then, let this make thee to abhorre all ſinne, its the monſter of the ſoul. The Centaures and other divers-ſhapen monſters ſpoken of by Poets, was to repreſent wicked men.

2. As

2. As sin is an error, because a deordination of the understanding in its proper operation: so its an error, *because its a perverting and disorderly confounding of the sweet harmony and subordination that ought to be among the powers and faculties of the souls themselves, and their due and proper objects which they tend unto.* for now in the soul as in the Heavens, the upper spheres carry along the lower in their motions, though contrary to their inclinations: so the understanding and the will, which are as the King and Councell, in many a mans estate, should rule and command the affections and all other inferior stirrings of the soul; but when a man sinneth, then it is as if the Earth should guide the Heavens, the tayl the head, servants ride and Princes go on foot: wonder not then that sin is called an error, for it disorders all the subordination or order that is in the soul, for either the will is oppressed by the affections or the understanding by the phancy, and so against all order, the seeing are led by the blinde. Again, As the harmony among the powers of the soul is disordered, so the objects are confounded; for in all sin the creature is preferred before the Creator, the drop of the creature before the Ocean of the Creator: Oh what error is this? Who can bewail this folly, that thou shouldest take an empty cistern before a fountain, that thou shouldest accept of meer husks before the heavenly Manna? What, did God make thee and give thee a soul of such capacious desires, onely for the comfort that is in a creature? can this be the center of thy motion? *David* could not do so, for God was his portion, and he had nothing in Heaven or earth but him. 5. It pervets the Harmony of the Soul.

3. *Sinnes are errors, because they make a man restlesse, giving him no true content or satisfaction at all:* Therefore the Scripture speaking of wickednesse saith, *they add drunkennesse to thirst*, Deut. 29. 19. That as the drunkard by his excesse is made more dry, and his drought makes him drink the more, then there is no stop; so it is with men, especially when accustomed to sinne, they wander farther and farther in this wildernesse; they long to satisfie such a lust, and then another, and when these are accomplished, still they desire further and further impieties: Oh then do but lay this to heart; Is not thy covetousnesse, thy uncleannesse great errors? Doest thou not find that, like the grave, they still swallow up all, and yet say, Its not enough; doth not all sinne leave an hydropicall thirst, or an unsatisfied *Bulimia* upon thee, that thou canst not give over: certainly this is a great error and folly. 6. They give no satisfaction to the soul.

But lastly and principally, *Sinne is an error, because its alwayes committed for want of consideration:* No man that sins doth duly and deeply consider what he doth, he may have some transient apprehensions, but that doth not deserve the name of consideration, for that is called to from *Sydus*, which is more then a bare simple *stella*; Its not *stella*, but such a conjunction of Starres, and that causeth great influence (they say) in inferiour things; so to consider, is not barely to apprehend such a thing, but to conjoyn many motives and arguments together, not leaving till it doth produce some good. The Hebrew phrase is, to lay a thing upon our hearts, or to keep and hide a thing in our hearts, as the woman did the leaven in her meal, letting it alone, till its vertue was diffused all over: Its the birds constant sitting upon her eggs, that breeds young ones; so the arguments thou art to consider on against sin, must never be taken off from thy heart; let them morning and evening be upon thee. This fire will not kindle such green wood, unlesse there be constant blowing. 7. Its alwayes committed for want of consideration.

Now I shall select some of the most powerfull and efficacious arguments against sin, that the sinner doth not consider of. As

1. *The majesty, greatnesse, and power of that God, whom he doth offend by every sinne.* If the wrath of an earthly King be like the roaring of a lyon, how unspeakable is the anger of an infinite God! Did therefore every sinner but consider the omniscience, greatnesse and power of God, he would say to every soliciting lust, as *Joseph* to his enticing Mistris, *How can I do this and sinne against* 1. The sinner considers not the majesty of God.

God? Our Saviour tells his Diſciples, whom they ſhould fear, even *him, that is able to deſtroy ſoul and body in hell*, Luk. 12. 5. For want of this conſideration, wicked men are ſaid to forget God, not to know him, not to have him before their eyes, not to have him in their thoughts. The Heathen's admonition to him, that deſired to abſtain from any diſhoneſt way, was, to imagine ſome grave, rigid man as *Cato* before his eyes; but the Scripture directs us, *to walk before God, and ſo we ſhall be perfect or ſincere*. Think then with thy ſelf, Before whom do I commit this lewdneſſe? Is not God's ſparkling, revengefull, eye upon me? I would be afraid man ſhould ſee me, and yet man can cannot damne me, men cannot fill the heart with horror and gall, as the great God can: Break off then thy ungodly wayes, and conſider what thou doeſt: againſt whom is all this evil committed? Its not an Idol-God, that having eyes ſeeth not, or hands ſmiteth not; but that God, whoſe wrath, if kindled though but a little, is like a conſuming fire, and thou as ſtubble before it.

2. Nor what he himſelf is.

2. *The ſinner doth erre, in not conſidering, what he himſelf is, who doth ſinne; a poor mortal wretch, that hath no aſſurance of his life, for an hour, for a moment.* Why then wilt thou venture ſo deſperately for ſuch ſinfull profits, and ſuch ſinfull pleaſures, when it may be God will ſtrike thee dead, and ſend thee to hell while theſe quailes are in thy mouth. While thou art rowling the ſweetneſſe of thy luſts in thy mouth, thou mayeſt hear that voice, *Thou fool, this night thy ſoul ſhall be taken away from thee.* Oh its a wonder, when there is nothing more certain and obvious then our mortality, that we ſhould not conſider of it more, that it ſhould not antidote againſt ſinne: *O ye mortall men how long will ye love vanity*, Pſal. 4. Oh thou mortall tongue, how long wilt thou delight in curſing and ſwearing? Thou mortall body, how long wilt thou be polluted with brutiſh luſts? Did you remember your lives are but vapours, that you paſſe away as a ſhadow, that your glaſſe may be running the laſt crumme, Oh how wouldſt thou then cry out, I am a dying man; let me alone, I dare not ſinne. It was *Nyſſens* obſervation, *Poſt Geneſin, ſequitur Exodus*; immediately after our generation or being, there is our departing out of the world; now this conſideration of mortality, might be very effectuall, eſpecially with the great, rich, and mighty men of the world; for its hard for them to remember they are duſt & aſhes. But as your Letters to great men, though they have the ſuperſcribed Titles of Honourable, great and mighty, yet within there is nothing but a little black ink and ſand-duſt; ſo it is, even with the higheſt men in the world, though they have never ſuch pompous Titles, yet they are nothing but a little black blood and a skin of duſt covering them. It was a proud and arrogant fact of *Conſtantius* the Arrian Emperour, after his great victory over *Magnentius* the Tyrant in armes againſt him: He would needs have them Style him, not his Imperiall Majeſty, but his Eternity; they did beſeech his Eternity: And the Arrian flatterers, that would not grant Eternity to Chriſt the Son of God, yet would attribute that title to him; but this Eternity of *Conſtantius* did quickly come to an end, ſo vain are all mortall things: Oh then pray with the Pſalmiſt that God would teach thee to number thy dayes, and this will make thee apply thy heart to wiſdom.

3. Nor the eternity of Torment.

3. *The ſinner doth not deeply conſider the eternity of torment and miſery which muſt be, for thoſe ſhort pleaſures of ſinne*; for if he did weigh this in his heart, we would think even a legion of devils could not tempt him to the leaſt ſinne. Hence it is the Scripture doth ſo often preſſe that argument of unquenchable fire, and worme alwayes gnawing, and everlaſting chaines of darkneſſe; now this bitter pill ſwallowed down, would immediately cure us; he that hath ſinned, would do ſo no more: *Oh that they were wiſe*, ſaid God, *that they would underſtand their latter end*, Deut. 32. 29. As the godly do comfortably endure theſe afflictions as light and momentany, becauſe of that everlaſting weight of glory; ſo the ſinner would, if duly conſidering of it, throw away thoſe light and ſhort pleaſures of ſinne, becauſe of the eternall weight

of

of misery and torment that is coming upon them: Go then and retire thy self, think sad and serious thoughts: Oh what is Eternity! eternall torments, eternall horrors! No end, no evasion, after thousands and thousands of years, still as farre from ending as at first! and will not such lively thoughts as these, make thee immediately leave all thy sinnes and follow Christ. But who doth believe or consider these things, no, not while we are preaching of this usefull and necessary consideration.

4. This consideration may pour coals of fire upon our heads, and melt the hardest heart, which is fixed upon Christ, in reference to our sins. And two things we may observe from Christ, which may command us to stand still, and not step a step further in sin's way. As

4. Nor Christ.

1. *The infinite displeasure of God against sinne, who thus poured out his anger upon his own Sonne, while he stood surety for our sinnes: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* This was the bitter cup he was to drink for our sakes: All the pains of his body, and sufferings in his soul, were not for his own sins, for he was the innocent Lamb without any blemish, but for our iniquities, he laid our iniquities upon him, *Isa* 53. They met together in him, as mighty streams of water, which carry down all before them, so the word signifieth: Now who can finde in his heart to sin, when he shall behold God so terrible against it, when its only charged upon Christ as a surety?

1. The infinite displeasure of God.

2. *The other consideration is the Love of Christ*; He endured all this wrath and agony; not only to cleanse us from the guilt of sinne, but also the filth of it; *that he might redeem to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, Tit. 2. Now this love of Christ *Paul* found it did constrain him, 1 *Cor.* 5. 14. as the word signifieth; like as when any had the spirit of prophesie come upon them, they had violence within, and could not but speak. Thus the love of Christ would be like fire in thy bones; and as *calor* doth segregate heterogeneous things; so love would separate thee from thy sins as inconsistent with God: The love of Christ crucified, shed abroad in our hearts, would easily, kindly and speedily loose us from all sin; and all the duties and service we should do would be with gladnesse and cheerfulnesse of heart. *In eo quod amatur, non est labor; aut labor amatur*; There is no labour in love, or, if there be, the labour is loved: Some have thought that the sole consideration of the love of God in Christ, is only necessary to part a man from his sinnes; that all other considerations are needlesse: but this would be to charge the Scripture with superfluities, that useth many other motives.

2. The love of Christ.

Lastly, *and here to see the consideration, that though every man loves the truth, praise of sin, yet he cannot endure the name of it put upon him*: This consideration should greatly make against sin. Thou delightest in the practise of adultery, drunkennesse, &c. yet thou canst not endure any should say, thou art an adulterer, or a drunkard. Oh inconsiderate foolish man, Dost thou love the thing, and canst not abide the name? On the other side, it makes for the excellency of grace, that though men care not for the practise of it, yet they love the name: They rejoyce to hear men give the titles of such vertues; but if the name be so good or bad, why are not the things themselves much more?

Use. Use of Instruction: Are sins errors? then see the necessity of Repentance; The Greek word is more emphaticall, *metanoia*, an after-minde, or an after-understanding; as also, hereby we see the necessity of Illumination, and the spirituall opening of our blinde eyes. All the world could convince them in a saving manner of these damnable wandrings, till the Spirit of God reminde them: Or that men should live and walk in these errors, and yet think all is well, or if they have some transient apprehensions of them, yet for all that frequently commit them. As those who have sore eyes, though they know rubbing of them, makes them worse, yet they cannot keep their fingers off. What a wretched thing is it, to say I see and approve better things, though I do worse: Intreat God to give thee a wise understanding heart; thou art not wise till thou repent.

SECT.

SECT. V.

The Great exalters of Grace

SERM. XIX.

Humbled pardoned Sinners, the great Exalters of Grace.

PSAL. 19. 12.

Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret sinnes.

THe first part of this Text, which is *Davids* sad expostulation, hath been fully improved. We come to the second, which is a vehement postulation, or ardent Petition occasioned by the complaint, *Cleanse thou me from secret sinnes.*

Wherein observe the mercy prayed for, and the object about which it is conversant. The mercy prayed for, is, cleansing; the object, secret sinnes.

To *cleanse*, hath for our purpose a two-fold signification; First, that which is more noble, principall, and more ordinary, and that is, to *pardon, forgive*, or *remit sinne*, so that it is the same with covering of sinne, or not imputing sinne; Thus 1 *Joh.* 1. *The blood of Christ is said to cleanse us from all sinne*: As *David*, Psal. 51. doth much presse this phrase, to *wash* him so, as that he may be *whiter then snow*, and this is the most common acception of the word; and it is an allusion to those typicall washings and cleansings which were amongst the *Jews*, as the Apostle *Heb.* 9. doth interpret, which did prefigure the blood of Christ washing away our guilt; especially this cleansing, or to be pronounced clean, was used of the leprous person, when made whole; so that this very expression *cleanse*, doth denote, that sinne was most abominable and loathsome in God's pure eyes, and also to *David's* feeling and apprehension; Even as *Job* was a burden to himselfe, when he sate upon the dunghill with those bodily ulcers upon him abhorring himselfe, and even weary of his life.

The second use of the word *cleanse*, in the Scripture, is for *Sanctification*, and reforming of our hearts and lives from sin; Thus *Esay* to the *Jews*, Isa. 1. *Wash ye, make ye clean, how long shall vain thoughts lodge in you?* 2 Cor. 7, 1. *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of flesh and spirit.* Now it may be in some places both these significations may be intended, for one is subordinate and necessarily coherent with the other; and if we should in this petition comprehend both,

we

we should not greatly erre, so that pardoning of sinne be the principall and main. The words thus explained, we may observe

That a reall and lively apprehension of the unsearchable sinfulnesse of a mans heart, is or should be a great motive to magnifie and exalt Gods grace in pardoning. They are not words or expressions, but reall agonies and conflicts with the guilt of sinne, that will make us indeed admire Gods grace. *Peter* ready to sink in the sea, he will heartily desire Christs arm to support him; or like the Disciples in the ship, tossed with tempests, *Master save us, we perish*; O Lord, save, pardon, we are damned else. The soul, that is tossed up and down in these deeps, would be glad to find such an haven as remission of sinne; some learned men make that phrase *opens*, or remission of sinnes, to be a metaphor from those wretched persons, who are cast into a dark dungeon, and there have fetters and manacles put upon them; oh how welcome are all those, that come to ease them of these fetters, and set them at liberty! No lesse, yea far more welcome are those, who bring the glad tydings of the Gospel, and the blessed peace of a mediator, to the troubled sinner, who was bound and fettered in his conscience, not able to take any comfort, spirituall or temporall, in any thing: or else it's made an allusion to the year of Jubilee, which was a most acceptable time to all poor indebted persons, for then was a generall release; This is to shew, how that pardon of sin, and reconciliation with God, is highly esteemed only by such, as are even overwhelmed with the guilt of their sinne, and are wholly cast down with the apprehension of Gods displeasure, and his frowns: We have two pregnant examples for this, the one in *David*, Psal. 51. who being greatly wounded within himself for the sinnes he had committed, and finding no rest for his bones, how affectionately doth he pray again and again for this washing and cleansing? Oh we had not had such a Psalm of so much spirituall hungring and longing after Gods mercy, if he had not been deeply afflicted because of his sinne. The other example we have in *Paul*, Rom. 7. where after a long and sad conflict with that Law of sinne working in him, he cryeth out as a man undone; *Oh miserable man, who shall deliver me from this body of sinne?* but he doth not stay there; *I thank God through Jesus Christ.* Christ was the more welcome because he had such a dangerous enemy in his own bowels.

Observ. Convinced and pardoned sinners, great exalters of Grace.

To open this: When we say, *Onely the gracious heart, deeply sensible of the guilt of sinne, doth advance and set up this priviledge of cleansing from sinne*; *you may easily judge, that he must thereby set up and advance all those things which are the cause of this cleansing, or without which it could not be.*

The humble pardoned sinner advanceth all the causes of pardon.

Now there are these things necessary to the pardon of sin;

1. First, *The efficient cause of it, is the meer goodnesse and free grace of God*: There is nothing moveth him to this cleansing, but his meer mercy, *Rom.* 3. 25. *Being justified freely by his grace*: So then the wounded heart for sinne, that doth exalt pardon of sinne, is thereby also greatly affected with the cause of this, the free grace and meer love of God. This *Psal.* 51, *According to the multitude of thy mercyes, have mercy on me.* This *David* in many Psalms is greatly affected with; and you may see *Paul*, like the silk-worm, weaving from his inward bowels heavenly enlarged expressions about Gods grace, sometimes calling it *the riches of his grace*, and the *unsearchable riches of his grace.* Oh, the truly humbled for sin, do love to hear, to read, to meditate on this point; This is the mount of transfiguration, of which they say, *It is good to be here*: That man is only an admirer of Gods grace, who is an astonished and an amazed man at his own vilenesse: Gods unsearchable riches of grace, are only prized by those who cry out of the unsearchable errors of their wayes: Therefore an *Antinomian*, or a *Papist*, and *Arminian*, these though they have different principles, yet by their doctrine, they cannot truly and heartily advance grace; for the latter by their doctrines, strive to make us more beautifull and sound then indeed we are; and the other

1. The efficient cause.

forbids those constant and serious humiliations for sinnes, both which do greatly take off from the Cordiall esteeming of Gods grace.

2. The meritorius cause.

The second thing, which procureth this pardon of sinne, *is Christ, and Christ offered up as an expiatory sacrifice*: Therefore his blood is said *to wash or cleanse*. Now *David* knew that this cleansing could not be without a Messias; for all those *Judaicall cleansings*, and *legall sacrifices*, they did typifie Christ, and the godly man even in those dayes, did look to Christ in them; Therefore haply the people generally did rest only in the offerings themselves, and the works of the Law without Christ, as appeareth by *Pauls* disputing against this in his Epistles; and no wonder they did so, when the light of the Gospell was not so glorious; for even in these bright times, when the Sun of righteousnesse is risen on high in our sphere, yet most people do rest *in duties and Ordinances*, as if by the performing of them meerly they had pardon and remission of sinnes, and not looking to Christ the body and fullnesse of all; so then when *David* prayeth, *cleanse me from sinne*, it is as much, as if he had desired to be sprinkled with Christ's blood: But in the new Testament, when the Sunne was come to its verticall point, there you may see *Paul* no longer living, but *Christ in him*. Not only the soul of him that loveth, is where it loveth, but of him that believeth, in whom it doth believe: *I desire to know nothing but Christ crucified*, 1 Cor. 2. 2. And again, *God forbid, that I should glory in any thing, save in the crosse of Christ*; Gal. 6. 14. *And Christ is made righteousnesse, wisedome and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. *It pleased God, that in him all fullnesse should dwell*, Col. 1. 19. This is the *good Samaritan, that will not passe by, but powre oyle into the wounded soul*. This is the Ark, in whom men are safe, while the floods of Gods wrath overwhelme others. This is the City of refuge; Though the justice of God pursue thee as a Malefactor, yet here is protection; Oh the affections, the ravishments, Oh the longings and breathings that the wounded heart hath after Christ: Then is the contrite spirit taken up with him, as you see the Spouse, the Church in the *Canticles*, with Christ her beloved, *the chiefest of ten thousands*.

3. The Instrumentall cause.

Lastly, When we say, The afflicted Spirit through the sense of that depth of corruption in it self, doth highly esteem the grace of God in remission, this is also necessarily implied, *that it unites faith, and sets it up, that grace above all others*, not that faith hath any dignity more then other graces, but because it is the instrument to *lay hold on Christ*, by that alone we receive forgivenesse of sin, *Act.* 26. By that *Christ dwelleth in our hearts*, Eph. 3. By faith we *partake of the fatnesse of the Olive*, Rom. 11. This is the hand that receiveth Christ the Treasure; This is the mouth that eats or feedeth on him; This is the eye that beholding the brazen Serpent makes us healed of the sting we had through sin; This holds out that red colour the *Blood of Christ*, like *Rahab*, that the destroyer may not consume the Believer with others: the blood of the sacrifices was to be sprinkled with Hyssope, as *David Psal.* 51. implieth, now the touch of Hyssope was a poor and base herb comparatively, yet instrumentall to a great end: so faith is a grace that hath not the outward glory and honour, as other graces have, but yet is appointed by God for so glorious a priviledge as justification, so that in saying, We are justified by faith, we do not thereby advance faith more then other graces, only faith debaseth us more, and giveth all to Christ. We have laid down this introductory particulars as necessary, because it tends to shew that pardon of sin, Gods grace, Christs Obedience, and Faith are considered all as one.

Reasons.

Come we now to shew why the godly heart thus wounded through sinne, will set up Gods grace in the forgivenesse thereof; and the Reasons will come from a twofold ground; From the nature of pardon of sinne, and from the subject who is so sadly affected: Let us consider

fuller the first at this time; and pardon must needs be precious to the troubled repenting soul.

First, *Because of the proper and suitable fitnesse that is in it, to take away our grief*: It's only the fit remedy to a wounded conscience; When *David*, Psa. 32. had all within consumed away through sin, what is that which he looketh upon as a blessed thing, but the *covering of sin*, the *not imputing of sin*? Oh there is nothing in the world can give ease to a broken heart but this forgivenesse, should you proffer it all the glory, all the riches and profits of the world, they would be accounted nothing; oh give me rest for my soul in Christ. No wonder then if the gracious heart sensible of the want of this great priviledge and mercy, be in prayer and agonies often, mindes and regardes not his Wife, Children, Houses, or great estate. Alas, these comforts are not the proper cure for their disease; As you see a man with the exquisite torment of the gout, it's not fine clothes, or a soft bed, that can give him any ease from that torture he hath: so neither when thou cryest, yea, roarest out, as *David* did, through guilt of sinne; It's not thy honours, thy greatnesse, thy outward pomp, doth any thing avail; but still thy heart will be restlesse, and thou wilt cry out, I have no peace till thou art setled upon Christ. 1. From the suitablenesse of pardon.

Secondly, *Pardon of sinne must needs be welcome because of the fullnesse and perfection of it*; Its a cleansing away, so that a man is made as *white as Snow*; Its a *blotting out*, its a *covering of it*: Its such a taking of it away, that it is no more; yea as if it had never been, God dealeth with the forgiven person, as if he had never sinned: most of the Scripture-expressions do denote the full taking away of the guilt of sinne when its pardoned: As Christ healed those that were diseased perfectly, he did not half heal them, or imperfectly: Thus when God forgiveth, he doth fully and perfectly forgive, he remembers the sinne no more, he throweth them *into the bottom of the Sea*, never to come in sight more: Oh how welcome must such a priviledge be, when it shall be told the humbled sinner, Thy sinnes are quite taken away, God will never mention them more to thee, God will be as gracious to thee, as if thou hadst never been the man. Indeed, though God doth forgive the sinne, yet he may sometimes chastise and afflict notwithstanding, as we see in *David* and others, but these are medicinall and come onely from Gods love, they are not pœnall or vindictive; so then Gods forgivenesse is full and perfect, that whereas in subduing the filth and power of sinne, God goeth by degrees, and the reliques of it abide in the godly, till the very last; in removing the guilt of sinne, God taketh all that away at once, *There is no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus*; Rom. 8. 1. *Who can lay any thing to their charge? It is God that justifieth.* 2. The fullnesse of it.

3. *The plenty of mercy in pardoning, this also must needs affect the soul.* Psal. 51. *According to the multitude of thy mercy.* And God is said *to multiply to pardon*; so that as a man can never understand his errors, so he can never understand Gods mercies. Thus when God promised by *Esay*, that *he would abundantly or multiply to pardon*; he giveth this reason, *Gods thoughts were not as theirs*; *but, as the Heavens were above the earth, so were his mercies to their sinnes*, Isa. 55. 8. As therefore high hills and great mountaines may seem very big to us on the earth, but if they be compared to Heaven, the whole earth it self is but a *punctum*: Thus, though our sinnes may be vast, and numberlesse to us, yet in respect of Gods grace and mercy, they are nothing: As Gods essence and being is infinite, all the nations of the world, are but as a drop to him; so are all our sinnes to him, whose mercy is as infinite as his essence. Oh then how sweet must the meditations of Gods mercy be to that soul, who findes such a multitude, such a burden of sinnes, that it cryeth out, Oh it is not an ordinary thing that can help me; it must be the infinite mercy of God, it must be the infinite merits of Christ: and then, it must not be pardon for once or one day, or one years pardon, but as my sinnes are multiplied every day, so there must be multiplied pardons. 3. The multitude of pardons.

boldly, *The freeneſſe of this pardon, muſt needs draw out the affections of a broken heart:* For thoſe words, *Who can underſtand his errors?* Who can find out all his ſinnes (and if he cannot underſtand it, he cannot cleanſe himſelf from all) could never be anſwered but for free mercy. A man would be left in eternall deſpair, and never get out, did not the free grace of God in forgiveneſſe interpoſe. Oh then how terrible muſt it be, for a ſoul to be brought into ſuch a wildernesſe, that he can find no way out: To be plunged into ſuch dark holes, that he cannot ſee any light? yet this is the caſe of every man diſcovering ſinne with in him, till God cleanſe him: He is as the man that ſaw great Armies againſt him, full of fear and deſpair, till his eyes be opened, that he can ſee more for him, then againſt him.

4 The freeneſſe of it.

Uſe of Inſtruction. Why it is that mens deſires, affections, and all their endeavours are after earthly and worldly things? This is the cauſe they feel no want but of them: They apprehend nothing a miſery, but to be without theſe things; whereas if thy heart were ever affected with thy horrible and unſpeakable pollution, nothing in the world could content thee but Chriſt; nothing could ſatisfie thee but grace. Come to the poor malefactor, that is going to his dreadfull execution, its not the beſt food, the beſt rayment that he regards; but bring him a pardon, and then you comfort him. Thus it is with a man ſenſible of his ſinnes, and wearied under them; tell him of his honours, of his eſtate, he crieth out, Theſe are miſerable comforters; but ohi if he could enjoy Chriſt, if his ſinnes were forgiven, though his food were bread and water, and his houſe a poor cottage, yet he ſhould account one a continuall Feaſt, and the other an Heaven. Thou then who art a worm and no man (in this ſenſe) living only on earthly comforts, who art wholly taken up with worldly things, Oh little doeſt thou know what thou wanteſt: There is one more neceſſary thing then all this earthly greatneſſe, and that is a pardon for thee. What would *Judas* have given, to have had his ſinne covered by God's grace? And *Pſal.* 32. *David* lyeth languiſhing and pining away for want of this. Well, how careleſs ſoever thou now art, yet the time is coming when only Chriſt, only God's favour will be in requeſt.

Uſe.

SERM.

SERM. XX.

More Reasons, why the Soul truly sensible of Sinne, doth so greatly prise pardoning Grace.

PSAL. 19. 12.

Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret sinnes.

PArdon of Sinne (we have heard) is highly magnified by an heart sensible of its unsearchable sinfulnesse, and that from many considerations, derived from the nature of their pardon. There remain some more from the concomitant, or effects of this cleansing. As

Reasons from the concomitants of pardon.

1. *Wheresoever there is a cleansing from the guilt of sin, there is in some measure also from the power and filth of it.* Not but that justification & Sanctification are two distinct mercies, which the Papists confound, only they are inseparably conjoyned together, as light and heat in the fire. This therefore must raise an high esteem of this cleansing from the guilt of sinne, because it hath always such a welcome attendant, it comes with spirituall power and life to conquer sinne. That these are twinnes in the womb of free grace, appeareth, *Rom.* 8. *There is no condemnation to those that are in Christ* (here is *justification*) *who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit*, here is *sanctification*. And thus 1 *Joh.* 1. *If we confesse our sins, he is faithfull to forgive and cleanse us from all iniquity*: So that the afflicted soul lying under the burden of sinfulnesse, seeing pardon to bring along with it some power to crucifie, and mortifie it, must needs pant and hunger after it. Oh that our hearts were so spirituall, as to go on under this two-fold respect of sin, The guilt of it, and the filth of it: then our souls would accordingly seek after and pray for those two eminent mercies, justification, which removeth the guilt, and sanctification, which in some degree subdueth the filth of sinne. *These are the upper and lower springs*: These are the two arms of Gods grace receiving the soul: These are the two great lights in the Heaven of a Christian soul. Let men of the world, whose appetites are diseased, long for the dust, and the earth of the world, the godly heart hath more spirituall and heavenly desires.

1. Pardon of Sinne brings with it power against sin.

2. *This pardon of sinne, bringeth peace with God, and an admirable serenity & tranquillity upon the whole man.* Rom. 5. 1. *Being justified, we have peace with God.* Oh how terrible and unspeakable is it, to have God our adversary! He can raise what hellish and black thoughts he pleaseth. He can command a number of gnawing wormes upon the consciences of men immediately, as he did once of Grashoppers and Frogs. When God did but put forth some of his terror and majesty in giving the Law, how much afraid were all the people? yea *Moses* himself exceedingly trembled: If therefore God put forth all his wrath, who can abide? Now the guilt of sinne, that presently represents God as a provoked enemy, that suggesteth nothing but justice and vengeance, whereas pardon of sinne, represents God a gracious father, bringeth to minde all the precious pro-

2. It bringeth peace.

mises

miſes, the fulneſſe and ſufficiency of Chriſt, and thereby cauſeth a calm, quiet, frame of ſoul. This is meant by that *reſt*, Chriſt promiſeth to the *wearied ſoul* that ſhall come to him, *Mat.* 11. 25. The want of this peace with God, ye ſee what an hell it cauſed in *Cain's* and *Judaſſes* ſoul, what torments and wounds did they feel. God was angry, and who can command the windes and tempeſts of that anger to be ſtill, but God alone? Its no boaſting of any peace or friendſhip with the greateſt in the world, while God from Heaven frowneth on thee.

3. And Joy.

3. *Where this cleanſing is, as there is peace ſo from that floweth joy, even unſpeakable joy ſuch as the world knoweth not, neither can it enter into their hearts to conceive,* Rom. 5. 2. inſomuch that the Kingdom of Heaven is ſaid to conſiſt in joy as well as in other things: Yea *Gal.* 5. joy is the fruit of the Spirit: Oh then where a true and lively faith receiveth this pardon, there it cauſeth wonderfull joy and gladneſſe of heart. *David* ſaith, *God hath put more joy into his heart, then they had when wine and oyl encreaſeth,* Pſal. 4. This is the ſpirituall wine, that the Goſpel giveth to thoſe that are ſad in heart, all the worldly joy and pleaſures are but a blaze to this: The very Heathen could ſay, *Gaudium eſt res ſevera, Joy is a ſevere and ſolid thing.* That which wicked men have in their luſts, its but like the tickling of the itchy place, which leaveth more ſmart afterwards: What triumphing joy doth *David* expreſſe in many Pſalms, from the ſenſe of Gods forgiveneſſe of his ſinnes: Indeed, only that men may walk cheerfully; the name of poverty, death, and all outward evils in the world, cannot or ought not to affright that man who hath this inward joy. *Nabal* in the midſt of all his carnall mirth, at the very mention of *Davids* revengefull reſolution againſt him, had *his heart turned to a ſtone within him*; There was no ſpirituall joy to revive and ſupport him.

4. Alſo much love to God.

4. *Where this cleanſing is received by faith, there the heart is inflamed with much love, and that makes all obedience eaſie and delightſome.* *Mary Magdalen* that wept ſo much, that ſhe could wipe Chriſts feet with her tears: whence came that diſtillation of ſuch precious water, but from the fire of love kindled in her breaſt? and whence was that love? *She loved much, becauſe much was forgiven her,* Luk. 7. 47. Now where the love of God doth thus inflame the ſoul, there *Chriſts commandements are not grievous.* Love is like the ſpirit in *Ezekiels* wheeles, that made them move ſo nimbly; ſo that dulneſſe, ſluggiſhneſſe and wearineſſe is quickly diſpelled by heavenly love, as the ice is preſently diſſolved by the Sunne beams: yea where this love is kindled, ariſing from Gods pardon, there ſlaviſh and tormenting fears, that carry pain and anxiety with them are alſo removed: So the Apoſtle *John*, 1 Joh. *chap.* 4. Where love is, there is no fear, for fear hath torment with it, ſuch as a man findes that is tormented in his guts: Wonder not then, if the mourning and ſorrowfull heart be thus glad of pardon, for it makes love to run like warm blood through all the veines: There is no winter or froſt under this torrid zone.

5. A filiall boldneſſe.

5. *Where this cleanſing is, there is a filiall boldneſſe, and an holy confidence in all our approaches to God.* And this frame of ſpirit is more worth then all the world: A guilty heart, that feeleth no pardon, makes a man, with *Adam*, run and hide himſelf from God. The damned in hell, becauſe they ſee no hope for pardon, cry to the mountaines and hills to cover them from the Lamb's wrath: Oh but remiſſion of ſinne obtained by faith, makes a man hold up his head; its accompanied with that ſpirit of *adoption*, that makes us cry *Abba Father*. The gemination of the word, and the expreſſion, *crying*, denoteth the boldneſſe, and confident vehemency of the heart: And *Epheſ.* 3. *We have acceſſe with boldneſſe through faith.* Hence the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 4. 16. having declared what a ſufficient high Prieſt we have in Heaven, the Lord Chriſt, who hath ſubdued our ſinnes for us, he concludeth, *Let us come boldly to the Throne of grace.* The Scepter is not held out, that inviteth us to come into his preſence,

till

till our iniquities be pardoned: this is the great gulf that must be first removed.

Lastly, *Cleansing from sinne, is thus welcome to an afflicted spirit, because it giveth an heavenly fortitude, and admirable support in all outward tribulations and miseries.* Rom. 8. When *Paul* had treated of justification, and that nothing can be laid to the charge of him whom God pardoneth; he then breaketh out into that great *triumph over death, and all other oppositions:* and on the other side, every outward calamity breaketh into pieces, while the guilt of sinne is upon us: Alas, we are not able to indure any earthly misery, when inward guilt is also upon us: If there be the sting of sinne within, and the sting of death without; *This wounded spirit who can bear?* Here affliction is added to affliction, and not wine, but gall is given to the sorrowfull soul to drink.

6. And giveth an admirable support in all outward tribulations.

In the next place we come to consider, what reasons there are on the subjects part, *viz.* the party deeply sensible of his unsearchable filthinesse; why he should so affectionately desire pardon of sin. And

Reasons on the subjects part.

1. *Because its the nature of guilt, if not removed by pardon, to eat into the heart, and fret it more and more.* *David*, Psal. 32. telleth us, what a miserable object he was, while this guilt of sinne lay tormenting and scorching of him within. *My bones waxed old, through roaring all the day long.* His bones, the strongest part about him, and his vitall *moisture was turned into the drought of summer.* Thus you see, the guilt of sinne if not taken away, doth inwardly consume a man: That as a man who is hung up in gibbets to be starved to death, if he have no food given him, he will eat up the flesh of his own arms, and devour his own self, if possible: Thus a man destitute of Gods favour, hungring after Gods grace, if he cannot enjoy it, will even devour and eat up himself; his fears, his horrors, his despair, will swallow him up, as the *whale* did *Jonah.* As those who have the disease of the Wolf, if it have no outward thing applied to it, to feed upon, it will eat and consume inwardly: so it is here, if they have not the grace and mercy of God to support and establish them, they do inwardly pine away. Oh then wonder not, if the pardon of sinne be thus welcome, for no tongue can expresse, what the guilt of sinne doth in a troubled conscience, how it eateth, consumeth, and devoureth.

1. Guilt unpardoned eats into the heart, and frets more and more.

They must needs look out for pardon, because of the insufficiency, and impossibility that is in themselves to blot out the least sinne: If so be, that upon sinne committed, the tears, sighs and religious duties of a repenting man, could make satisfaction to God, and that these would presently wash him clean; then he need not so solliciteously beg of God for pardon: but all these are imperfect, and need forgivenesse as well as our sinnes; our very prayers, tears and humiliation, they are so foul, that they need cleansing also: what then is left for a troubled sinner? Where is hope to be had, seeing he cannot cleanse himself? Onely in the blood of Christ. When *Naaman* cannot be cleansed by any waters in his own Country, though he be unwilling, yet his best course is to go and wash himself in *Jordan.* Though it be against our pride, and principles of self-fullnesse within us, to renounce all our duties as unclean, & to put our trust in Christ only; yet if ever we will be healed, this way we must take. *Oh then what miserable comforters, are all the popish Casuists, who detain their penitent person, in a scrupulous and puzling consideration about his satisfaction, and meritorious works, and in the mean while, direct him not to Christ onely to be made clean!* In this wildernesse were all people kept, going backward and forward, finding no true ease for their souls, till the light of the Gospel appeared, which shewed us the ready way to *Canaan.* All the while a man is kept with puzling doctrines, to be his own Saviour in part, he doth but roul the stone up the hill, which immediately comes down upon him; he labours in vain, the waters come in at one place, as much as he emptieth them out at another. And this impossibility of ever finding

2. From the impossibility for a mans self to blot out the least sinne.

finding any true ground of comfort from those popish doctrines, was the occasion to make *Luther* and others seek out for that evangelicall grace revealed in the Gospel. It was *Pythagoras* his rule, *Cor ne edito*, *Be not a canniball to thy self*; but the Gospel prescribeth believing in Christ for pardon, and that will compose all the troubles and tempests of the soul.

3. Because of the greatnesse of the evil of sin.

3. *Therefore doth the soul affected with its sinfulnesse, fly out for pardon, because the evil of sinne is greater both in the nature of it, and in the apprehension of a godly man, then any temporall evil can be.* Now then, if it be so naturall, for men in temporall necessities and calamities, to seek out for temporall remedies and comforts; no marvell if spirituall wants do drive us out more to spirituall supports. The man that lieth tormented with great bodily pain, he cannot rest or sleep for it, how doth he cry out for some ease? he bids this servant run and that servant run, to get some to help: now the trouble of conscience is far more afflicting, it takes all our desires and comforts away, as we see in *David* and *Job*, and therefore they cannot but be more importunate and desirous to meet with spirituall refreshments. As the *joy of the Gospel* is more then ever entred into the heart of man to conceive, so are the *terrours and troubles for sinne*, more then ever a man could imagine: Oh how do such wish they had never been born? how often do they say, Oh if it were any outward misery, if it were any bodily trouble, I could bear it; but the frowns of God are upon me, an hell is within me, the arrowes of the Almighty stick into my heart; and this makes him cry out, he cannot beare it, he cannot hold out any longer. Though wicked men feel nothing but the pleasures and delights of sinne, yet when the Spirit of God by the Word shall convince thee of it, set thy sins in order before thee; when this honey in the mouth shall be turned into gall in thy belly, then thou wilt go bowed down, then thou wilt be a burden unto thy self: Then all thy desires and comforts in the world will wither away, and all thy pantings and breathings will be after Gods favour, and his grace in pardoning: Oh that you who commit sinne with delight, would hearken to this; Either here or hereafter sinne will be an heavy burthen, it will presse thee down: Oh therefore now, while the acceptable time of grace is, come in and sue for thy pardon.

4. Because of the workings of the Spirit of God in them.

4. *The heart sensible of its vast and unsearchable sinfulnesse, must needs cry out for Gods grace, because of the gracious and mercifull workings of the Spirit of God in them.* As in that dark abysse at first, the Spirit moved on the waters, and by degrees caused light and a beautifull form to appear; so the Spirit of God, which first wrought all that confusion and grief in the soul, will direct it to mercy and comfort: for this you must know, A man cometh not to be sensible of, or wounded for sinne, by his own reason and naturall strength, but it is *the mighty power of God*, which turneth this barren heath into running streames, that makes water to gush out of this rock. Experience confirms this; Let a man hear never so many Sermons; Let him consider and hearken never so much, yet he never is affected at the heart, till the Spirit of God work on him and in him; then he is another man, he is of another minde, of other desires and affections: Its God only that stops this *Jordan* in her course and stream, that stayeth the wicked man from going on in his obstinacy. So then, as the Spirit of God made these meltings and troubles of soul at first, so the same Spirit doth heal and comfort: That which was the *spirit of bondage*, is now *the spirit of adoption*; That which made us with *groans unutterable* cry out, *Oh wretched sinner that I am*, the same makes us cry *Abba Father*: so that he which wounded will also heal. This spirituall exercise and agony of a godly man, is not begun or finished by humane strength or considerations. When therefore at any time, the Spirit of God conviuceth of sinne, and doth not direct to faith and comfort, then is the heart of man in wofull darknesse; then it crieth out, *my sinnes are greater then I can bear*, his soul is in bitter pangs and travell, but cannot bring forth.

From

From hence therefore we shall take an occasion to handle this question, *Whether the preaching so much about the Guile and hypocrisie of the Heart, be not an occasion, to take off from the life of faith, and joy in evangelicall promises; for we can hardly minde the one but we forget the other?* Though *David* was thus plunged in the depth of his sinnes, and yet could cry out for grace, yet many have not the strength as he had: I shall therefore shew, how his necessary subject is to be treated on, viz. *The unsearchable depth of sinne in a mans heart, and yet no stop be put to a Gospel-life, and the spirituall imbracements of Christ only.*

Now I conclude with an Admonition, to wicked men *covered over with sinne yet feeling no burden*, cry not out for any deliverance: How is it thou art become thus stupid? There is much wickedness of thine, it needs no searching out: It cannot be hid from thy eyes, thou canst not turn thy face from it, and yet thou seekest not to be cleansed. Doth *David* bewail the sinnes he cannot find out? doth he intreat to be cleansed from such sinnes he doth not yet know in himself, and thou knowest many grievous sins by thy self? They come into thy minde every Sermon, and yet thou seekest not out to be cleansed. Dost thou presume to come to God in holy duties, before thou thou art roused from such noisome pollutions. Is not the hour and day yet to come, that ever thou didst with sorrow and mourning of spirit pray to God, that he would cleanse thee? The Elements are not heavy (they say) in their proper place; Its a signe, that sinne is thy proper course, which thou livest and delightest in, because its no more a trouble to thee: There cannot be any tast or relish in Christ and the Gospel, till thou be thus broken and contrite in heart; You that are full of worldly contents must needs loath this hony-combe: *Blessed are the poor in spirit*, *Blessed are they that mourn*, saith our Saviour. Oh it is a blessed thing, to preach to a people, that mourn after Christ, to come with the glad tydings of the Gospel, to those who are cast down with the sad curses of the Law. *Use.*

SERM. XXI.

That a due and ſound managing of the neceſſary Point of Self-examination, and conſtant ſearching into our ſelves, leſt any falſe way be in us, is wonderfully conſiſtent with the life of Faith; yea and neceſſarily coherent, with that joyfull and comfortable walking the Goſpel doth require; and that a Miniſter, or a particular Chriſtian, doth but half his work that doth not attend to both.

PSAL. 19. 12.

Who can underſtand his errors? Cleanſe thou me from ſecret ſinnes.

FRom the Doctrine premiſed (*viz.*) *That an heart deeply ſenſible of, and even overwhelmed with, it's unſearchable vileneſſe and ſinfullneſſe, is thereby provoked to magnifie the grace of God in pardoning*, I ſhall interre one Use more of Inſtruction, to inform us in the main and neceſſary practicall Point, namely, *That a well-ordered ſtudy about the hypocriſie and deceitfull luſts of our own hearts, is no impediment of, but a furtherance to, that excellent life of the Goſpel, and dependance upon the Covenant of grace.* A man may at the ſame time live the life of faith through the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, yet walk with an holy fear and trembling, leſt he be an hypocrite or caſtaway; and ſo there may be ſuch a ſolid and well methodized preaching about the unſearchable errors of a mans heart, the exactneſſe of grace, the difficulty of diſcerning between truth and counterfeiting in good works, that alſo may ſweetly comply with, and even embrace, all that glorious and comfortable life, which ariſeth from Goſpel priviledges. The connexion of *Davids* ſad expoſtulation, with this vehement petition, doth afford a proper occaſion, to remove that ſtumbling block, which now more then ever is laid in ſome mens wayes, *viz.* *That its enough in our preaching, to exalt the glorious offices of Chriſt, to deſcribe him onely crucified, and aſcended into Heaven, with all the admirable effects thereof*: and as for preſſing this doctrine about the heart-work ſo much, to be daily ranſacking into the differences of truth and hypocriſie: This, they think, is to keep people, in a low, legall and deſpondent way: They think we onely give water and not wine to drink: They think us ſuch unnaturall Fathers, that when our Children call for bread, we give them a ſtone: They think we wrong our people, by keeping them

them on mount *Calvary*, representing to their thoughts, only sad and discomfortable objects, never taking them up to the mount of transfiguration. This is greatly stood upon in these dayes, as if many Ministers were having their people even into *Egypt* again, or keeping them in the wildernesse, by uncomfortable darknesse about the Law and duties, and not putting them into the Land of *Canaan*. It will therefore be very seasonable to the times, and not impertinent to the text in hand, to shew; *That a due and sound managing of the necessary Point of self-examination, and constant searching into our selves, lest any false way be in us, is wonderfully consistent with the life of Faith; yea and necessarily coherent, with that joyfull and comfortable walking the Gospel doth require; and that a Minister or a particular Christian doth but half his work that doth not attend to both.* To speak much of Christ, and yet not presse people to digg deep and to lay a sure foundation of godlinesse, is to build high roofs of a stately house, and take no care for the foundation, which will not abide storms and tempests. Again, to be alwayes cutting and hammering into the soars of the heart, and searching into the wounds, never preparing the oyl or balm of the Gospel, is like the unwise Physician, to apply Corrosives, but not to use healing and suppling remedies.

And first to satisfie this Objection, *Consider the example and practise of Christ and the Apostles in their preaching.* Certainly we are not to affect an higher way then they walked in, and you shall observe how carefull they were to keep up both these points: To see that we made sure work in the matter of grace; and also that we depended only on Christ for our acceptance. Concerning Christ, we know he had *the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to the contrite in heart*, Isa. 40. 5. yea so tender was he, that he would not *bruise the broken reed, not quench the smoaking flax*, Mat. 12. 20. Where he saw any hopefull beginning, he would give great encouragement: Yet there is no subject that he doth more ordinarily treat on, pressing over again and again, than this, about looking to themselves that they do not take that for grace which is not grace; that they be sure to search deep enough in these things. He is often in telling them, how far hypocrites and reprobates may go. This being a theme he did so constantly discourse upon, its plain, he saw the necessity of it. He saw multitudes of those that followed him, not take up their profession upon sure and lasting grounds, therefore would he touch them to the very quick, and get out all the rottennesse in the bottom of the wound, before he did heal them. The *Parable* of the severall kinds of *ground*; which is of severall hearers, is very punctuall to this purpose: So also that famous one of the *foolish Virgins*, besides severall other discourses of our Saviour, they were wholly to instruct in this, That godlinesse is a farre more difficult and rare thing then most are convinced of: Then when men have prayed vehemently, crying *Lord, Lord*, when they have been famous in all externall duties of religion; yet God hereafter may tell them, *He knew them not*. If ever the Word was *a two-edged sword, to divide between the marrow and the joynts*, it was out of Christs mouth in this particular: so then we see him discharging this part diligently: but he stayeth not here, he doth also largely describe his own office and power, he giveth gracious invitations to troubled and afflicted sinners, he healeth as well as woundeth. In this Ark we have the Manna as well as the Rod; so that sensiblenesse and tendernesse about sinne, and a powerfull lively way of believing in Christ, are like the radicall moisture and innate heat which (they say) preserve the life of a man. Thus we see an example from Christ. And for the Apostles, I shall instance in *Paul*, who seemed to be more affected and enlarged with Gods grace to sinners then any other, because he had more experimentally tasted of it: now as his mouth runneth over with expressions about Gods grace, sweeter then honey or the honey combe, yet observe, that he doth withall diligently describe the properties and duties of such who

receive this grace; and therefore that 8th of the *Romans*, which seemeth to be like *Jacobs ladder*, carrying a man up to Heaven in divine meditations, yet how diligently doth he inculcate this, *That only such, who mortifie the deeds of the flesh, who live and walk in the Spirit, who are heavenly minded*, can joy their privileges? and that none might abuse his precious doctrine, he telleth us concerning his own self, *That he kept down his body*; by that implying all holy care and endeavour, both about soul and body, lest when he had preached to others, he himself should be a cast away, 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. And further, *Austin* thought this became many of *Pauls* expressions magnifying faith Christ, and his righteousness, might weaken the practicall power of godlinesse; that therefore *James* was moved by the Spirit of God to write his Epistle, the whole scope whereof is to shew, that no faith justifieth, nor can any man have benefit by his bare believing in Christ, if an holy life, and good works do not accompany it.

2. In the second place consider, *That the auditory to whom the Minister of the Gospel preacheth may be very different*; for either they may be generally a people ignorant or prophane, and at the most resting in a formall way of religious duties, or else they may be a people of a broken and contrite spirit, such who hunger and thirst after righteousnesse, who mourn and are cast down for their unworthiness: & now according to these different dispositions, so these distinct truths have their appropriated seasonableness. To a pharisaical & formal people, the discovery of sin in all the inward filthinesse of it. The opening of all the secret hypocrisie of the heart. The discovering of mens principles, aimes and ends is very necessary, and to such our Saviour preached: whereas if a people be wounded & cast down with their sinnes, to such we are to bring the *glad tydings of the Gospel*, and with the Angels to cry, *Glory be to God on high, peace on earth, and goodwill to men*. When *Felix* desired to hear *Paul* about faith in Christ, he presently preacheth about *righteousnesse* and *temperance*, which *Felix* grosly failed in, and the *judgment to come*, Acts 24. This *Paul* did, as thinking it the best way to save *Felix* his soul, and to make him happy indeed, as well as in name. But generally in our times, the number of afflicted, mourning Christians are very few, the greater part, are either *prophane*, or *formalists*, and *self-justiciaries*: and therefore searching and piercing discoveries of the falshood and guile of mens hearts, whereby they are so apt to daub, and make half or imperfect works in Christianity, are the most necessary subjects we can preach upon. As therefore its the skill of Husbandmen to know what seed is most proper for his particular ground, and the prudence of the Physitian, to distinguish of the diseases & constitutions of his patients; so it should be of the Ministers of the Gospel, to presse duties exceedingly to some, and the gracious promises very much to others.

In the next place let us consider, what is the due and right methodizing of these distinct subjects, *viz.* the work of grace within us, and the gift of grace without us. And

1. *Its necessary to keep our hearts in the study of our own selves, and examination therein* (so that we do not put in such a bitter herbe of doctrine as Papists and some others do, about the *impossibility of any certainty we can have of the truth of grace in our selves, without divine revelation*; which the papists grant hath been vouchsafed to some few, as *Paul* and others); for the truth is, to keep the godly always puzling and tyring themselves about the danger of hypocrisie, and withall to add, that they can never come to any assurance of the truth of grace in themselves, is to detain them in a wandring wildernesse, is to put in vexing ingredients, that the wound may never be cured; is as vain in Divinity, as those in Alchymy who spend their labour and estates to find the Philosophers stone. When Christ was risen, it was a vain thing to seek for him in the sepulchers, and constantly to abide there. To teach them, that there can be no certainty of our being in the state of grace; to nourish these doubts and fears, as the proper effect of humility, is indeed to teach men with briars and thorns, as they

they did the men of *Succoth*. But no wonder the Papists teach such uncomfortable doctrine, for thereby they inhance their own Church-commodities, as excellent receipts; doing herein like some beggers, that will alwayes keep their wounds raw, that so they may partake of greater almes.

2. *The people of God are to be instructed in the unsearchableneſſe of their errors, without any prejudice to a Gospel life, if they look upon this duty only as the preparative, as the way, not as the end or the center.* Certainly those Christians wrong themselves and the grace of God, who are only in examination, intending no further work, but alwayes exercising themselves herein: No, *David* did otherwise, he groaneth under his corruption, but then flyeth to grace as a sure refuge. So *Paul* doth lament and bewail that Law of sinne within him, yet runneth unto the grace of God in Christ. That which the godly should aim at, is, *first to see they are prepared and qualified with the truth of grace*, and this foundation being laid, then the rest of their study and affections, is to be drawn out about Christ. *John* the beloved of Christ, who is so much affected with Gods love, yet he giveth severall characters, by which we may know when we are of God: We are to seek for a rest to our souls, and that cannot be from the graces within us: This then must be granted, that when the godly are acquainted with the truth of grace in themselves, they are then to seek out further for Christ, and the Covenant of grace, as that which is the chief duty in Christianity. Be not then alwayes in the way, desire to be at the journies end.

3. *Our carefull distinguishing between the truth of grace, and the counterfeit of it, will not prejudice the life of faith, if so be we do not make what we finde to rest upon for our justification and pardon of sinne.* It was the great complaint of the Apostle, that some false teachers taught *justification by the works of the Law*, *Gal. 2.* and as many as did so, he said, they were *fallen from Christ*: and thus if any put trust in their own righteousneſſe, they do not only seek to find grace in their lives, but put confidence also in it afterwards; this man sets up a *Dagon* against the *Ark*, he sets up something in Christs room, he goeth about with the *Jews*, to establish his own righteousneſſe, and then no wonder if he never come to prize a Gospel-righteousneſſe; but if the godly look for its presence only, as being necessary by Gods command, without which there is no grace or happineſſe vouchsafed to a man, and go no further, abhorring all self-confidence, then this makes a mans heart a fit vessell to receive the oyl of the Gospel: Its so farre from hindring, that it dresseth and prepareth the heart for Christ to come and lodge in it: so that this is the right method, to preach the necessity of the truth of grace, but to preach down all causality thereof to our justification: We bring another Gospel, if we do any otherwise; and so though we were angels, yet we were to be accursed: Those Sermons then will never eclipse the glory of the Gospell, which tend to the searching of the depth of a mans heart, yet withall instruct, that though they should find grace in their hearts to their comfort and desire, yet nothing but Christ must be relied on. Admire imputed righteousneſſe, as if thou hadst no inherent, yet labour and pray for inherent, as if there were no imputed. The people of God are sometimes affected in their sense and feeling, as those that have the disease Ephialtes, we call it, a trouble with the riding of the Mare: They think some horrid and heavy load lyeth upon them without them, which is nothing but some distempers of humor within: So it is with the children of God, sometimes they have dreadfull and formidable apprehensions about God, and his severity, as one that did even seek an opportunity to damn, which all is distemper is in themselves: let not any thing without from God, but their sad unbelieving and suspicious thoughts within: Do not therefore let any trouble within oppose the free offer of Gods grace without: but as no man ever hated his own flesh, but cherisheth and nourisheth it; so do not thou thy soul, but cherish it with imputed righteousneſſe,

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4. To teach people ſelf-examination and ſtudy about the work of grace in themſelves, will not exclude a Goſpel-life, unleſſe we preach *ſatisfactory and meritorious works to be done by us, to make a recompence unto God.* Thus we juſtly complained of thoſe times when Popiſh Doctrines had covered the face of the whole Church; Then was the Sun of Righteouſneſſe under a Cloud; Then mans ſatisfaction and not Chriſt's was exalted; Then the Popes indulgences hurried Gods indulgence in pardoning; Then ſome relique of a Saint was more magnified then the obedience of Chriſt. Now its an unreaſonable thing in ſome Antinomians to call the doctrine of neceſſity of repentance and a ſtrict godly life, Popery; for thus the whole Scripture would incurre our raſh cenſure. Keep we then within theſe bounds and limits and then ſay, Oh let the Miniſtery powerfully ſearch into every dark corner: let it find out every falſe way, The more ſearching and cloſe it is, the more welcome it will be to me: Thus there cannot be any oppoſition againſt free grace and Chriſt, from a true and right preſſing of the inward, ſtrict, and powerfull way of grace: We ſhall ſhew on the other ſide, that a right magnifying of Chriſt and pardon, doth not oppoſe a daily ſollicitude and holy trembling about our ſelves: Now then, is Chriſt and Grace rightly preached when it's exalted according to the extent and latitude of the Scripture, for ſeeing Chriſt is not only revealed to be a Saviour, but we have alſo his Commandments and manifold duties which he enjoyneth us to obſerve, he preacheth but half Chriſt that mentioneth only the benefits by him, and not the duties required alſo; Chriſt is the life, but He is alſo the Truth and the Way. He is the head, and all fulneſſe is from him, yet the members are to receive of this fulneſſe; ſo that many miſtake what it is to preach Chriſt, and the Goſpel: Oh they think you muſt tell them of nothing but joy and heavenly embracements; They think, you muſt in every Sermon make them like *Paul*, ſnatched up into the third heaven, whether in the body or out of the body they cannot tell: for certainly *Paul* was no Goſpel-preacher then, becauſe he is much in commending the powerfull practiſe of all graces, both as we are Chriſtians, and as in ſuch relations. Hence in ſeverall places are thoſe many directions about husbands and wives, and children, and ſervants, to do their duties, ſo that its not true Chriſt, or the true Goſpel, but a meer Idol of their own brain, who do not preach Chriſt, pardon of ſinne in the full latitude of the Scripture-direction: *There is forgiveneſſe with thee that thou mayeſt be feared*, ſaith *David*. And how notably doth *Paul* thunder in this point, *Rom.* 7. 1. *What, ſhall we ſinne that grace may abound? God forbid.* See! here *Paul* hath a God forbid, that any ſhould be the leſſe tender and fearfull to ſinne, becauſe grace doth abound; and thus have I removed this Objection, which I had a fit occaſion offered me to anſwer, from the connexion of *Davids* complaint and his Petition.

Uſe. A twofold Uſe may be made, Firſt, To diſcover the folly of all ſuch who boaſt of grace, and ſpeak much of the merits of Chriſt, yet are not afflicted with the known and unknown ſinfulneſſe that is in them. In pains, in calamities, They tell us of truſting in Chriſt, of hoping for pardon, but not a word of that load and burden which they find ſin to be upon them; Thou muſt make a new Bible, and bring a new Chriſt, and a new way of pardon, if ever ſuch an one as thou art, doſt expect pardon.

And Secondly, 'Tis of Admonition to the godly, not like *Rachel* for her Children, ſo thou for thy ſinnes to ſit diſconſolate alwayes, and refuſe to be comforted. Do not divide and ſeparate thoſe things which God hath conjoyned; Thy ſinfulneſſe conſider, but conſider Chriſt alſo. Neither of theſe millſtones may be taken to pledge, between which thou maieſt be made pure bread, as *Luther* once.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

Of Sinnes of Ignorance, Presumption, and Reigning in a man; As also the Mitigations and Aggravations of Sinne.

SERM. XXII.

Of Sinnes of Ignorance; And how it comes about that a godly man may live in sin and not know it.

PSAL. 19. 12.

Cleanse me from secret sinnes.

WE are now arrived at the last considerable particular in this eighth verse, which is the object matter of the Petition, That from which *David* desireth to be cleansed, *viz. secret sinnes*: In the Hebrew, it's only *secret*, and is for the explication of errors, which he had mentioned before, *viz. such sinnes*, that through ignorance or any other way I cannor discern. Therefore our Translators do well adde *sinnes*, though in a different character, to shew it is not in the originall. Now a sinne may be said to be secret or hidden two waies.

First, In respect of others, That others do not know it; and thus many men commit grosse and vile sinnes, which their own consciences accuse and condemn, only they labour to conceal them from others. Thus the Apostle said, *It was a shame to speak what was done by some in secret*, Eph. 5. 12. and they are called 2 *Cor.* 4. 14. *The hidden things of dishonesty*, because it's the property of every man like *Adam* to hide and cover his sin from others, and if possible from God himself. Now *David* doth not mean such secret sinnes here; for howsoever it be true, that a godly man dare not allow himself in any secret known sin, as we see in *Joseph*, *How can I do this and sin against God!* yet *David* reacheth to an higher degree of grace in this Text, He is so far from conniving at any sin known to himself, though secret to others, That he is afraid and praieth

prayeth againſt even *thoſe ſinnes that may be in him, and yet he not know them.*

Secondly, A ſinne may be ſaid to be ſecret or hidden, not only in reſpect of the knowledge of others, but alſo our own knowledge, to that the man who doth ſuch a thing, yet doth not at all think he ſinneth therein, and this *David* prayeth againſt in the Text. Now it may be objected, *How any thing that cometh meerly through ignorance can be a ſinne, if it be wholly from ignorance it's involuntary; and if it be involuntary how can it be a ſin, ſeeing there is no conſent?* Hence an axiome of *Auſtins* is urged by the Papiſts (who would not have that luſt riſing up in us againſt our conſents, and antecedently to our reaſon and deliberation, to be truly & formally a ſinne,) *viz.* that *uſq; adeo peccatum eſt voluntarium malum, ut nullo modo ſit peccatum, ſi non ſit voluntarium*: and is it not another rule, *invincibilis ignorantia excuſat à toto*? To anſwer this: the Scripture makes the formall nature of a ſinne to lye in this, *that it be a tranſgreſsion of the Law*, as appeareth by *Johns* definition, 1 *Joh.* 3. whether it be involuntary or come from ignorance, that doth not take off from the ſinne. Hence we read that the *Jews* had their ſacrifices for their *ſinnes of ignorance*, Lev. 4. 12, 13. Lev. 5. 15. And *Paul*, Rom. 7. calls that ſinne, which yet *he would not, yea he hated*: And as for that of *Auſtin*, he himſelf did not underſtand it of originall ſinne, but of actuall ſinnes: and whether a thing may be ſaid to be voluntary, either *immediately*, becauſe directly and immediately willed by the will, or *mediately* and interpretatively, becauſe it is willed in the cauſe of it: and thus originall ſinne, and all the ſinnes that are committed out of ignorance, error, inadvertency, they are voluntary in the *remote cauſe*, and ſo cannot be ſaid to be committed without the will. And as for the other rule, *that invincible ignorance doth totally excuſe*, that may be true in ſome particular facts amongſt men, but *reſpectu juris divini*, or the Law of God, there cannot be any excuſable ignorance; for every man is bound to have a knowledge of Gods will, and ſo his ignorance whereby he ſinnes, is a privation of a rectitude that ought to be in every mans underſtanding. Thus you ſee, that ſinnes are ſinnes, becauſe a breach of Gods Law, though we many times know them not to be ſo; and therefore *David* by a holy caution and godly jealouſie doth pray againſt ſuch ſinnes.

Obſerv. A godly man ſhould be humbled for his unknown ſinnes.

Obſ. *It's the duty of godly men to be humbled for, and to deſire pardon of, not only the ſinnes they know and are convinced of, but even of unknown ſinnes*: He is to have an holy jealouſie, that ſome unknown ſinne, ſome undiſcovered ſinne do not damn him; it may be there may be more danger from theſe than known ſinnes, becauſe when diſcovered, they are more eaſily withſtood and ſtriven againſt; but an unknown enemy, or an unknown diſeaſe, doth eaſily kill, ſo an unknown ſinne may quickly deſtroy us.

Whence it is that a man may not underſtand his Sinnes.

To open this Doctrine, we ſhall firſt diſcover the grounds whence it may ariſe that our ſinnes be hid from us; *how it may come about that a man doth not underſtand his ſinnes*: And

1. From the wound that is upon a mans mind by originall ſinne.

1. *It ariſeth from that dangerous wound and diſeaſe, which is upon a mans mind by originall ſinne*: for although a godly man be renewed in his mind, and have his eye-ſalve, yet the Apoſtle ſaith, *we know but in part*. If the Philoſopher could ſay, that even in naturall truths, our underſtandings were but like *noctua ad ſolem, the Owls eyes to the Sunne*; how much more is this true, in Divine and heavenly things! No wonder then, if the godly lye in many ſinnes of ignorance, ſeeing they have knowledge but in part; and the Apoſtle in that comprehends his own ſelf, though *taken up into the third Heaven, and hearing things unutterable*. Yea and that in the time of the Goſpell alſo, when a greater meaſure of knowledge is vouchſafed. *Paul* thought his former time, a time of childhood; *he ſpake and underſtood as a Childe*: but yet, when he comes to ſpeak as a man, and childiſh things are done away, while he is in this life, *Paul* is not able to know all things by himſelf, and therefore he ſaid, *though he knew nothing by himſelf*, yet

yet therein he was not justified, because it was God that judged, 1 Cor. 4. 4. Oh then how humble and debased should Gods children be in their own eyes! for if they do and can understand such errors, and so much filthinesse in themselves, that they cannot indure and abide themselves, what would they do, if they could behold all their deformities?

2. *Therefore the people of God cannot see all the spots and blemishes that are in themselves, because of their self-love and self-flattery*; the reliques whereof are in the godly as well as other sinnes, yea sometimes they are too active: We see in *David*, concerning the matter of *Bathsheba*, how severe he was in judging the supposed man that was so injurious in *Nathans* Parable; and he was so farre blinded with self-love that he did not think he was the man. And thus *Judah* also in the matter of *Thamar* whom he had defiled, how zealous was he? *Bring her out to be burnt*, not considering that he was guilty of adultery. Now then if in grosse sinnes, a godly man may so farre love himself, and indulge himself, that he shall not know his errors, how much rather in sinnes more difficultly found out! Many sad fallings, and divers miscarriages the Children of God may run into; and yet have such a mist before their eyes, that they see nothing: Others they wonder and say, How dare such if they fear God, if they have felt the bitternesse of sinne, if they know what godlinesse meanes, allow themselves in such wayes! but though the godly see in many things, yet self-love puts a vail before their eyes in other particulars: What a cloud was upon *Jonahs* spirit, when the Lord expostulating with him for his disobedience and discontent, he saith to God himself, *I do well to be angry?* Here *Jonah* did not see his froward disposition; if he had, he would have said the clean contrary, I do ill to be angry; I abhorre my self, because I have been like a beast before thee O God: You see then, the people of God through self-love may be so farre transported, as that they do not only not understand their errors, but they justifie them, they plead for them; they say they do well. What need have we of *Davids* prayer to God, that he would prove him, and try him, if there were any doubt, or false way in him,

2. From self-love and self-flattery.

3. *Sinnes are many times hid from the godly mans eye, though he commit them, because he is not diligent and accurate in making a search of himself, and in an impartiall studying of his own wayes.* If any sinne be hid, as *Saul* was behinde the stuff, or as *Rahab* had hid the Spies, unlesse a man be very carefull to search, he shall think no sinne is there where it is. Hence it is, that the Scripture doth so often command that duty of *searching* and *trying*, of *examining* and *communing with our hearts*, now what need were there of this duty, but that its supposed many secret and subtle lusts lye lurking in our breasts, which we take no notice of? If then the godly would find out their hidden lusts, know the sinnes they not yet know, they must more impartially judge themselves; they must take time to survey and examine themselves, they must not in an overly and slight manner, but really and industriously look up and down, as they would search for theeves; and they must again and again look into this dark corner and that dark corner of their hearts, as the woman sought for the lost groat. This self-scrutiny and self-judging, this winnowing & sifting of our selves, is the only way to see what is chaff, and what is wheat; what is meer refuse, and what is indiring.

3. From neglect of searching and studying himself and his wayes.

4. *The people of God sometimes do not understand their sinnes, because of the great deceitfulnesse that is in sinne, it steales in upon us unawares.* Hence is that phrase, *Be not deceived*; and its called, *the deceitfulnesse of sinne*, Heb. 3. 13. It hath many secret wayes of insinuating; it is like a *Dalila*, it like *Jael* to *Sisera*; Sinne is a sweet poyson, it tickleth while it stabbeth: no wonder then, that a godly man may commit sinne and he not know it, for the first thing sinne doth, is to bewitch him, to put out his eyes, to take away his sense and feeling; to do to a man, as *Lots* daughters did to their father, make him drunk, and then he

4. Because of the great deceitfulnesse that is in Sinne.

doth he knoweth not what: Thus many kind of sinnes come with such pleasures or profits, or fair pretences, sutable to flesh and blood, that the delight and content they bring with them, make the godly for the present be secure, and they apprehend no danger at all; as *Joab* came with a kind salute to *Abner*, and thrust him under the fifth rib, while *Abner* thought of nothing but kindnesse. Thus it is with sinne, it comes smiling, it comes pleasing and humouring of thee, while it giveth thee that deadly stabb.

5. Because of custom and education.

5. *The godly do not understand many of their sinnes, sometime because of custom and education*: They have been alwaies brought up in such a way, they have alwayes been accustomed to such usages; now because they were never reproached, nor heard of the sinfulnesse of them, therefore it is, that they do many things without scruple or fear, which the godly of greater light and knowledge dare not do. Thus the Apostle, *Rom.* 15. speaks of some who were *weak in faith*, by reason of their education and custom to Jewish observances: They could not but make a difference between *meats* and *meates*, between *dayes* and *dayes*: This was their weaknesse, yet they could not presently be brought out of it; and our Saviour suppoteth this, in that admirable and prudent rule he giveth, *No man putteth new wine into old bottles*, &c. *Matth.* 9. 17. The meaning is, as appeareth by the occasion, No Minister that is wise, will suddenly presse high and more sublime duties to those that are yet weak, and through custom and education are not fit to receive such strong meat, but they must be prepared by degrees: It may fall out then, that some godly men do build hay and stubble upon the good foundation, and all the while, they think not, nor know its hay and stubble; and a great cause of this, may be custom and education: they have not been brought up under better knowledge, and where better instruction was to be had.

6 Because of their inward and immediate alliance with the heart of a man.

6. *Sinnes may be hid from the godly, because they are of a more inward and immediate alliance with the heart of a man*: They are the immediate issue and offspring of the soul; such are the thoughts, the notions, the aimes and intentions of our heart: such sinnes as these; because they are of a more subtle and close nature, a man doth the lesse discover them; whereas for grosse actuall sinnes, those a man may more easily be convinced of: If you ask then, What are those sinnes which a godly man takes least notice of? You will find, they are not grosse and outward transgressions, but *heart-sinnes*, the thoughts, the intensions, the motions of the soul; a world of these may passe through the soul, and be never examined; You see the Pharisees could quickly discern any of those Camels, those great, big sinnes, in a mans practise, but then those gnats they could swallow down without any pain at all, such were the sinnes of their hearts, They made the *outside of the dish clean*, but all the filth was within: Oh then how little do the godly understand of their heart-pollutions, the thoughts and intentions of their hearts; These are very undiscernable, you see the very thoughts and all other acts of the soul are hardly perceived, we hardly know when we think or will, much more then do we hardly discover the sinfulnesse of those actings of the soul: The Philosophers say; We cannot perfectly know the nature of *materia prima*, because of its imperfect being, it being the next thing to Nothing; and thus those motes that fly in the soul, we cannot discern them, unlesse in the Sun-beams, unlesse the Spirit of God by his word do enlighten our soules; though swarmes of these flies are in the heart, yet we perceive them not.

7 Satans Temptations.

7. *Satan he doth very busily assault the people of God and tempt them to sinne*: Now he hath no way sooner to overcome them, then by *casting a mist before their eyes*, or by his cunning devices *to beguile the godly*, so that they are not able to perceive the sinne, till it be committed: some have had a charitable thought of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, as if they might be saved for all that great sinne of theirs; but how comes it about, that they lyed and dissembled so much? how is it, that they did not perceive the sinfulnesse of it? It was because *Satan had filled*

filled his heart, Acts 5. 3. A learned Critick compareth it with that phrase of being *filled with the holy Ghost*, or faith; that as a man filled so, is strongly encouraged, and doth not consider the difficulty or dangers in his duty; so *Ananias* being filled with the devills suggestions, did not feel or fear any remorse of conscience, any anger of God, but was fully bent to sinne whatsoever came of it. We have also an instance in *David*, he will have the people numbred, though *Joab* do never so much dissuade: well, but when he hath done, then saith the text, *his heart did smite him*, 2 Sam. 24. 5. then he began to consider that he had sinned, and he was greatly afflicted because of it. But why did not *Davids* heart smite him before, that might have prevented much sinne? Its said, *Satan stirred him up to number his people*; so that as Juglers and conjurers they delude the senses, and make the appearances of things to be when, there are no realities; so the devil, through his wily and crafty temptations, knowing the godly mans disposition, and the fit occasions for sinne, doth so darken and becloud his judgement, that he is carried into the deep pit before ever he think of it.

8. The want of a sound and searching Ministry.

Lastly, *One great cause, why so much of the godly mans sinne may be hid from his eyes, may be the want of a sound and soul-searching Ministry*; That is the light, which makes us see those Toads and Serpents, that we could not discover before, 1 *Cor.* 14. 25. The unbeliever, that comes into the Congregation, while the word is opened, hath the thoughts of his heart manifested, and he falls down and worships God. Those that lived under the Pharisees teaching, would never have been convinced, that the thoughts and affections of the heart were breaches of Gods Law; they did not understand, that there was heart-adultery, and heart-murder, as our Saviour instructed them: What a world of sinnes may a people live in, for want of a sound and powerfull Ministry? for if when the light doth shine, men for all that *love darknesse more then light*, and they will presumptuously commit such sinnes, that they know to be so, how ready and active must they needs be in sinnes they do not know?

Use of Exhortation to the godly, That they be not confident in themselves, that they walk with an holy and godly suspition of themselves; If thou doest not find multitude of heart-sinnes within thee, even as the sea is full of creeping things, its not because they are not there, but because thou doest not perceive them: What *Jacob* said in another case, *Verily this is the house of God, and I knew it not*, thou mayest on the contrary say, Verily my heart is a lodge of unclean thoughts, of proud, earthly thoughts, and I knew it not. If *Peter* had been thus affected, the devil could not have tempted him to throw himself down from the high pinacle as he did.

Use of Terror, *to all those who live in known and convinced sinnes*: What, shall *David*, so greatly bewail, and so heartily beg the pardon of unknown sins? and art thou so obstinate in sinnes thy own heart condemneth thee for? *Father forgive them*, said Christ, *for they know not what they do*: but how shall we pray, Forgive them, for they know what they do?

SERM. XXIII.

Directing a Godly man what to do, who is afflicted under this Conſideration, that he cannot underſtand all his Errors.

PSAL. 19. 12.

Cleanſe thou me from ſecret faults.

WE have already diſcovered the Grounds, why ſinnes may be hidden from a godly mans eyes: We now come *to direct to theſe Duties, which are required of a godly man in this caſe*: For you will preſently ask; What then ſhall a godly man do, if theſe unknown ſinnes may be latitant in his breaſt? when he hath done all, yet he muſt ſit down with doubtings and uncertainties, ſaying, I may be damned for all my profeſſion hitherto; there may be a crack, a flaw, a leak in me, and I have not yet found it out: Is not this to bring the godly ſoul into ſuch a wilderneſſe that it can never get out again?

The next thing therefore is to direct to ſuch Duties, as are required of a godly man, afflicted under this conſideration, that he cannot underſtand all his errors: And

1. Humiliation for unknown Sinnes.

1. *Therefore it is thy duty, greatly to humble thy ſelf for all thy unknown ſinnes.* Never to confeſſe & bewaile known ſins, but at the ſame time alſo to go further, and acknowledge all that hidden and undiſcovered filthineſſe in thee. For as there is no man ſo learned, but he will bewail his ignorance in many particulars, *Hoc tantum ſcio, me nihil ſcire*, ſaid he, ſo there is no man ſo holy, but he muſt alſo acknowledge a great deal of unholineſſe which he doth not find out: ſo that he may in ſome ſenſe ſay, This is my godlineſſe, to bewail my ungodlineſſe. So *David* you ſee gives a patern in this verſe: neither can you ſay, This may prove a mock-humiliation, and I may thereby bewail a lye; for if I do not know of any ſin in me, it may be there is none, and ſo I ſhall bear falſe witneſſe againſt my ſelf, and God would not have me to believe a lye, that thereby I may ſeem to be humble: As ſome Papiſts expound that of *John*, 1 Joh. 1. 8. *If we ſay we have no ſinne*, &c. We muſt ſay ſo (ſay they) to teſtifie our humility, though it be not true: but the Apoſtle doth not ſay, If we ſay we have no ſin, there is no humility in us, but there is no truth in us, we do deceive our ſelves with a lye. Indeed if that opinion of ſome could be made out, That a man may attain to ſuch a perfection in this life, that he may be without ſin: then in ſuch a caſe, a man bewailing ſin not diſcovered, may bewail *a non entity, a lye*, But that Petition commended to every one in the Lords Prayer, *Forgive us our ſinnes*, doth evidently convince the falſhood thereof. Seeing then that the heart of a man, is never emptied of all this filth; ſeeing that fountain of blood is never dried up, he need not fear, by confeſſing the ſin he doth not diſcover, that he doth witneſſe falſly againſt himſelf, for there are the reliques and motions of all evil, ſtirring in every mans heart, as appeareth

eth, *Rom.* 7. which is called *the Law of ſinne*. Though therefore a godly man may not know what kinde of ſins they are which come from him, yet he is aſſured, that there are ſinnes in the generall. If indeed it were a Theologicall doubt, whereby a man might juſtly queſtion, whether any ſin were lurking in him or no, then he might put himſelf upon the venture of bewailing a lye: but though the particular ſins cannot be diſcovered or numbred, yet that there are ſuch, is without all doubt: Though *David* could not underſtand what his errors were, yet he did clearly underſtand that there were errors.

2. *As we are thus to bewail unknown ſinnes, ſo we are diligently to try and ſearch our hearts; that if poſſible we may bring every hidden ſin to light*; We muſt do as the Artificer that puts his mettall to the teſt or tryall, to ſee whether it be true or counterfeit, ſo muſt thou diligently and conſtantly examine thy actions, thy affections, thy intentions, thy heart, yea, all thou art and doſt, by the Word of God; Bring thy ſelf into the Sun-light continually: We read how the whole community of the people of *Iſrael* were chaſtiſed for *Achans* ſin, *Joſh.* 8. A ſin they did not know was committed, nor had they any hand in it, inſomuch that it is a great Queſtion among Divines, Why the whole body ſhould be ſo puniſhed for one mans ſin, which they did not know or co-operate in: but you ſee what way they were to find it out, by caſting of Lots, at laſt it came to *Achan* himſelf; Thus do thou by thy judging and ſelf-examination come nearer and nearer ſtill to find out every hidden ſin in thee; for if through thy negligence and ſelf-love thou art willing to cover and hide thy ſins from thy own eyes, never think then that thy heart is ſo upright as it ought to be: If thou wilt not underſtand thy ſins for fear they ſhould be a thorn in thy ſide and a grief to thy eyes, know, this is a great diſcovery of a treacherous and falſe heart. If with *Rachel* thou ſitteſt upon the Idols, and makeſt excuſes, be ſure that Text will find thee out, *He that hideth his ſin ſhall not proſper*, Prov. 28. 13. 2. Search the heart for hidden ſins.

3. As we are to make diligent ſearch for ſins that may be *lurkant in our breaſts, ſo we are to ſtir up our memory, and to look back to our former lives*, that ſo we may know and bewail thoſe ſins which are wholly forgotten by us; for in this reſpect many ſins are hidden from knowledge; They have been committed many years ago, in our youth time, in the dayes of our vanity and preſumption: Now it may be thou haſt never had ſuch ſins in remembrance; To this very day they have not been matter of bitter complaint unto thee, and truly the people of God who are once wrought upon by Gods grace, and put into theſe ſpiritual travels of ſoul, may greatly be affected with thoſe particular ſins that lie heavy upon the conſcience; but then for many other, eſpecially if long ago committed, they are wholly forgotten; ſo that through forgetfulneſſe there is many a ſin we take no notice of: *David and Job* did both complain that *God made them poſſeſſe the ſinnes of their youth*; and thus the godly ſhould bring to remembrance all the vanity of their former daies: it may be many a ſin, many a debt is there in Gods Book that is not yet cancelled or blotted out; For you muſt know the Scripture tells us of a Book that God hath, wherein he writeth down all the ſins we commit: Now it may be there are ſins that are forty or thirty years ago committed, and God hath them down in his Book, but thou haſt clean forgot them as men do old debts, thinking they are paid when they be not; Oh then let the people of God, if they would know all their ſins, caſt their eyes to their former courſe of life; what hath been done by thee many years ago, when a childe, when grown up? It may be, if thou ſet thy ſelf to it, many things may come to thy memory which thou haſt forgotten: We read of *Joſephs* brethren, that they remembred their ſins againſt *Joſeph* many years afterward, and then their conſciences become to be troubled, which before ſeem ſtupified: and thus you muſt know that all ſin once committed ſtands unblotted out, and is as ready to damn though it be many years ſince it was committed, as if it was but yeſterday; 3. Look back to our former lives.

yesterday; Time that eateth up all things, and devours the strongest things, yet cannot consume sin, but the guilt of that is as vigorous and damning after many years as if committed but the last hour; so that if the godly would understand their errours as much as may be, let them reflect upon former daies, let them cast their eyes back, and there they shall see many grievous and bad things, it may be; As *Jacob* got a lameness in wrestling which made him go halting all his life time; It may be thou hast got such a wound by some sin that may make thee go halting, bowed down and troubled all thy life time.

4. Take notice of a twofold Repentance.

4. *You are to take notice of a two-fold Repentance, the one is expresse, formall, and particular: the other is implied, virtuall, and habituall.* 1. An expresse Repentance is, when the sinne is known, mentioned, and sorrowed for, by particular naming of it. As when *David* bewailed his *blood-guiltinesse*, when *Peter* upon his denying of Christ went out, and *wept bitterly*; and the Apostle he reproveth some *Corinthians*, fearing left when he came, he should not find them humble for their uncleanesse, lasciviousnesse, and wantonnesse, 2 *Cor.* 12. 21. *Paul* required an expresse direct repentance of those sins in particular, by confessing and mentioning the particular vilenesse and lothsomenesse of those sins. 2. There is a virtuall and habituall Repentance, whereby a man is prepared and ready to repent of and forsake every sin that he shall be convinced of and therefore doth in the generall confesse all those sins that may be lurking within, and yet he not discover them, This *David* in the Text speakes of, and supposeth in other places where he praieth that God would *prove him* and *try him*, if there were any falshood in him: Thus among the Jews there were sacrifices for such sins that they were ignorant of; and this whether it were for a particular person, or for the whole Congregation, *Numb.* 15. 22. so that those sacrifices were by way of caution, or jealousie, that no sin might rest unforgiven unto them; Thus if a man do really repent of what sins he doth know, and hath a prepared habit of heart to repent of and forsake all other sins when he shall be convinced of them; This man takes the direct way for his peace and comfort.

5. Pray for the pardon of hidden sins.

Hence in the fifth place, Let the childe of God when thus bewailing and examining, and habitually prepared to repent, *earnestly and importunately pray unto God for the pardon of those hidden sinnes:* As we see *David* here in the Text doth; for if you are only humbled for them, and sue not out for a pardon, you leave your work half done, you do but go one mile, where you ought to go two, and this is the very direct duty in the Text; whensoever upon diligent examination thou findest there are still many more sins then thou art able to discover, Then go to God saying, O Lord I know there are many rocks in the Sea of my heart, which because covered by water I may not espy, and so be in danger to split my self; There are many secret and hidden diseases in my soul, which I cannot find out; Oh therefore forgive what I know and what I know not, *Cleanse me from open and secret sinnes*; Its a trouble and a heavy grief to me that I cannot find out all, that still there is more abomination in me then I can discover; but they are not secret or hidden to thee though to me: Thou knowest them though I do not, and therefore O Lord, *cleanse me from them*: Now there are many encouragements why thy faith should be strong to believe God will pardon such secret sins to thee.

Encouragements for faith to believe the pardon of secret sins upon a general Repentance.

1. They are sins of daily infirmity.

First, *Because they are the sinnes of daily infirmity coming from us, and for these God giveth a daily pardon:* They are pardoned of course to the godly; *If we sinne we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*, he doth there especially relate (though not excluding other sinnes,) to such sinnes as through ignorance and humane frailty we cannot possibly escape: *Solomon* saith, who is there *that sinneth not*, 2 Chro. 6, 36. and *James*, *In many things we offend all*,

all, Jam. 3. 2. and *If we ſay we have no ſinne we deceive our ſelves*, 1 Joh. 1. Now many of the godly are preſerved from groſſe ſinnes; they may of a truth ſay, no ſuch ſins are in them, but then there are daily ſins of weakneſſe, and the ſtirrings of corruption in their hearts; Now theſe God doth conſtantly pardon upon a generall Petition: He knoweth our ſinfull temper, that we cannot live without this droſſe, and therefore he renewes his forgiveneſſe every day; *But there are other ſins of a more groſſe and notorious guilt, if a godly man fall into any ſuch, there muſt be a more ſolemn & renewed Repentance.* There muſt be earneſt ſuing out of a more particular pardon, as we ſee in *David* and *Peter*. Though God can as eaſily forgive great ſinnes as leſſe ſinnes, yet he requireth greater things of us in the way to have pardon for one then the other; Even as we read of Chriſt, that though he could by a word cure all diſeaſes as well as ſome, yet in ſome, as in raiſing of *Lazarus* and others, he manifeſted more expreſſions, as if in it ſelf it were a greater work though all one to him; So then thou maiſt well hope to ſpeed: for although there be no ſins veniall, ſuch as for their nature are ſo little that they do not deſerve hell, yet God hath ſo graciouſly ordered, that ſuch ſhall not hinder the uſe and claim of his grace and pardon; They are not ſuch for which God will bid thee keep out of his ſight, as *David* did *Abſalom* for his rebellion; but he is willing to forgive and communicate his favours though thus unworthy.

Secondly, *Thou muſt have a lively faith in ſuch Petitions, becauſe thoſe ſinnes are done ignorantly*, for though ignorance doth not excuſe *à toto*, yet it doth *à tanto*: God doth the rather pitty when we do not know our ſins, if in the generall we bewail them: *Paul* ſaid, *God had mercy on him becauſe he did it ignorantly*, 1 Tim. 1. 13. and Chriſt prayeth, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they they do*, Luk. 23. 24. If then God be ſo gracious as to forgive ſins, though of knowledge and willingly committed, when truly humbly ſor, then no doubt he will pardon hidden and ſecret ſins, where he ſeeth an heart prepared to repent of them, if he knew them; Let not then the godly be dejected under this Truth; Oh there may be more ſin in me then I am aware of, I may be damned for what I know not; Oh this cannot be, as long as thou makeſt theſe generall Petitions unto God, and canſt ſay with *Eliphaz*, *What I know not teach thou me, and if I have offended I will do ſo no more*, Job 20.

2. Theſe ſins are done ignorantly.

Now to this doctrine or truth, That a generall Repentance is enough for unknown ſins, we muſt add a caution or two: As

1. *This will not hold when we are wilfully and induſtriouſly ignorant of our ſinns:* When men will not underſtand that they may do well, then this is a groſſe and an affected ignorance: very likely the Phariſees and chief Prieſts in Chriſts time did not know that to be true which our Saviour laid to their charge, *That they were ravening Wolves*, that their inſide was altogether foul and unclean; but were they excuſed becauſe they thought not of ſuch pollution within themſelves? No, in no wiſe, for they were willfully ignorant; *If I had not come unto them, they had had no ſinne*, ſaith Chriſt, yet becauſe they ſaid, they did ſee and know, therefore their condemnation was the greater; So *Joh. 9. For Judgement I came into the world, that thoſe which do ſee might be blinde, and the blinde might ſee.* Underſtand in what caſe this is true, *viz.* when we are diligent and deſirous to finde out every hidden ſinne; we pray, we ſearch, we bring our ſelves to the light that every thing may be manifeſted, then God is ready to pardon: but if you refuſe the light, are willing to cover and hide your ſins, then the Scripture ſpeakes of ſuch as more certainly deſigned for deſtruction. Do then as the blinde man, *Joh. 9.* Chriſt asked him, *If he did believe in the Son of God: Who is he, Lord*, ſaith the man: ſo, Doſt thou underſtand and know thy errours? Which are they Lord? ſay, If I knew them I would abhor them.

2. *Theſe*

Those sinnes that are hidden to us are the more easily pardoned, which are in their own nature lesse discernible: but if they be sins of such a grosse nature that their guilt may be easily found out, then we are the more inexcusable in such: If a man should think his swearing, his drunkennesse, his lusts were not sinnes; This would not help him, to say, I did not know it was a sin to do so or so, for seeing by ordinary diligence thou maiest come to find out these sins. Therefore this fig-leafe will not cover thy nakednesse: No, thy sins are so great, that every eye may see them, such Camels they are that his throat must needs be very wide that can swallow them and not feel them.

3. *Our secret sins will be the sooner forgiven when we have not the means and occasions to finde out the true nature of them*; Thus the Apostle saith, *They that are without the Law shall be Judged without the Law*: And thus our Divines say, Negative belief doth not damn; The Heathens shall not be damned for not believing in Christ, because they have not the meanes to know this duty.

4. If thou dost not perceive thy sins from a stupidity and customarinesse that thou hast in sin, then this doth not excuse but aggravate; As *Aristotle* saith of a drunkard, what mischief he doth in his drunken fits, though he knoweth not, yet he deserveth a double punishment, because he willfully put himself into such a senselesnesse; The Apostle *Eph.* 3. speaks of some who were past feeling, and others of a seared conscience; and our Saviour tells us of some that had eyes by but did not see, hearts but did not understand; now these men committed sin and they did not feel it, or consider of it: but this aggravated their wickednesse, and not lessened it.

Use. Use of Admonition, to be acquainted with our selves, fear thy unknown sinnes; were thy eyes opened, it may be thou wouldst see armies of lusts coming against thee out of thy own breast: Take heed of self-love and flattery, especially of hiding and covering thy sins, that will not prosper long, God will set them in order before thy eyes; what is not known now, will one day be manifested to all the world.

SERM.

SERM. XXIV.

How and by what means the Grace of God keeps Godly men from grosse and presumptuous Sinnes.

PSAL. 19.13.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sinnes; let them not have dominion over me, &c.

Although my purpose in pitching on this Text was to make a further inquiry into that depth of wickednesse which is in every mans heart, and to direct the godly under their sad temptations in the considerations thereof; yet I cannot but peruse the next verse, which is another particular of *Davids* petition, arising from the former sad comp aint he made, *ver.* 12. so that it would be unmercifull (as it were) to separate these two particulars so nearly linked together. Come we then to the second petition that *David* breaketh out into so heartily, from the serious consideration of that unknown evil in him, which is in the Text, *against presumptuous sinnes. David* is afraid some unknown sparks of this fire may at last break out into a terrible flame, these Cockatrices egges may for want of discerning hatch flying Serpents: So that as the former petition was for pardon, so this for power and strength against sinne. Surely this Text, as it is a faithfull saying, so worthy of all humble and trembling considerations; for it teacheth the godly that it is not their power, their care, their industry, but the meer grace of God that keeps them from most presumptuous and arrogant sinnes: Its not a *Cain* or a *Judas*, not a monster of men, that praies thus to be preserved from daring and bold sins, but *David* a godly tender man, bewailing the sinnes he did not know; how farre then would he be from wilfull, known sinnes?

In the petition consider, 1. The prayer. 2. The object matter of the prayer. 3. The modification or qualification of the matter, in what sense he desireth to be preserved from such sinnes. 4. The consequent benefit and advantage.

I shall take these particulars in their order: and first of the prayer it self, *Keep me from presumptuous sinnes.* That mercy he petitioneth, is, to be kept to be preserved from grosse sinnes. The Hebrew word doth signifie what a proclivity and inclination there is even to the worst of sinnes, if the Spirit of God doth not keep and restrain, even as the horse without a bridle, would rush into all violence. So that it implieth even the very godly have such untamed and unruly hearts, that, unlesse the Spirit of God put a bridle upon them, they would sinne in a bold and presumptuous manner. Observe,

Observ. The meer grace of God preserves even godly men from presumptuous sins.

That its not the godly mans own care and indeavours do preserve him from horrible presumptuous sinnes, but Gods grace meerly. *David* himself is a sad instance of this, for although he thus affectionately doth here pray unto God, yet in the matter of *Uriah*, we there see many grosse and deliberate counsells, to accom-

pliſh his deſigned luſts, Oh there the *Philiſtims* were upon this *Sampſon*, and his ſtrength was gone; there, preſumptuous ſinnes did ſo while prevail over him.

Before we come to ſhew what is the particular manner whereby the grace of God keeps the godly from preſumptuous falls, you muſt take notice that God may ſo preſerve a man from ſinne two waies, either *externally* or *internally*; externally by meer reſtraint, or ſome mighty interpoſition of God, as we ſee in the matter of *Abimelech*, whom God kept from violating of *Sarah*: and thus he did keep *Jeroboam* from doing violence to the Prophet, by cauſing his arme to wither: and thus in the generall, God by his providence doth reſtrain all the malice, and pernicious purpoſes of wicked men; he keeps them from ſinnes, ſuch as they incline unto, and ſtudy to contrive but cannot, even as he hath put bounds unto the ſea, that it doth not overflow the banks. Thus he is ſaid *to faſhion the hearts of men, to put hooks into their noſtrils*, and that *it is not in man to order his own waies*: yea thus God reſtraineth the devills themſelves, that they cannot do ſo much wickedneſſe as they deſire. Its the obſervation of a Learned man, that *Julian*, who did ſo much deſire to foreknow things, and accompliſh deſignes, by compact with the devils, yet could never obtain his deſire. Now God keeps theſe from ſin, not out of any love to them, but to his Church and the world, that humane ſocieties be not deſtroyed, and his Church overwhelmed. Of this kind of reſtraint from ſinne, as when a Lion or Maſtive dog are tied up from doing hurt, I do not intend to ſpeak; but of a gracious and ſatherly preſerving from ſinne, which God vouchſafeth unto the godly, becauſe of the Covenant of grace, and that his love is fixed on them; and its good to conſider wherein the particulars of this grace do ſhew themſelves.

God graciouſly preſerves his people from ſinne.

1. By internall helps, as

As firſt, *Its ſeen in ſome remarkable things internally, and then externally.* The particulars whereby God works on the ſoul, ſo that a godly man is preſerved from ſinne, are many: And,

1. By illumination and conviction.

1. *A clear illumination and conviction of the heart concerning ſinne, the nature of it, the aggravations of it, and the woefull conſequents thereof.* This clear light of the minde is apt to produce great heat in the heart; yea its the opinion of ſome Learned men, That the practicall dictates of the underſtanding are ſo forcible and cogent, that the Will doth neceſſarily follow in obedience. But that I cannot ſubſcribe to; howſoever this is certain, That clear and certain illumination of the minde is very apt and potent to turn about the whole heart; and therefore in converſion, God doth firſt give light to the *underſtanding*, and the Spirit of God doth firſt *convince of ſinne, and then of righteouſneſſe*. Hence it is that *David* doth ſo often pray to have his *eyes opened*; and the Church is adviſed to get *eye ſalve*, Rev. 3. as a ſpeciall way to recover out of ſinne; even as on the contrary, darkneſſe in the underſtanding, and blindneſſe of minde, doth cauſe men to ſtumble and fall; therefore wicked men are ſaid not to know God, becauſe the *acknowledging of truth after godlineſſe*, would make new heavens and a new earth, as it were, within us.

2. By corroborating and ſtrengthening the Will againſt ſinne.

2. *Gods grace keepeth us from willfull ſinnes, by corroborating, and ſtrengthening the will, that it will not eaſily yield and conſent unto ſinne.* And this is a precious mercy, when our ſtrength is not departed from us. The Apoſtle prayeth that they may be *ſtrengthened with grace in the inner man*, Eph. 3. and he ſaith, *He can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens him*. It's weakneſſe and feebleneſſe of heart many times, that makes the godly fall into the mire: *Peter* wanted ſpirituall fortitude within, when he denied Chriſt. Thoſe then whom God preſerveth from preſumptuous ſinning, he vouchſafeth courage and boldneſſe unto them; they are like *mount Zion*, Pſ. 125. 1. that the windes and ſtormes cannot fix them out of their places.

3. *Grace*

3. *Grace preserveth from presumptuous sinnes, by making the heart tender and pliable, mollified and soft.* As at our first conversion God removeth the *stone* out of the heart, and giveth it tenderneſſe and ſoftneſſe, ſo that we may not apoſtatize or fall off from God again, ſo it preſerveth the ſame tenderneſſe in us. *Joſeph's* heart was in a tender, ſenſible apprehenſion when he ſaid, *How can I do this and ſinne againſt God?* On the other ſide, the more benummed and ſtupified any mans heart is, the more deſperate a man is in ſinning. There is no wickedneſſe ſo hainous, but an hardened heart dares commit it, as we ſee in *Pharaoh* and the Jews: And on the other ſide, there is no ſin ſo little, but a tender heart is afraid of it, as we ſee in *David*, when he *cut off Saul's garment*; and in the matter of that *water*, he would not drink it, for which men had *jeoparded their lives*; ſo that there is no ſuch ſure antidote againſt the plague of all ſinne, as to keep the heart tender, and apt to feel the weight of the leaſt ſinne; for if little ones be a burden, how much more will greater ones be? 3. By making the heart tender.

4. *Grace doth preſerve the godly from preſumptuous ſinnes, by daily quickning and enlivening the principles of grace to the actuall exerciſe thereof.* So that while they are in conſtant operation, all ſinne and iniquity is ſhut out. We have heretofore told you, that beſides the principles of grace, inherent in us, there needeth a daily exciting and quickning of Gods grace alſo, without which a man may commit great and grievous ſinnes, notwithſtanding that root within: Indeed its ſaid, *He that is born of God, cannot commit ſin, becauſe the ſeed abideth in him*, 1 John 3. 9. but that is meant of ſuch habituated and rooted ſin, that is incompatible with godlineſſe: otherwiſe the ſeed of grace was in *David* and *Peter*, notwithſtanding that groſſe graduall apoſtacy; as there is hidden life in trees, though in the midſt of Winter they ſeem dead: but when this ſeed of grace is quickned and ſtirred up, then ſinne doth the more difficultly enter: The ceſſation therefore or the ſleep of grace, makes ſuch a ſad confuſion in the whole man, as Chriſt's ſleeping in the Ship. Hence we have *David* praying ſo often, that God would *quicken him*; when therefore the godly would be kept pure and free from every arrogant tranſgreſſion, let them pray, that the grace of God may be breathing and allwaies blowing upon them; let them deſire that the Spirit of God may do that to their ſouls, which *Eliah's* application of himſelf did to the dead childe, never leave till life and breath come into them. While the ſtreames of water flow and are in conſtant motion, they are preſerved pure and clear, but when made a ſluggiſh pool, then frogs and toads breed in them: The daily breathing of grace upon the heart, are like the winnowings of the Corn, that drive away the chaff, like the filing of Iron, that keeps off all the ruſt. 4. By inclining the principles of grace unto a ſualexercise.

5. *God by his grace doth inwardly preſerve from ſinne, when he ſtirreth up thoſe two great affections in a right manner, viz. the Love of God and the Fear of God, both which will ſtrongly reſiſt any luſts of ſinne.* The love of God and Chriſt, where that is ſhed abroad in the heart, doth conſtrain a man to duty, 2 *Cor.* 4. As ſhe ſaid to *Sampſon*, *How canſt thou ſay, thou loveſt me, and yet wilt not diſcover this thing to me?* So doth God lay, How canſt thou ſay, thou lovest me, and yet do ſuch things as offend me? When Chriſt would put *Peter* upon all his duty, he ſtill asketh him, *Peter Loveſt thou me? John* 21. 16. *Loveſt thou me?* as if wherſoever the love of God were, there would be a conſtant care to do all things pleaſing to him. And what was it that made *Abraham* ſo willingly *offer up his only ſon*, in all thoſe aggravations of his obedience? it was only love; *Now* (ſaid God) *I know thou loveſt me.* Thus while the heart of a man is kept up with hot burning love of God and Chriſt, being exceedingly raviſhed with all the gracious effects of the Goſpel, he can no more cloſe with ſinne, then the fire can freez a man. And as *love* is thus potent, ſo the *fear of God* in an holy and due manner, is an admirable preſerver of the ſoul from ſuch preſumptions: The Midwives *feared God*, and that made them not obey *Pharaoh's* cruel commands, *Exod.* 1. 5. By ſtirring up the love of God and the fear of God.

Exod. 1. So *Nehemiah* carried himself in that holy and gracious manner, not exacting and oppressing, as other Governours had done, because *he feared God*, Neh. 5. 2. and God promiseth to *put his feare in our hearts*, that so we may not depart from him, *Jer.* 32.

6. By keeping up our faith.

6. *One main and principall manner by which God keepeth from sin, is by keeping up faith in us*: He keepeth us by keeping faith in us: We have a full instance of this concerning *Peter*, *I have prayed*, saith Christ, *that thy faith may not fail*, *Luke* 22. 32. Why his faith? because as long as that was operative and working, so long sin would be subdued. When we lose faith, we are, as *Saul* that lost his spear, all our power against sin is taken away, the gates are then set open, the enemy may come in when he will: Therefore the Apostle above all things bids us *take the shield of faith*, *Ephes.* 6. The devil, though a roaring lion, runneth away when faith is put forth: As it's said, *Christ could do no miracle in a certain place*, *because of their unbelief*, Mark 6. 5, 6. he could not, *i. e.* he would not: but here the devill can do nothing against the godly, because of their *faith*: Even fiery darts are quenched by this faith, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *We are kept by the power of God through faith.*

7. And delight in that which is good.

Lastly, *God preserveth us, by affecting with a sweet and delightsome frame of heart in what is good*: He puts such joy and peace in our spirits, that we easily see every sin comes to tempt us to our losse: we are better as we are, Gods loveing kindnesse is better then life; many live, but are weary of life, cry out for death; yea the damned live, therefore Gods loving kindnesse is better then all.

II. Outward helps.

Thus you see how the grace of God doth preserve from sinne by inward operation: Now let us consider what outward helps there are: And

1. The Preaching of the Word.

1. *The preaching of the word*, is blessed to the godly, as a speciall meanes against all sin; they finde the Ministry to be a continuall dropping upon them, that they should not degenerate into a wildernesse; they find this to be like blowing up coales alwaies upon the Altar of a mans heart; for if the word preached be so instrumentall to convert, and to put life at first into men dead in their sinnes; no wonder if it be effectuall also to quicken up, and inflame in godlinesse. *Ezek.* 18. you see a righteous man, by the Prophets warning, is kept from several transgressions, which would be his ruine, and the righteous man needeth warning as well as the wicked: In Paradise, there the ground needed not the clouds to drop on it, there came waters out of the midst of it to water that Garden: Thus in heaven the Ministry and these Ordinances will cease, but here all the godly need the instruction, and the reproof of it, and therefore the godly can no more live without it, then their bodies can be sustained without food. Thus the spirituall watchman makes them stand upon their guard, they find the Word preached a goad in their sides, and fire in their bosoms, that they cannot hold their peace.

2. By afflictions.

2. *God doth lay afflictions upon them to humble them and keep them low, and this is a speciall help against sinne*. *Before I was afflicted, I went astray*, said *David*, Ps. 119. 67. and *every branch in me, my Father purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit*, *John* 15. 2. So that God doth hereby preserve his people from presumptuous sinnes, by daily chastisements, by constant purifying them in the fire, or purging them by water: all the troubles and afflictions which come upon them are for this very end to mortifie sin; they are let blood to cool them of hot feaverish lusts.

3. By keeping from us temptations.

3. *God keeps them from presumptuous sinnes, by removing the temptations and occasions thereunto*. Oh should not God keep off the snare from us, many a time would the godly mans soul be indangered: Hence are we taught to pray so effectually, that God would *not lead us into temptation*; for little do we know

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what fuits such warm beames will presently inliven in us. It was a temptation of the eye did first undo *Eve*, and in her all mankind: It was a temptation that brought *David* into the mire, that cast down *Peter* so grievously, our hearts are as stubble, when the sparking fire of a temptation falls upon them.

Now the ground why Gods grace, and not the godly mans wisdom or power, doth preserve him from such apostacy, is, *Because of those reliques of lusts that do still cleave to every regenerate man.* This hair of *Samson* would grow again, and be as strong as ever, if God did not daily help and preserve: In heaven indeed there will be no need of this petition, no fear of such sinnes, because that flux of blood will be dried up, but here as long as the nest and womb of sinne is, there will be lusting and conceiving, and bringing forth. We see what confidence *Peter* had of his love and perseverance, yet he grossely fell, not knowing how quickly those sparks would break out into a flame; its grace therefore that keeps that old wound from festring and increasing.

Reasons why a godly man cannot keep himself from presumptuous sinnes.

1. Because of the reliques of sin left in them.

Use of Exhortation to the godly. Write after this copy which *David* hath set us. Doth a man after Gods own heart so affectionately pray against presumptuous sins? Take heed then that God doth not leave thee, be jealous of thy self, desire the Spirit of God to be alwaies breathing upon thee; Into what dungeon maist thou not fall, In what mire maist thou not quickly be wallowing, if the grace of God uphold thee not? Take heed of grieving this Spirit of God which putteth all life and strength into thee: When you see men grow secure, loose, and careless about duties, or sin, then think such an one is a Tree removed from the waters side, first, his fruit will fall, and then his very leaves; first his godlinesse, and then the very profession and name of it.

Use.

SERM. XXV.

Of Presumptuous Sins that God's People should chiefly pray against.

PSAL. 19. 13.

And keep me from presumptuous sinnes: that they prevail not over me.

THe next thing in order to be considered is the object matter of this Petition, *viz.* presumptuous sinnes.

As in the verse before, we told you in the Originall was only *secret* or *hidden*, our Translators adde *faults*, so here in the Hebrew is only *presumptuous* or *proud*; for many do translate it, keep me a *superbis* from proud and arrogant waies: Hence some Commentators think the Psalmist speaks of persons and not of sinnes, as if he did pray to be delivered from proud and arrogant persons that they might not domineer over him, but the context doth easily confute this: Therefore our English Translators do well supply *sinnes* for a Substantive to that Adjective *presumptuous*; now what presumptuous sinnes will appear in the pursuing of the doctrine, which is, That though a godly man cannot be without sinne in this life, yet he is greatly to be afraid of presumptu-

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our sinnes, or rather thus, *There are sins of presumption which a godly man is especially to pray and watch against*; These are such spots that should not be in God's Children; and indeed it's disputed whether the godly can fall into presumptuous Sinnes, so that they should reign over him: but this will appear in the sequel.

Observ.

I shall at this time discover the nature and ingredients, or concomitants of presumptuous Sinnes.

What sins are presumptuous sins.

And first, *Presumptuous sinnes are usually committed against full and clear knowledge and conviction of conscience*: When men are convinced in their conscience and informed, These things that I do are Sinnes, I venture the damnation of my soul by such unlawfull waies, this man sinneth presumptuously: Thus the Sinnes of the Pharisees were presumptuous Sinnes because they did obstinately rebell against that clear light Christ discovered, They could not tell what to say, They were often convinced, & yet they would maliciously oppose him, so that ignorant & weak people are not so apt to throw down themselvs headlong this steep hill, as men of knowledge and understanding are; Oh that the ears would tingle, and the hearts tremble of all such who live in Sinne against their knowledge and conscience! for is not this the case of thousands? Who are so blinded in judgement, so darkened in minde, that they know not those grosse waies they live in to be Sinne? Dost thou not know thou oughtest not to lye, swear, be drunk, deal unjustly? and yet thou runnest into such bogs; I tell thee to thy terrour, thy Sinnes are presumptuous Sinnes, Thou art a presumptuous Sinner, Thou that knowest the contrary, and thy conscience tells thee to the contrary, yet thou wilt violently passe on, Worse then *Balaam* in this respect, for he pressed violently on, and though the Asse dared not go on, yet still he endeavours to put forward, till he saw the Angell with a naked sword before him; Now thou wilt in a brutish and most unsavoury manner rush into thy Sinnes, though thou seest the naked sword before thee, though thy conscience discover the nature and filth of thy doings, yet thou wilt not give over; It had been better thou hadst never been a man, never been born, then to be such a presumptuous wretch; *He that knoweth his Masters will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes*, Luke 12.47. Hell will be heated seven times hotter for such proud and arrogant sinners as thou art.

2. Sins committed against full and clear knowledge & conviction of conscience.

Secondly, *The more willfullnesse and resolved deliberation there is in sinne, the more it is presumptuous*: When they cannot pleade excuses, bring pretences, but they will follow their lusts, as those to whom *Jeremy* preached, exhorting them *to turn every one from his evill way*, but they said, No, *They would walk every one after the imagination of his own heart*, Jer. 18. 12. What made the sinnes of the devill so hainous that God did cast them for ever into those chaines of darknesse? Even because they were meerly willfull in their Sinnes; They had no ignorance in minde, no perturbation by passions; There was no tempter to deceive them, as *Eve* had, but they sinned willfully out of meer and pure choice; That Text *Heb.* 10. 16. stands like a Beacon on the hill to awaken all: *If we sinne willfully after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, There remaineth no more sacrifice for sinne*, &c. I know this is applied by many to the Sinne against the holy Ghost, and so it is very probable, yet it also proveth that all willfull Sinnes committed with resolutenesse and obstinacy, are of a very bloody nature, and do endanger the soul in a very high degree; And yet how frequent are these presumptuous Sinnes, men sinning meerly because they will? The word is against them, God is against them, Their own consciences against them, yet men will rebell and disobey how dear soever it cost them; This is the condition of many of our hearers, look about you, see if it be not meer will and obstinacy that hurrieth many into these bogs of Sinnes, They willfully go after the imaginations of their own hearts: *Our tongues are our own, who shall controll*

control us? said the Psalmist, Was the presumptuous speech of some wicked men, *Psal.* 12. Sins of ignorance and involuntary sinnes committed without or against our wills, these cannot be called presumptuous.

3. *The more premeditation, deliberation, and studied contrivance there are to accomplish sinne, the more presumption there is in it*: Thus the Pharisees were presumptuous in their crucifying of Christ, for they plotted and contrived it: It was the design they had for a long while together; So *Josephs* brethren sinned presumptuously against him, because they made it their businesse; They consulted together how to betray the innocent: And on the other side where men are surprized suddenly, and they are led aside by those sinnes they never intended, yea, their purpose and prayers were against them, such do not Sinne presumptuously; Thus *Peter*, though his Apostacy and Fall was very dreadfull and terrible, yet because it was a sudden surprise; It was that which the fixed purpose of his heart was wholly against; therefore he did not Sinne presumptuously. Of a godly man we have no example of such premeditated and deliberate Sinning, as in *David*, we shall see him with all craft and subtlety studying how to accomplish most grosse Sinnes, which the very light of nature would condemn, and when he hath done them, we see him covering and excusing of them; Here was no sudden surprise upon *David*: He that at another time said, *His meditation was in the Law of God day and night*, doth as often exercise himselfe in the lusts of Sinne: Many times length of daies doth abate the fury of a lust, or there come in seasonable and powerfull considerations, like *Abigail* to stop *David* from his intended wickednesse; but if a man do not let once, but again and again, the Sun to go down upon his wickednesse, then this argueth the more presumption in his wickednesse.

3. Plotted and contrived sins.

4. *The more a man is free from all perturbation of passions, the more sedate and composed he is, and yet will stretch out his hand to wickednesse; the more presumption is in that sinne.* Sinnes done out of passion though they do not or ought not to excuse, yet they do diminish from the arrogancy and presumption in sinning: Thus *Aaron's* consent to make an Idoll, though a grievous Sinne, yet because over-powerd by the people, was the more excusable: *Moses* because his Sinne was through passion, God did forgive it, yet that it did not excuse, is plain, because God would not let him enter into *Canaan*: *Peters* denial of Christ was in a Passion of fear, but *Judas* had no passion upon him, he was in a composed quiet frame, and yet through the lusts of his heart did manifest himself so wickedly: Consider then, the lesse passion or perturbation there is upon thy soul, and yet thou art ready to spit thy venome; Thou wilt sting though not provoked; Here is the greater measure of presumption in thy rebellion.

4. The more free a man is from passion when he sins, the more presumption is in his sinne.

5. *The more men sinne that have no externall temptation either of pleasures or terrours, these have the more presumption in their sinne*: As passions and perturbations from within, so externall temptations from without do much take off from the presumption in sinning: for that temptations are mighty strong to overthrow even the godly as well as the hypocrite, appeareth by that speciall direction to pray against temptations and Gods speciall promise to preserve therein. *David* in many externall temptations and pressures that were upon him, runneth into many unlawfull shifts, yea, *Abraham* and *Isaac* by an externall temptation dissemble and equivocate, because of too much worldly fear within them: We reade in Antiquity of many Christians who grievously relapsed in the daies of those bloody persecutions, yet because such apostacies were extorted by tyrannicall violence; The Orthodox thought it their duty to receive such upon their repentance to Christian fellowship and communion; There is a great difference when a man sinnes from his own habituated principles in wickednesse, and from the over-powring force of some importunate temptation;

5. When they sin without temptations.

A temptation depriveth a man, for the time, of his own self: He is not the man he was, like *Noah* overwhelmed with too much wine, he knoweth not what he doth: You see Iron by the fire may be put out of its hard and intractable nature, you may bear it into this form or that form; And so it is here, even the most upright and true-hearted godly man may be quite put out from his genuine and true disposition, by some enticing or terrifying temptations.

6. When a man sins against expresse admonitions, commands and reproofs.

6. *The more a man sinneth against expresse admonitions, commandments, and reproofs, the more presumptuous he is in his sinning*, Such an one cannot pleade, that he had none to warn him, none to instruct him, and therefore when he sinneth he hath the lesse excuse; What made *Sauls* sinne in sacrificing and in sparing the fattest of the spoil, such a presumptuous Sinne; that it's said to be rebellion in a speciall manner, and such rebellion as was worse then witchcraft? Was it not because *Samuel* had given him expresse commandment to the contrary; so that the more powerfull admonitions, instructions, and reproofs thou hast to the contrary, the greater is thy presumption in disobeying, *Deut.* 1. 43. The people of *Israel*, are there charged for their rebellion, and that they went presumptuously up to the hill, and why so? when God commanded them not to go, and fight against their enemies, they would go, but *Moses* bid them they should not, yet for all this expresse prohibition, they went presumptuously, and smarted for their foolish rebellion; so that what heresie is in matter of doctrine, the same is presumption in matter of practice. After the first or second admonition, an erroneous person manifests himself to be hereticall, obstinate and selfwilled: And thus it is here; After severall reproofs and instructions, if thou still persist in thy wickednesse, let thy sinne be never so little, thou sinnest presumptuously in so doing; so that by this it appeareth, all those who live under the powerfull preaching of the word, where such sinnes as the auditory are most guilty of, are constantly reproved and condemned, such sinners are presumptuous Sinners, Oh consider this and tremble, all ye who have heard those particular Sinnes, those very lusts thou livest in, particularly mentioned; there is not a Sabbath day, a Sermon scarce, but brings thy Sinne to remembrance; know thou, that thou sinnest presumptuously, thou hatest reproof; Who is the Lord, or his messenger, that thou shouldst regard him? Oh beleeve it, Thou wilt find no excuse for thy self, God will judge thee as a presumptuous sinner: Thou art a presumptuous drunkard, a presumptuous curser and swearer, for these things have been often reproved and yet thou hast hardened thy neck: Take heed lest after this very Sermon and notice thou hast had, presumption be not in an higher manner laid to thy charge.

7. When notwithstanding his impenitency he promiseth happinesse to himself.

Then do we sinne presumptuously, when notwithstanding all our wickednesse and impenitency, we imbolden our selves, as if it would be well with us for all this: As if we should not be punished here, or damned hereafter, though we walk thus contrary to God. God hath commanded the Ministers of the Gospel to proclaim and say *to the righteous, it shall be well with them, but to the wicked it shall be ill with him*, but the presumptuous man he will not beleeve this, he thinketh God loveth him, and his blessings shall be upon him, though thus discovered in iniquities: and this is that indeed, which Divines do properly call presumption, when men do expect such a glorious and blessed end, yet never use or perform the meanes tending thereunto. Thus the devill tempted Christ to presumption, when he would have perswaded him to throw himself from the pinnacle: and thus *Moses* describeth such a presumptuous man, that when the threatnings and curses of the Law shall be read, yet he shall blesse himself in his heart saying; None of these things do belong to him, *Deut.* 29, 19, 20, 21 and who can mourn enough to see such grosse presumptuous Sinners every where? for thou who art a known sinner, what makes thee bear up thy heart? what causeth thee to go up and down with joy and boldnesse? why dost thou not cry out with fear,

fear, lest every night the devils do not come to fetch thy soul away? why art thou not afraid to tread on the ground, lest that swallow thee up? to be in thy house, lest the pillars thereof break and crush thee into pieces? Why art thou thus senselesse? Is not all because thou blessest thy self, and flatterest thy self, though God abhorreth thee? Oh when wilt thou judge thy self, and passe that censure upon thy condition, which God himself doth, were it not for sinfull presumption in thee thou wouldst be a trembling *Cain*, thy conscience and heart tells thee of all that wickednesse thou art privy unto, that were it not thou makest such false hopes to thy self, thou couldst not refrain a moment from crying out, Oh I fear I shall be damned, I shall be damned: Oh take heed then of this desperate presumption, which makes thy condition indeed hopelesse, while it is upon thee; though thou art full of vain and false hopes: Is it not enough to be such a brutish Sinner, such a notorious rebell to God, but thou must add presumptuous thoughts to all these things, saying, It shall be well with thee howsoever? Oh do not these abhominable things in such a presumptuous manner.

8. When men proceed in wickednesse notwithstanding Gods judgements are upon them.

8. *Then men sinne presumptuously, when notwithstanding Gods judgement are upon them, yet they care not, but proceed wickedly in their wayes:* and this must needs be a sure discovery of presumption; for if while the rod is upon the back, and the smart is felt, they will persist in their rebellion, what hope can there be, when the scourge is removed? Thus *Pharaoh* was an arrogant presumptuous sinner, for though God did severall times in such a dreadfull and unusuall manner punish him, yet he will not let the people go. Thus *Ahaz* was a presumptuous sinner, because under all his calamities, he yet added to his wickednesse; therefore the Scripture saith, *This is that Ahaz*, 2 Chron. 20, 22. that presumptuous incorrigible sinner! Oh then judge of your presumption by the afflictions God layeth upon you: If thou hast been often chastised, the hand of God hath been upon thee severall wayes, yea yet his hand is stretched out still, and thou for all this dost not care for these blowes, art not afraid, but venturest impudently upon thy Sinnes; then know, thou art arrived to an high degree of rebellion against God.

9. When men are habituated to do wickedly, that makes them sin presumptuously.

9. *When men have a long while accustomed themselves to any sinfull way, so that now they are rooted and habituated in it, this makes them sinne presumptuously:* Then they are become blackmores that cannot easily change their skin: when the devill hath possessed them from their youth up, then it must be much fasting and prayer that can dispossesse him; such mountains are a long while digging up and removing away: Sinne and the devill do by degrees strongly harden men; that as the devill possessing the bodies of men, filled them with boldnesse and presumption, making them runne into the fire and the water, thus when he filleth the heart of a wicked man, he maketh him bold to commit the vilest and most abhominable crimes.

10. Then men are presumptuous sinners when they boast and brag of their sins.

Lastly, *Then men are presumptuous sinners, when they boast and brag of their iniquities.* As *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* did proclaim their impieties, and the *Israelites* were not ashamed when they had done evill, but made their foreheads like brasse. Thus the whore is made by *Solomon* to be an impudent presumptuous sinner: And are there not many such hoggs and doggs, for to such the Scripture compareth them, that at noon-day will tumble in their mire? They have lost all shame and modesty: they boast of their ungodly deeds: they make a mock of their sins: they laugh at and despise all admonition.

Use of Instruction; Let it be thy fear, thy care, thy prayer, not to fall into presumptuous sinnes: How terrible and dreadfull this is, will appear by the next. In the mean time, know that all you who live in the customary committing of all known grosse sinnes, and that under the light of the Gospel,

you sinne more or lesse presumptuously; you cannot plead ignorance, temptations, passions, but its your habituated, rooted wickednesse, that driveth you thus headlong: If you had faith but like a grain of mustard-seed, it would make you other men: you could not hear so much, know so much, be convinced so much as you are, and yet committ such sinnes, but that high presumption doth reign in you. Well: at the day of judgement, or it may be in this life, when God shall set thy sinnes before thee, that lofty proud heart of thine will shake like a leaf.

SERM. XXVI.

The Ingredients and Aggravations of Presumptuous Sinnes.

PSAL. 19. 13.

And keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, &c.

YOu have heard what are presumptuous sinnes, and when men sinne presumptuously; let us now consider the ingredients or concomitant dispositions of those who do thus offend, because such bitter streams could not flow but from a bitter spring: It is a prave and ill-disposed heart that breaks out into such proud and arrogant actions; you may indeed see the outward conversation of this presumptuous Sinner, and lament over it, but the inward part of that man is farre more abominable: were his heart and inwards discovered these would be more vile, and horrid then any outward transgressions: And

Ingredients. 1. Pride and haughtinesse.

1. A notable ingredient to presumptuous sinning, is, *Pride and haughtinesse of minde*; these can never be separated, pride and presumption in offending. Hence the Hebrew expression to Sinne presumptuously, is with an *hand and heart lifted up*; as if they would say, Who is God, and what is he, that we should regard him? Thou couldst never act so much wickednesse in such an obstinate way; did not thy soul swell with pride, as the toad with poyson. The Scripture doth fully testifie this, *Isa.* 9. 9. Those that would build themselves houses in despite of Gods judgements, and whether he would or no, as it were, did intend to exalt themselves: All that they said to this purpose was in the pride and stoutnesse of their heart; so again *Jerem.* 27. 17. where the Prophet plainly and powerfully preaching unto them, saith, *If ye will not hearken, my soul shall weep in secret for your pride*, that was the cause and fountain of all. If therefore it be asked, Why is it, such men, though they hear so much, know so much, understand so much, yet will not humble themselves and submit to Christs commands? it is because of their pride and loftinesse, they know not how to stoop and yield unto God. Thus *Dan.* 5. 20. The Kings heart is said to be *hardened in his pride.*

2. Hardnesse of heart.

2. *Hardnesse of heart and senslesnesse*, that is another cause of presumptuous sinning; for what do such fear? what restraint is laid upon them? they have no bridle to keep them back: This is called *a seared conscience*, 1 Tim. 4. 2. that feeleth

feeleth no pain; such are said, *Ephes.* 4. 19. to be *past feeling*: Now a man that can feel no pain, if you lay firebrands to his naked flesh, he careth not; Thus it is with men presumptuously offending, discover unto them all the wrath of God, carry them to the very brinks of hell, bid them see and hear all the howling and raving of persons damned there, you move them not at all, for they are past feeling; these are Idol-sinners, that have *eyes and see not, hearts and understand not.* 2 Pet. 2. 10. those persons that are called presumptuous, are said to be also like *brute beasts*, that understand nothing: And are there not many sad objects of this nature every where, they are no more apprehensive or sensible of their sins, and the terrible aggravations of them, then the very brute beasts are: they get no more good by a Sermon, they are as stupid, and devoid of all understanding: Oh its no marvell thou makest such a sport and delight in thy sins, that thou biddest thy self eat and drink and be merry, and take thy mirth in this world, for thou art become like a brute beast, not only in thy filthy sins, but in thy grosse stupidity: where therefore we see a people, though great sinners, yet trembling at Gods Word, melting and ready to cry out because of Gods threatnings, here is some hope; but of all men, those are most incurable, who are bold and presumptuous to commit any grosse wickedness, and yet have no terrour or sense about it.

3. *Scorn and derision of all reproofs and wholesome admonitions*; This will alwayes accompany a presumptuous sinner, such were those scoffers and deriders that *Peter* speakes of, 2 *Pet.* 3. 3. who said, *Where is the day of his coming?* do not *all things continue as they were?* Its not enough with them to sin, but they make a mock and jeer even at the very Scripture, and the powerfull dispensation of those truths therein. Thus the Pharisees, who sinned with so high an hand, they despised and scorned at Christ; and the Prophet complaineth of those scorners, that mocked the Prophets with *the burden of the Lord*, *the burden of the Lord*, because the Prophets used it so often, *Jer.* 23. 34. As wicked men now adaies will mock at the name of hell and damnation, *&c.* because they hear of it so often; these are swine, that when men throw a pearl to them, they rise up, and tear the persons who do it. Oh take heed of sitting in the councill of these scorners, God will one day laugh and mock at their destruction, as *Prov.* 1. 3. Scorn and derision of all reproofs.

4. *Contempt of God and man*; this is involved in presumptuous sins, Contempt of God; for wherein can they manifest their despising of God and his commands more, then knowingly and willfully to do contrary to what he would have them? God told *Ely*, he *despised him, and honoured his sonnes*, 1 *Sam.* 2. 29. more then Him; and yet we cannot say, *Ely* sinned presumptously; how much rather then may we say of bold and obstinate sinners, They despise God, and they honour their base lusts before him? *Numb.* 15. 30. the man *that doth ought presumptuously*, is said *to reproach God*: There is a kind of blasphemy against God in every presumptuous sin, sometimes verball with the tongue, but alwaies reall with the hand: Oh that thou shouldest not fear, some remarkable and astonishing judgement should surprize thee, for thy drunkennesse is not only drunkennesse, but it's blaspheming drunkennesse, because committed so boldly; its a reproach and a contempt put upon God, and God takes it so from thee; Oh if there were but sparks and a grain of any grace or modesty in thee, thou wouldst not indure to be such a son of *Belial*. There is also contempt of Men, for they bear no respect to them, though they know such willfull wickednesse doth grieve the godly, afflict the heart of the godly Ministers, though their examples incourage others, and draw many to hell with themselves, yet they contemn all these things. Oh consider, that the wicked shall one day rise up to everlasting reproach and contempt; then God and the holy Angels, yea all the world shall reproach and contemn thee, as one adjudged to everlasting wrath. 4. Contempt of God and man.

5. Security.

5. *There is commonly security also in presumptuous sinnes.* Men applaud and blesse themselves, their hearts are cloted with fatnesse, all things are as they would desire, *Nihil infelicium homine semper felici.* And thus their great unhappinesse lieth in their happinesse: This made the Psalmist say of such, *They go down quick into the grave*, because their destruction is so sudden and unexpected, a whirlwinde taketh them away, while they were sporting themselves with sinne. Thus the old world was said to have corrupted all its wayes, before God, *Genes.* 6. 11. that is, in the very face and eye of God, they did not fear or dread his power, and then the flood came and swept them away, while they were eating and drinking, living in all manifestations of security: Thus presumptuous sinners are said *to make a covenant with hell and death*, Isa. 28. 15. as if these should not hurt them; and indeed a man could never be brought to sin presumptuously, were not the thoughts of death, hell, and the day of judgement quite stricken out of his minde: Take this bridle out of his mouth, and he will run headlong any steep hill.

6. Attributing much to our own thoughts and apprehensions, not believing the Scripture.

Lastly, *In presumptuous sinnes, we attribute much to our own thoughts, our own apprehensions, not believing the Scripture:* And this is especially seen in those presumptuous sins which are in matter of opinions and doctrines concerning Religion; for you must know, *That not only the grosse prophane sinner, may sinne presumptuously, but the false prophet, the false teacher, the heretique, he sinneth presumptuously*, because he doth boldly and impudently vent that for Gods truths, which are nothing but the impostures of his own heart. *Deut.* 18. 22. the false Prophet that foretold that which God had not revealed to him, is said *to speak presumptuously*, Thus 1 *Pet.* 2. those false teachers that bring in damnable heresies, are called *presumptuous, and self-willed:* And no wonder if this be called a presumptuous sin, for what can be greater impudence than to counterfeit this Divine Coin? to take away the live childe, and put a dead one in the room? to make our own fancies and carnall suggestions, divine revelations and inspirations? God would have the beast that touched the mountain to be stoned to death: but greater is thy presumption, *when thou makest thy own thoughts and opinions the Word of God, and thy own will a Law and a Bible to thy self.*

7. Shamelesnesse and boldnesse

We might adde another ingredient, which is, *shamelesnesse and boldnesse*, to have foreheads of brasse and iron, but that hath been touched on already.

The aggravations of presumptuous sin.

In the next place let us consider the aggravation of this presumptuous sinne: And

1. Its a daring God to do his worst.

1. *Its a daring, and as it were, braving God, provoking him to do his worst, what care they:* Therefore the Hebrew expression for a sin committed presumptuously is, *Before the Lord. Nimrod was a mighty Hunter before the Lord*, or in the face of the Lord. *Genes.* 38. 7. *Er, Judas* eldest son, was *wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord slew him:* Its not said what his sin was, Commentators have several conjectures; but that phrase denoteth, he was a bold, presumptuous, impudent sinner. Amongst men its accounted great presumption in their inferiours, if they offend while their superiours look on them; they care not though they see them: Oh then, let thy heart be at last filled with terror and amazement for thy wilfull wickednesse: Do not thou think God is an Idol God, that hath eyes and not see thee? Is he not able to be avenged on thee for thy reproach and contempt thou dishonourest him by? 1 *Cor.* 10. 22. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousie? are we stronger than he?* It's no dallying or jesting matter, thus to stirr up the wrath of God against thee; for if God hath been so terrible against sins of infirmity and passion or sudden temptations, and that in the very godly, as we see in *Moses, David, Eli* and *Uzzah*, how will his fierce anger break out implacably against thee, a daring and impudent sinner? Oh consider then, how provoking and imbittering your presumptions are of God against you.

2. *In*

2. *In the old Testament there was no sacrifice appointed for wilfull and presumptuous sinnes*; and that the Apostle alludeth unto, *Heb.* 10. when he saith, *If we sin wilfully, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin*: This I say alludeth to *Num.* 15. where after the sacrifices prescribed for the sins of ignorance, he nameth none for presumptuous sinners, but such must be immediately cut off; not that such sins upon repentance might not be pardoned, for then *David* did in vain pray for the pardon of his murder and adultery, because no particular sacrifice was appointed for such sinnes, only God hereby would demonstrate his hatred and wrath against such stout and stubborn offenders; to the terror and fear of others. As *Deut.* 17. 12, 13. The man that would not obey the Priest, he was to be *cut off for his presumption, that every one might hear and fear, and do no more so presumptuously.* This is the reason why no sacrifice was prescribed for such sins, but immediate death. They therefore are too rigid, and lay a necessary ground for irrecoverable desperation, who hold, all wilfull grosse sins under the time of the Gospel to be unpardonable, that *God* will not set open the door of grace for such to enter in, that there is no Ark provided for such; only such sins are not easily pardoned, they make a sad breach between *God* and the soul; they wast our comforts, they wound our consciences, they throw us into the depth of fear and perplexed thoughts within; why should not this then make cold at the very heart? those sinnes so easily, so frequently so constantly committed by thee, will hardly be washed away: It will cost thee many a sad hour, many a heavy temptation, frequent struglings and strivings, ere a reconciliation be made between *God* and thy soul.

2. The old Testament had no sacrifice for presumptuous sinnes.

3. *The presumptuous sinner makes himself a direct image of the devil*; only the devils sins are intellectuall, being the *spirituall wickednesses in high places*, and thine are bodily grosse ones; and wherein art thou become after his image and likenesse? even in this respect, he is already under torments and he knoweth greater one day will be inflicted on him; he is full of knowledge and clear apprehension of this enmity and malice against God and his way, yet for all this torment, and all this knowledge and light, he wilfully sinneth against God, and increaseth his condemnation; such a bodily devil is every presumptuous sinner; it may be severall plagues and punishments of God are upon him already, his knowledge, his conscience, his own heart is against him, saying, Remember for all this thou shalt come to judgement: and yet he wilfully and obstinately will runne into all wickednesse; where canst thou make thy self liker a devil then in this very respect? Oh its not so much sinne, as thy presumption and wilfulnesse in it, that makes thee in such an incurable disposition.

3. The presumptuous sinner makes himself a direct Image of the devil.

4. *This presumptuous sinning, is a great disposer to the very unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost*, as appeareth by the former place quoted. *Heb.* 10. Adde but apostacy, and a totall forsaking of the whole way of Christ, with despite and malice against Gods truth, and then this presumptuous sinner hath sinned the sin against the holy Ghost; so that presumptuous sinning, though it be not accompanied with a totall apostacy, yet it's putting thee into the way, if *God* stop not; if grace help not, thou art beginning to fall down that steep hill: Oh then take heed of wilfull sinnes, and sinnes against your clear light, for these at last may bring on despite and malice to what is good; This malice may bring thee to apostacy, and unto an implacable opposition to the holy waies of *God*; and when thou art fallen so farre, thou art come to the very bottom of all.

4. It is a great disposer to the unpardonable sinne.

5. *Presumptuous sinning hath this heavy aggravation, for its a sign and evident Symptome that the party so sinning is under a greater power of sinne and Satan then other men.* Were it not that the devil had filled thy heart, were it not that sin were roored in thee, and become thy very nature, as it were, thou couldst never harden thy self to such impiety; so that when you see a man go on in such presumptuous

5. Its a sign that the party so sinning is under a greater power of sinne and Satan then other men.

presumptuous waies, you may cry out, as the mother concerning her daughter, *Have mercy on me, for my daughter is greatly tormented with a devil.* The wife may pray for such an husband; Have mercy on me, for my husband is possessed with a devil: the father for such a childe; the master for such a servant: We may say to such, as *Peter* to *Simon Magus*, Oh thou childe of the devil, full of gall and bitternesse, thou hast no part in the Kingdome of God: Thou therefore who with all spite and contempt dost runne into the excessive waies of sin, nothing keeps thee back; know, that if sin and the Devil had not a great power over thee, thou couldst never be so obstinate.

6. Its puts a man into an incurable state.

6. *Such presumptuous sinning makes our condition miserable, because it putteth us into an incurable state.* There is no ordinary way to be washed from this filth, as it were, for being thus proud and obstinate, all the means that are applied can do no good. *Ely*'s sons, because presumptuous sinners, despised all their fathers counsels. The Jews, because presumptuous, made the Prophets complain, they had *laboured in vain, and stretched out their hands all the day long to no purpose*: yea they made Christ to weep over *Jerusalem*, Mat. 23, 37. *How often would I have gathered thee, but thou wouldest not.*

Lastly, *Therefore doth presumptuous sinning make a man so miserable, because wrath and condemnation will take them in the midst of all their security*: when they are least thinking of it, when they are in their prosperity, taking their ease, as it was with *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, as it was with the old world: Oh what a sudden change will *God* make in a moment upon such haughty sinners! Presumptuous *Belshazzar* in the midst of his jollity, seeth an hand-writing, and falleth into fears and trembling; their Sun setteth at noon day, and even while the flesh is in their mouthes, they are consumed.

Use. *Use of Instruction*, To take up a bitter lamentation for the wofull and wretched estate most men are in: and the more it is to be pitied, because such do not pity themselves, for where do ye not see places full of presumptuous sinners? what are all those prophane, grosse transgressions committed against the light of the Gospell, wittingly and willingly, but notorious Presumptions? Are not our streets, and many families full of such presumptuous sinners? Oh the patience and longsuffering of *God*, that giveth such any longer time upon the earth! Oh the goodnesse of *God*, that strikes thee not suddenly, that damneth thee not suddenly! Do not think long to dare *God* after this manner; his vengeance, though slow, will at last break thee into pieces, It behoveth *God* for his own name and honour to take notice of, and punish such bold offenders; Thou hast a time, a while, wherein thou satisfiest thy lusts, and dost accomplish thy desire, fearing nothing: but oh, what wilt thou do, when *God* ariseth terribly to shake thy heart and conscience! What mountains and hills shall then cover thee? Oh therefore get that mountain of thy heart to melt like wax, humble thy self betimes under the hand of the great and mighty *God*, agree with this enemy and terrible adversary of thine, while thou art in the way.

SERM. XXVII.

Of Sinne Reigning in a man, with the Signes and discovering Marks thereof.

PSAL. 19. 13.

Keep back thy Servant from presumptuous sinnes, that they prevail not over me.

THe third part considerable in this Petition comes to be treated on, *viz.* The Modification or Qualification of his Petition, or in what manner he would be thus preserved, and that is, *That sinne may not prevail over him*; That no sin may lord or master him, so that he should be a servant, and in continuall bondage to it, for seeing he cannot serve two such contrary masters, as God and sinne; If he love sin and subject himself to that, he doth thereby forsake and renounce God.

The *Psalmist* therefore takes it for granted, that while he is in this life, he cannot be without motions and instigations to sin, yet he desireth that these may not prevail to have dominion over him. Its with *David* as the Sea and the Land; The waters are higher then the earth, in all naturall considerations, the waters would immediately prevail over it to drown it, but God hath set bounds to it; and so it is here, There are daily workings of corruption, and strong inclinations to sin, even in the godly, and had they only their own strength, they would immediately be plunged into all filth, but grace supports and prevents. From this we observe.

That though the godly cannot be without sinne, yet they are earnestly to watch and pray, that sinne do not prevail over them. While we are in conflict and combate with sin, it will not be our ruine, but when we wilfully take these bonds and chains upon us, then sin will be our overthrow. The Maid that cried out, while any man violently assaulted her, was acquitted by *Gods* command; Hence *Rom.* 6. 12. the Apostle exhorts, *That we let not sinne reign in our mortall bodies*; he doth not say, Let it not be there, but let it not reign: Even as the *Israelites* could not wholly expell the *Jebusites* and *Canaanites*, yet they kept them under, they hindered them from reigning over them; so ought the children of *God*. There will be pride, carnalnesse, unbelief, moving and working in thee, only let them not reign over thee. The Apostle in that sixth Chapter, doth at large shew, how every man, till regenerated, is a servant to sin, and overcome by it, till the grace of Regeneration doth renew, and set us at liberty; but of this anon.

Observ.

Before we come to shew what are the signes and discoveries of sin reigning in a man, take notice of some particulars introductory.

Introductory Propositions to the point of reigning sin.

1. As first, *That there is originall sinne which by nature doth reign over all mankinde*: so that there was never any man (except Christ, God and man) which was not wholly under the power of it; This sin hath depraved all the whole man, deprived them of all their strength, so that whatsoever it bids us think, have, desire or act, that we immediately perform, so that as the godly are said

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no longer to live, but Chriſt in them; ſo much rather, every man by nature may be ſaid not to live, *but ſinne* in him. This the Apoſtle *Rom.*5. doth at large inſiſt on, declaring that ſin as the cauſe, and death as the effect, *have reigned over all.* This is the ſpirituall bondage all are in, under which we are all to groan more then the *Iſralites* under *Pharaohs* oppreſſion; and the leſſe it is a burden to thee, the more it ought to be, ſo that an *Anathema* may well be pronounced againſt all thoſe Doctrines that do wholly deny this bondage, or in a great part diminiſh it. This is like thoſe mad and diſtracted perſons, who though in priſon and chains, ſuffering in a wretched condition, yet fancy to themſelves Kingdoms and Nations that they are Lords over. Yea this bondage is in ſome meaſure ſtill in the godly, though regenerated, and they bitterly complain of this, as that which makes all their comforts to be like wormwood. *Rom.*7. *Paul* grieveth under this, as being *ſold under ſinne*, as a ſlave brought under the power of another againſt his will. Thus it is with the godly, *Cogitur motus ſentire*, though not alwayes *conſentire*, as *Bernard* ſaid; and *Gal.* 6. even the children of God do find the fleſh ſo farre prevailing againſt the Spirit ſometimes, that *the things they would not do, thoſe they do.*

2. Secondly, *Every unregenerate man till ſanctified, is not only under the dominion of originall ſinne, but under ſome actuall ſinne, or ſome one or divers luſts do reign over every unconverted man.* So (*Rom.*6.) all, before ingrafted into Chriſt, are ſaid *to obey ſin in the luſts thereof*, and (2 *Pet.* 2.) the Apoſtle ſaith, *Of whom a man is overcome, he is a ſervant unto.* Now there is no naturall man, but ſometimes one ſin, ſometimes another, yea ſometimes many do overcome him, *Quot vitia, tot domini*, the Heathen could ſay, So many vices, ſo many cruel Lords and Maſters. All unregenerate men have put their neck into ſins yoke, and are unwilling to have it taken off again; Though he be the greateſt Ruler and Governour of the world, yet if a man be a ſervant to ſome luſt, he is more wretched and miſerable then the *Algier* Gallie-ſlave; What is it for thee to be a Maſter of ſo many ſervants, and thou a ſervant to ſuch a vile ſinne? One is a ſlave to uncleanneſſe, another to ambition, another to covetouſneſſe; ſo that the whole world is like an *Egypt*, an iron furnace, a place for drudgery to ſinne. Oh the pains that men take to go to hell! Oh the labour and care they are at to damn themſelves! Such ſervants and bond-men are all unregenerate men to ſin, *Tit.*3. *We were, as others, unbelieving, diſobedient, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures.* So that we may truly ſay of mankinde, that which *Tiberius* of the *Roman* Nation, *O Gentem ad ſervitutem natam! Iſſachar* is compared to an aſſe for couching down under her burdens, and we are more brutiſh, who wilfully ſubject our ſelves to ſinne and Satan for our utter deſtruction.

3. Thirdly, *We are to know, that ſinne may have a twofold prevalency or dominion over a man either with a full and plenary conſent, or elſe unwillingly with reluctancy or contradiction.* As *Joſephus* ſaith of *Herod*, that he reigned over the Jews for many yeats by meer force, they oppoſing and reſiſting of him, but afterwards they willingly conſented to him. As there is ſuch a ruling in the world by force and by ſpontaneous ſubjection, ſo ſin hath ſuch a dominion in wicked men, it reigneth, as thoſe who readily, willingly, and with great delight obey the luſts thereof; they chooſe and imbrace nothing ſo much as this; now on the godly, ſin may ſometimes prevail, as we ſee in *David* himſelf and others; but then there is not a total and full poſſeſſion given to ſin. Though ſinne be the ſtrong one, yet the houſe is not at quiet ot; if it be, as in *David*, yet afterwards a ſtronger then ſin cometh, which is the ſeed of Gods grace, and that overcometh; So that by this diſtinction, Divines uſe to reſolve that caſe of Conſcience, *Whether a godly man may be ſaid to be under a reigning ſinne?* For as you underſtand or explain the word *reigning*, ſo it is true or falſe; if by reigning be underſtood a quiet, totall and full poſſeſſion, ſo that the whole heart is given up to ſin,

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to a godly man cannot be, becauſe of that ſeed of God abiding in him; but if by reigning be meant ſuch a dominion that brings a man into obedience, though with ſome conflict and grief, and at laſt with a final recovery; then in this ſenſe ſin may ſometimes reign in a godly man.

Fourthly, *Sinne comes to prevail over a man by degrees, and ſubtill inſinuation.* A man is not at the very firſt under the powerfull dominion of it, *Jam.* 1. *There are firſt enticings and ſuggeſtings; after that ſinne conceiveth; and after that, brings forth*: So that the Cloud in *Eliahs* time, which was at firſt but as big as an hand, did afterwards biggen into a vaſt Cloud, able to darken the whole ſky; or as the exhalations and vapours when they ariſe at firſt from the earth, are not diſcernable, but when congealed in the ſecond Region, they turn to black tempeſts of lightning and thunder; Thus it is here, ſin hath its beginnings, and its ſubtill ingreſſes; but afterwards, theſe ſparks do prove a very great flame. As therefore it was *Herods* deſign to kill Chriſt in the Cradle, in his Infancy, fearing his Kingdome ſhould ruine him, ſo it ſhould be thy godly wiſdom on the contrary, to ſubdue ſin in the beginnings of it, to break them in the egg, before they come to be Dragons or flying Serpents; one ſpark let alone may endanger a whole Town; if thou give indulgence to thy luſts at firſt, they will be thy maſters afterwards; thy pride, thy unbelief, thy worldlineſſe, thy paſſions, if thou reſiſt them not betimes, they will ſoon be thy Lords and Maſters.

Signes of ſinne reigning over a man.

1. When the ſtudy, endeavour, and purpoſe of a man is wholly bent for the accompliſhing of ſome luſt.

Theſe things premiſed, let us conſider what are the ſigns or diſcovering *Marks of ſinne prevailing over a man*; when may it be ſaid that ſuch an one is a ſervant to his ſinne, it hath dominion over him? And

Firſt, *Then ſinne prevaileth, when the ſtudy, endeavour, and purpoſe of a man is wholly bent for the accompliſhing of ſome luſt.* A godly man may fall into ſin, may commit iniquity, but yet his heart, his ſtudy, his whole ſoul is not ſet upon it. This our Saviour confirmeth, *John* 8. *He that doth ſinne, is the ſervant of ſinne*; and becauſe this point is of ſo great conſequence, mark the aſſeveration he uſeth, *verſ.* 30. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you.* In ſome important, neceſſary and conſequentiall truths Chriſt uſeth this affirmation; now the Phariſees boaſting they were the ſeed of *Abraham*, and hereby glorying in their liberty, there was no doctrine ſo neceſſary, as to let them know they were ſervants and bond-men, and that unto their luſts; Conſider then this Propoſition, thou that art rich, great in the world, doſt what thou pleaſeſt; remember that thou art an enſlaved wretch, whoſoever doſt commit iniquity; now what is this *committing of ſinne* as makes a man a ſervant? It is ſuch as *John* ſpeaks of, 1 *Joh.* 3. *He that is born of God ſinneth not, viz.* ſuch a ſtudious, diligent, induſtrious providing for the luſts of the fleſh, that the whole man is taken up therewith: Some learned men would make a difference betwixt *ἁμαρτάνειν* & *ποιεῖν ἁμαρτίαν*, to ſinne ſimply, and, to make ſinne induſtriouſly; but in the Scripture-uſe, thoſe expreſſions carry not ſuch a diſtinction, only the context muſt make ſuch a difference. Thoſe that ſo ſin, that their endeavours, deſires, and inclinations are for it, ſuch are the ſervants of ſin, though the act ſhould not be committed; As Chriſt ſaid to *Judas*, *What thou doſt, do quickly*, not what thou art about to do, or art purpoſed to do, but *what thou doſt*, though he was then at Supper, yet Chriſt ſaid, he was then betraying of him, then delivering him up, becauſe his heart was to do it. So that this will greatly diſcover, though not to others, yet to our own conſciences, when ſin reigneth over us: if the thoughts, inclinations, and all the care of the ſoul be that way, for as the godly know they are ſervants to righteouſneſſe, and that the Lord is their God, becauſe of the meditations and affections they bear to him, ſo may a wicked man eaſily find out his bondage to ſin by the motions, propenſions and conſtant inclinations of the ſoul. Thus the Adulterer, his thoughts, imaginations and deſires are that way. The covetous man, his projects, deſires

and endeavours are wholly worldly, ſo that if men did not wilfully blind their eyes, they might eaſily ſee what miſerable captives they were to ſome ſin or other.

2. When a man doth willingly and readily give up himſelf to the commands of ſin.

Secondly, *Then ſinne prevaileth over a man as an abſolute Lord, when a man doth willingly and readily give up himſelf to the luſts and commands of ſinne.* What his bids him think, he thinketh, what it bids him love, he loveth, do, he doth. As the *Centurion* proved his Command and Authority, becauſe when he ſaid to his ſervants, *Do this, they did it.* Therefore the Apoſtle uſeth an emphaticall word, *Rom. 6. As you have given up your members unto unrighteouſneſſe, ſo give them up to righteouſneſſe, παριστανω,* is a free, ready letting a mans ſelf for ſervice, as ſervants do when their Maſters call. As the Angels are ſaid to ſee the face of God, to ſtand in his preſence ready for every beck and command; ſo we who were once ſo ready to obey the luſts of ſin, ſhould now be a willing, forward people for God: Oh its a great matter to conſider, with what conſent and delight thou doſt freely and gladly commit ſin, the more of this, the more doth ſinne prevail over thee. *Paul* found that ſin led him captive, but becauſe he ſtrove againſt it, he complained with it, he did that he would not have done, therefore thoſe ſins were ſins of infirmity, for *he delighted in the Law of God*, his joy was in the clean contrary to ſin at that time, *Rom. 7.* But now, when ſin findes all in thee, as the Devil did, *ready ſwept and garniſhed*, when its like *the honey and the honey comb unto thee*, then tremble and be afraid, ſaying, I am in bondage and ſlavery. As in the day of Gods power, *his people are a willing people*, Pſal. 110. So in the time of ſin and Satans power, ſinners are willing to obey them.

3. When we make it our utmoſt end.

Thirdly, *Then any ſinne is a maſter, and doth prevail, when we make it our utmoſt end, placing it in Gods room.* For a man that ſerveth ſin doth not make it meerly his Maſter, but it is even a god to him; he referreth all things to that luſt, he eats, he drinks, he labours, liveth, onely to ſuch a ſin. The Scripture calls it, *Living to ſin*, that is, when all our labours, endeavours and happineſſe, as we judge, is in the ſatisfying of ſuch a corrupt affection. As the prophane Amorift in the Comedy ſaid, *Malo me iſta mulier, quam Deus ipſe amet.* He had rather that woman ſhould love him then God himſelf: though every enſlaved ſinner doth not utter this blaſphemy with his mouth, yet he ſaith thus in his heart, he is thus inwardly affected: Doth not the adulterer regard the love of ſuch a woman more then the favour of God? if he doth not, why then dareth he diſpleaſe God and damn his own ſoul, to enjoy thoſe forbidden pleaſures of ſinne? Do they not deſire the enjoyment of ſuch a mortall creature, rather then of an everliving God? So the covetous, earthly man, is not his money a god to him, in which he truſts, and from which he fetcheth all his comforts? therefore it is called Idolatry, *Col. 3. 5. Clauſum arca cuſtodit Jovem*, as the Poet ſaid. So then, whenſoever any man doth ſo degenerate and become ſo brutiſh, as to live and labour only to accompliſh ſuch a ſin, this man is maſtered by his ſin, his ſin is a god to him, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome, *Their belly was their God*, Phil. 3. 19. Yet what more ordinary then to ſee ſuch miſerable enſlaved perſons every where? You pity malefactors when you ſee them go up and down with their chains and manacles, and their Keepers attending them, but you cannot ſee any prophane drunkard, adulterer, covetous perſon, but you may cry out, There goeth a poor priſoner, there goeth a wretched captive. It was written upon the Tomb of a great *Aſſyrian* Monarch puniſhed by God for his impieties, *quæ eſſedar avarish, &c.* Looking upon me learn to be godly; ſo do thou, beholding many men, who all the day, all the year long live to the ſatisfaction of ſuch or ſuch luſts, take heed of the chains and iron fetters ſin may put thee in.

We deſire other Characters till the next: Learne from hence to take heed leſt any ſinne do not prevail over thee. The Apoſtle

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Rom. 6. ſpeaketh of two contrary kingdoms, the one of Sinne and Satan, the other of Chriſt and righteouſneſſe. Now conſider under which thou art, there can be no greater miſery to a godly heart, as you ſee by *Paul*, than to be captivated to Sinne, to do the Sinne thy heart and ſoul is againſt: Oh then think, if the people of *Iſrael* when they were under *Pharaohs* temporall oppreſſion, did ſo grieve and groan under it, that they were even weary of their lives; if when they were a ſecond time carried into captivity, *Jeremiah* in the name of all the people makes ſuch bitter *Lamentations*, what then ſhouldſt thou do when Sinne and Satan rule thee at their will? Do not ſay, This is the bondage I would have, and as for Chriſts cords and bonds, let us break them aſunder, for thou wilt find this will prove bitterneſſe at laſt; Be weary then of thy fetters, of thy priſons: Oh pray and deſire others to pray that God would ſet thee at liberty to runne the way of his Commandements.

SERM. XXVIII.

More Diſcoveries of Reigning Sinne in a man, with its Aggravations.

PSAL. 19. 13.

Keep back thy Servant from preſumptuous ſinnes, that they have no dominion over me.

WE are to proceed in diſcovering ſome further Signs and Characters of Sinne in its dominion and reign over a man; and the firſt in order at this time ſhall be this,

4. A reigning ſin makes all other ſins obey it.

That ſinne is a reigning ſinne, which makes all other ſinnes obey that: That is the Ocean, into which all the ſtreames do empty themſelves; that is the Prince of devills, which ſets all other devills on work. As it was a ſure ſign, that pride and envy had dominion over the Phariſees, becauſe whatſoever cruell or crafty counſells they undertook, it was wholly to ſatisfie thoſe inward luſts: This is commonly called a mans beloved ſinne; and ſome think *David* did eſpecially aim at that, when he reſolved to be upright, *and to keep himſelf from his iniquity*, Pſal. 18. 23. that peculiar ſinne he was inclined unto, for commonly one ſinne out-groweth all the reſt: and as the tall tree takes away all the nouriſhment from the under ſhrubs, ſo ſome overpowerfull luſt draweth from other ſinnes; yea all other ſinnes are devoured by that, as the Whale conſumeth the little fiſh. Examine then thy ſelf, What is that ſinne, to which all thy other ſinnes do relate? The Adulterer, if he be covetous, or unjuſt, or over-reaching to get any gain, it is not for the monies ſake, *but to ſpend it all upon his luſts*: That ſinne is in its verticall point and full dominion, which is loved and delighted in for its own ſake, and all other ſinnes ſo farre as they help to accompliſh it. Thus if Covetouſneſſe be thy beloved reigning ſinne, all thy other ſinnes of paſſionate ſwearing, or lying, and cruell extorting wayes are to fulfill it.

5. When it is turned into a second nature.

2. *Then sinne hath full dominion, when it is turned into a second nature, when through custom we are habituated to it:* for that which is naturall, though we labour to suppresse it never so much, yet it will break out again. Every thing followeth its naturall inclination, and it can do no otherwise; therefore saith the Prophet, *If a black-more can change his skin, then may ye do good who are accustomed to do evill.* Thus originall sinne, you heard, that captivateth and enthralleth the godly man, because its so naturall, its like Ivy cleaving to the Oak, that doth consume it at last; and so any actuall sinnes, the more they are naturalized the more we are accustomed to them, it's as hard to remove them as high mountains: Oh then consider, how little it will excuse, when thou pleadest for thy Sinnes, that thy naturall constitution carrieth thee, thou canst not help it, it is thy nature; *Thus Cholerick and furious men will extenuate their Tyger-like passions:* Oh but tremble and consider, the more thy constitution, or thy custom inclineth thee to such Sinnes, the more dominion those sinnes have over thee, the greater is thy thraldome and vassallage to it. And doth not experience teach this? men accustomed to drunkennesse, to uncleannesse, are so habituated in it, that they cannot live a day without such Sinnes; they are not able to refrain from the temptations, they cannot but add drunkennesse to thirst; like the hydropicall man, one draught doth not extinguish but provoke more thirst; Thus the enjoying of these unlawfull pleasures doth not satisfie, but make them desire to return to their lusts again; Oh how many such wretched prisoners walk up and down every where!

6. When plagues and judgements do not reclaim him.

3. *Its a sign that sinne hath great power and dominion over a man, that notwithstanding all the judgements and plagues of God upon him for it, yet for all that, he will do it; and although it may be for the time suppressed, yet as soon as the judgement is over, they return with all greedinesse to their vomit again.* You see this remarkably in *Pharaoh*, that ambitious design to keep the *Israelites* under, did as much over-rule him as he did the *Israelites*; and therefore notwithstanding such remarkeable plagues immediately falling upon him, yet no sooner is there any respit, but he hardens himself to do wickedly as before. Thus also we may see in the *Israelites*, that whole Nation was brought under the power of that abhominable sinne, Idolatry; and because they served other Gods, therefore God gave them up to serve hard Lords and masters: yet for all those frequent judgements, how prone were they upon all occasions to commit Idolatry? and are there not many such enslaved sinners, that for their adulteries and drunkennesse are brought to a morsell of bread, to great extremities and beggery? yet they do not take notice of Gods visible displeasure against them; but in those miseries, can commit those grievous sinnes, the cause of all their ruin.

7. It is that sinne which a man cannot endure should be reproved or preached against.

4. *That sinne which a man cannot endure should be reproved or preached against*, concerning which a man doth not love to hear the threatnings, or the directions in Gods Word, That Sinne hath great dominion over a man: When *Saul* would spare *Agag* and the fattest cattell, it's a sign he was immoderately affected to them. There is many a man will commend such Sermons that are full of power and zeal against those sinnes he is not guilty of, but if you come to meddle with his sinnes, reprove that his conscience condemneth him for, then he breaketh out into rage: on the other side, it's a sure rule that man is upright, and heartily desireth no kind of sinne may over-master him, that loveth to have his heart and life searched, That desireth all sinne as well as some one sinne may be displaied in all the aggravations of it; That looketh upon all sinne as poyson, and so dareth not eat of one kind more then another; Thus *David* excellently, *Psa.* 119. 133. *Order my steps by thy Word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me.* Here he prayeth the same matter as is in my Text, and also sheweth how we may be preserved from sins dominion, even by a diligent and

and careſull attending unto Gods Word. Oh then the ſinne thou hideſt and coverеſt, the ſinne no man muſt tell thee of, that do thou fear and tremble at; This hath dominion over thee.

5. *That ſin which a man doth much reſolve againſt, yea, faſt and pray, and mourn againſt, and yet he is evertaken by it*, This ſinne hath great dominion over a man: as that diſeaſe is very ſtrong which ſtill abideth, though a man uſe all the advice and meanes to repreſſe it; Indeed thy reſiſting of Sinne and earneſt conflicting with it, is good and comfortable, and the godly in reſpect of the motions of ſinne, and ſeverall actions of Sinne, not ſo groſſe in nature, are often over-powerd: and thoſe wicked men who are carried away with ſtrong and grievous luſts, yet if they ſtrive, pray, mourn, and call upon others, eſpecially on Chriſt, and carefully avoid all temptations, they may hope God will at laſt raiſe them out of that grave of Sinne they are buried in, but yet they muſt know, had not Sinne not only a foot as we lay, but the whole body in their hearts, they could never lick up ſuch vomit, ſuch Sinne, that with ſo much grief and ſhame, and terrour they have confeſſed to God: Oh then thou that art afraid any diſeaſe or ſickneſſe prevail over thee, ſhould overcome thy naturall ſtrength, fear leſt Sinne do thus overwhelm thee.

8. That ſinne which a man much prays and reſolves againſt, and yet is evertaken by it.

6. *Thoſe ſinnes that conſiſt in an inordinate affection to lawfull and neceſſary comforts, do many times eaſilier intangle and overcome, then thoſe that are outward pleaſures and delights of known ſinnes*: inordinate love to our houſes, eſtates, eſpecially life, doth more ſpeedily conquer a man, then love to a groſſe Sinne, ſo that thoſe Sinnes may have the greateſt dominion over thee, which thou doſt not at all ſuſpect. Thus an over-love, an over-deſire of worldly comforts, may poſſeſſe thee like an Hectick Feaver, which is hardly diſcerned, yet ſecretly waſtes and conſumeth. Hence we reade in *Rev.* 3. They are ſo often ſaid to be bleſſed who overcome temptations, becauſe its ſeldome ſeen but that temptations overcome us. Life and livelihoods is very neceſſary and dear to us; all that a man hath, even his very ſoul, he will give for that; Therefore in the Scripture outward afflictions and troubles are often called temptations, becauſe they try a man in that which is deareſt to him; If any love to theſe outward comforts be immoderate, then it will be diſcovered, whether we have an *Iſaac* that we can offer or not; O then think not that thou haſt caſt off all the yokes and bonds of Sinne, becauſe ſuch groſſe luſts and prophane courſes can no more entangle thee; for if thy Wealth, thy Trade, thy Wife, thy Children, thy Life it ſelf be too dear to thee in Gods cauſe, then Sinne hath dominion over thee. If you cannot ſay, Luſts and prophaneſſe do overcome ſuch a man, yet if you can ſay, Such a man loveth Father, or Wife, or Children, or life it ſelf more than Chriſt; then Sinne hath dominion by the immoderate affection of theſe things over a man. Oh then conſider, whether theſe careſull things do not like a *Dalilah* lie in thy boſome, inticing of thee, never letting thee alone, till it hath bereaved thee of all thy ſtrength.

9. Inordinate love to lawfull comforts may be a mans maſter-ſin.

Laſtly, *Then ſin hath dominion over us, when it hinders and diſtracteth all our duties and religious performances to God*; for our Saviour ſets this down for an undeniable rule, *Ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon*, Mat. 6. 24. If God will have the whole heart, the whol ſoul, the whole ſtrength, then there is nothing for ſinne or the world; There cannot be two contrary Lords or Maſters of thy heart; *He that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him*; A man cannot at the ſame time look with one eye upwards and the other downwards. As the Scripture ſpeaks in matter of Idolatry, There is no halting between two, no dividing of worſhip between God and Idols, but *if God be God ſerve him*: ſo here; If the world be thy Maſter, If ſuch a ſinne be thy Maſter, then ſerve it; Never think to be under God's dominion, and the world's; Never think to ſerve God and thy Sinnes alſo; yet this is the fooliſh contradiction

10. When ſinne hinders and diſturbs all our duties and religious performances.

tradiction wicked men run into; They will on the Sabbath day come as if they ſerved God, and go to the Ale-houſe on the week day to ſerve the devil by exceſſe in drinking and other riot: Oh then conſider this more ſeriouſly all ye who find your luſts, or the world, to either diſtract or choak your duties, or elſe make you wholly lay them aſide, ſo that you care not how ſeldom you are in them, yea, they are a burthen to you: Thus you have characters of ſinnes dominion; Let us now propound the aggravation of this bitter ſlavery, which will be as ſo many ſpurres to make us long for a year of *Jubilee*, to come out of this priſon, as *Joſeph* did.

The aggravations of ſlavery under ſin.

1. Its worſe then all outward bondage.

And firſt, *Dominion over us by ſinne is worſe then all outward bondage and ſlavery whatſoever*: How tedious was *Pharaohs* oppreſſions to the *Iſraelites*, it made them weary of their lives, God at laſt *heard their groanes and cries*; Let it be thus with thee, O Lord, as long as this Sinne or that luſt prevaileth over me, I have no pleaſure in my life, I am weary of my ſelf becauſe of this ſoul-captivity: Neither riches, health, or honours do me any good while this luſt oppreſſeth me; Oh let God every day hear the groaning of thy oppreſſed ſoul, and certainly God that doth ſo graciouſly incline to ſhew mercy to the oppreſſed and needy, that the Scripture doth ſo often celebrate his goodneſſe herein, will not alwaies deſpiſe thy inthralled and over-whelmed ſoul: If then bodily ſlavery be ſo great a miſery to an ingenuous man, and liberty ſuch an ineſtimable good thing, that the Rabbins ſay, If the Heavens were Parchment, and the Sea Ink, it would not ſerve to write down the praiſes of it; how terrible and intolerable ſhould the yoke of any ſinne be? Have not moſt of the Warres that ever were in the world been for liberty againſt ſlavery and oppreſſion, Every one thinketh him too covetous of life that had rather live a vaſſall then not to live at all; This was *propter vitam, vivendi perdere cauſas*, Shall then the outward bondage of the body trouble thee? Shall ſlaves to the Turk have ſuch prayers and contributions made for them to be releaſed, and doſt thou not reſpect the freedome of thy immortall ſoul? When once ſinne begins to be a burden to thee, When once its a wearifome bondage, then thou art in a way of ſalvation.

The godly have promiſes againſt it as the greateſt evill.

2. *To be under ſinnes dominion is ſo great a miſery that the godly have a ſpeciall Promiſe to be preſerved from it as the greateſt evill*, Rome. 6. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you* becauſe under grace; Thus the Godly in their ſad conflicts and daily feares, leſt ſuch or ſuch ſinnes ſhould wholly overwhelm them, have this comfortable promiſe to ſupport them; Wonder not to ſee wicked men lorded over by their luſts; that they are carried away as brute beaſts; Alas, they are not under this promiſe, under this grace. The godly mans *faith* is ſaid to *overcome the world*, and Chriſt who is with the godly, is ſtronger then the devill who is againſt them.

3. All Chriſt did for us is called a Redemption.

3. *This bondage to ſinne is ſo great a calamity, that the whole work of Chriſt, which he did for us, and all his ſufferings is called a redemption.* In that Chriſt is a ſpirituall Redeemer, it argueth ſinne is a ſpirituall bondage; Now how dear did this coſt him? was it poſſible for us to be ranſomed but by the blood of Chriſt? Did he not give up himſelf to the power and dominion of his cruell enemies, that we might be delivered from our ſpirituall adverſaries? As long therefore as Sinne hath dominion over thee, thou haſt no part in Chriſts Redemption, for he died to ſet thee at liberty, he was crucified to free thee from thy ſinnes; And if there be no ſuch effect as this upon thee, that glorious redemption hath not at all reached thee; Do not thou then flatter thy ſelf with the name and title of a Redeemer, Oh you ſay, you hope to ſee your Redeemer, wherein hath he been a Redeemer to thee? hath he freed thee from ſuch luſts that once had power over thee?

4. Conſi-

4. *Consider the sad reward sinne will give thee for all thy service and obedience to it:* To take an whole pains, to be in that daily drudgery to a lust which afterwards will be thy eternall torment; how absurd is it? how canst thou but fly from such a matter that hath everlasting whips and scourges for thee? yet foolish and unwise sinners never consider where the end of all their labour and service to Sinne will be: *Jacob* complained of *Labans* deceit about his wages, but to all eternity thou wilt have greater cause to cry out that sin hath deceived thee, promising joy and pleasures, but instead of this hony, thou hast gall and wormwood to feed upon to all eternity.

4. The reward of Sinne.

5. *In becoming a servant to sinne thou renouncest all that liberty, blessednesse, and happinesse which is in the service of God.* When the Pharisees boasted of their freedom by *Abraham*, Christ told them they were servants of Sinne, and then they would be free indeed, *If the Son did make them free*, Joh. 8. What unspeakable joy did *David* find in the service of God? Who ever waited on him and was not plentifully rewarded? All our service, though so imperfect and deserving hell, yet he doth graciously reward with eternall glory; why then dost thou choose to serve Sinne rather then God?

5. A renouncing all that liberty, blessednesse, and happinesse which is in the service of God.

6. *He that is a servant to sinne is a servant to the devil also.* Where Sin hath dominion the Devil hath dominion. Now doth it not terrifie thee to have such a dispossessing of the body & tormenting it, is nothing so terrible as the possessing of thy whole man with any evil way. Hence the devill is called *the god of this world*, & is said *to rule in the hearts of the disobedient*, so that they are not only thy lusts, but the devill also that rules over thee: Should not this make men immediately renounce all their lusts, as being the devills livery, and by which we may know he is their Master?

Use of Admonition. To come out of this bondage with speed. We would think many words were needlesse, thy own slavery should make thee desire a redemption; But this undoeth men that they are so used to Sinne that they know no better, they love no better, therefore the first thing to be prayed for is to feel the chains and fetters upon thee; Though thy Sinnes be pleasant and sweet to thee, yet they are chains for all that, and thou should'st think so: they lay among the *Indians* where gold is so plentifull, they fetter their prisoners with chains of gold, as we do of iron, because of the commonnesse of it, but are these the lesse prisoners? are they the lesse miserable because their chains be of gold? No more are thy sinnes lesse heavy though accompanied with pleasures.

SERM.

SERM. XXIX.

Sincerity and Reigning ſinne are inconſiſtent.

PSAL. 19. 13.

Then ſhall I be upright, and innocent from the great tranſgreſſion.

WE have diſpatched the two petitions mentioned by *David*, *viz.* for remiſſion of ſinne, and a powerfull ſanctification and preſervation from the power of ſin. The laſt thing to be diſcuſſed, is, The conſequent fruit and benefit which will redound to *David*, when theſe mercies are vouchſafed to him, *Then ſhall I be upright*, Then, *viz.* When I have obtained the pardon of the guilt of ſin, and grace againſt the power of ſin, then and never till then am I compleat or upright: Some render the word, *Integer*, perfect and whole, or compleat: Some, *immaculatus*, undefiled: The Septuagint, ἄμωμος, intimating that any reigning ſin would be like ſome great ſpot or deformity upon a man, ſo as to make all the other parts unlovely: But all theſe words do aim at the ſame ſenſe, ſo that we may obſerve this Doctrine.

Doct. Sincerity inconſiſtent with the dominion of any ſinne.

Uprightneſſe and truth of grace cannot ſtand with the totall and peaceable dominion of ſin. Thus *David* doth acknowledge evidently, *Let not ſin have dominion over me, then ſhall I be upright*; and on the contrary, if it do prevail over me, I cannot make any claim to integrity: Truth of grace and the dominion of ſin can no more agree then light and darkneſſe, Chriſt and Belliall. Hence is that known place, 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. *He that is born of God ſinneth not, neither can he becauſe the ſeed abideth in him:* He cannot ſin (as the *Cains*, and wicked ones of the world, who are of the devil their father) with a full and a totall reſignation of all unto ſin: Hence is alſo that promiſe you heard to the godly, *Rom.* 6. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you.* To inlarge this point, conſider theſe inſuing particulars.

The dominion of ſinne may conſiſt with excellent gifts.

1. *That the dominion of ſin, may, and often doth conſiſt with excellent parts and abilities or gifts in a religious way.* A man may preach excellently, pray admirably, have great underſtanding and knowledge in the Scriptures, yet for all that be a very ſlave to ſome beaſtly luſt or other. *Mat.* 7. They that cried *Lord, Lord*, who had *wrought miracles, caſt out devils in Chriſts Name*, yet were *workers of iniquity*. I know its an heavy ſcandall, and a dreadfull condemnation to be ſuch a ſwine, and yet have ſuch a jewel in their mouths, but yet experience doth greatly confirm this. A conſtant and diligent performance of holy and religious duties may conſiſt with a wicked and ungodly life: As *Iſa.* 1. Thoſe that were ſo exact in their new Moons, and Sacrifices, were commanded to waſh them and to make them clean. Oh then conclude on this, multitude of duties and diligence in them, great parts, gifts and inlargements, do not argue upprightneſſe, there may be rottenneſſe in the core for all this: If unmortified ſins and paſſions do reign over thee, thou art ſtill in the ſtate of gall and wormwood, thou art yet in thy ſins.

2. *You*

2. *You must remember that of distinction of sins, dominion, either totall and absolute, with peaceable possession, or partiall and forced, meeting with much opposition and resistance.* Paul complaineth of the captivity he found to sin, yea he affirmeth there is such lusting and striving in the godly, between the *flesh and spirit, that they do the things they would not do*, Gal. 6. Here then sin hath the mastery, but it is by violence, its as a tyrant, not as the lawfull possessor; at the same time the godly groan under that oppression, they delight in the contrary, they pray for spirituall liberty and freedom: *Contraria, sunt simul in pugnâ*, Contraries may be in the same subject together fighting one with another, but not in rest and quietnesse, fire and water are together in the same subject fighting, till one hath conquered the other.

Dominion of sin is either total or partial.

3. *It must be confessed that its a very great controversie largely discussed between Papists and Arminians on one hand, and the Orthodox on the other hand, Whether the godly may be totally and finally overcome by sin.* Whether sin may have such dominion over the godly, as that it shall wholly conquer grace, and chase the Spirit of God quite away. The Arminians, They say *David* in those sins of murder and adultery, was wholly conquered by sin, so that for the present there was no degree of grace left in him. Hereupon they deride the Orthodox, as holding there may be godly murderers, godly adulterers, &c. But the truth in this point is this, *Such as have a seeming profession of Religion, and do fall into a constant, habituated way of grosse and prophane courses, we say, they never truly had the seed of grace in them.* They were dogs and swine though outwardly washed, and therefore return to their mire and vomit again: *They went from us, because they were not of us*, 1 Joh. 2. 19. But for such who were once truly ingrafted in Christ, and rooted in him, we say, *Though for a season they may fall into foul and grievous sins, yet they are not wholly conquered, there is a seed within them will recover again.* Like those birds that lye in hollow trees, that seem in the winter to be dead, till the warm Sunne comes, and then their life appeareth; their sicknesse is not a sicknesse to death, they are in a swoon, but will recover again. *Peter* was prayed for that his faith may not fail. Grace indeed of it self is amissible, as appeareth in the apostate Angels, and *Adam*, but they are under a new Covenant and Promise made in Christ; so that, As because God is their God, their bodies shall be raised out of their grave; so, because he is their God, their souls shall conquer these spirituall enemies.

Whether sin in a godly man may wholly conquer grace.

These things premised, let us consider why sincerity is so inconsistent with the dominion of any sin; And

Why sincerity is inconsistent with the raign of sinne.

1. *From the nature of sanctification, which is an universall healing of all the sinfull and diseased parts of the soul; so that there is no way or door for any beloved sin to come in at.* *I pray God ye be sanctified* (saith Paul) *throughout, in spirit, soul and body*, 1 Thess. 5. 23. So that no Spirit-sin, no soul-sin, no body-sin may have any admission. Thus, as in originall sin there is the seed-plot of all evil, so in regeneration, there is the root of all actuall graces: and by this means all sin as well as one sin is opposed. But now if we look to some, who have illumination only in their mindes, and no renovation of their hearts, because the defence is not universall, its no wonder that they receive many a mortall blow. This is often in the world, that men have great convictions, and yet strong corruptions; they know the will of God, but they do it not; they have a good eye, but a sore leg; they commit the wickednesse they are convinced of, though they have parts, and excellent abilities, yet they throw these flowers often in the dirt, they defile all by vicious lives, and why? their renovation is not universall. Its not upon their heart and affections, if grace were seated there, they would abandon every sin. Its no advantage with the toad to have a pearl in the head, and poison all over the body.

1.

2. *Sincerity and the dominion of any grosse sin will not agree, from the immediate contrariety that is between grace and sin.* They are formally opposite one to another

2.

another, and so cannot lodge in the same breast: Contraries indeed may be together *in gradu remisso*, as in luke-warm water, but not *in gradu intenso*, and while they are in that remisse degree, they are fighting and conflicting, and thus it is here, godlinesse and sin can no more accord then hot and cold, then bitter and sweet, *Rom.* 12. *Hate evil, cleave to that which is good*; *What communion hath Christ with Belial? Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from iniquity.* Can the Wolf and Lamb, the Sheep and Tyger lye down together? There is an antipathy in a godly man to sin, he feareth and trembleth about the temptations of it; *How can I do this and sin against God?* Gen. 39.9. said *Joseph*, it's contrary and opposite to my nature. So then seeing there is such an irreconcileable contrariety, wonder not, if where the truth of grace is, there the dominion of sin be subdued: If you say, Why then is any sin at all abiding in the godly, because of the contrariety of it? The answer is, sin is expelled by the grace of God assisting and inabling; now because that is by degrees only, even as the disease is not suddenly, but in time expelled by nature; so it is in the work of grace: This darknesse is dispelled, as the Sun doth arise more and more.

3. 3. *Where sincerity of Grace is, there God and Christ is made the beloved of the soul:* Now where the soul is deeply and pre-eminently in love with them, they cannot, they dare not entertain any thing contrary to this love: *The love of Christ constraineth me*, saith *Paul*, 2 Cor. 4. and God requireth love, *with all the heart, soul, and strength*: So that two Beloveds can be no more in the soul, then two Suns in the world. *Minus te amat, qui tecum aliquid (Domine) amat*: Doth not our Saviour expressely declare this? *No man can serve two masters, for if he love the one, he must hate, i.e.* lesse love *the other.* Wonder not then if the sincere Christian dare not entertain a contrary love to Christ, for he is espoused and married to him, God is his portion and inheritance, he is given up wholly to him, God is in stead of all things else, and he knoweth God is a jealous God, that cannot abide to see another in that heart which is dedicated to him. Oh then, as *Daliah* said to *Sampson*, *How canst thou say thou lovest me, when thou hidest this thing from me?* so doth the upright heart say, How can I say, I love God, when I entertain such enemies and adversaries to him? How can I say, I have none in heaven or earth but God, when yet I imbrace such a sin so hated and abhorred of God? The very love and ingenuity in a godly breast, will make him loath such sins, so that he will say, O Lord, I desire to have the same *idem velle & nolle*, to love what thou lovest, to hate what thou hatest; what is enemy to thee, shall be hated by me with a perfect hatred.

4. 4. *Uprightnesse cannot stand with the allowed dominion of any sin, from the nature of sin*: All sin and every sin is poison, is highly dishonouring of *God*, and destructive to a mans soul. There is no good sin, no harmelesse sin, as there is no sweet toad, or harmelesse dragon. Seeing therefore what sin soever it be, yet it hath that blacknesse and opposition to *God*, it hath that deformity and loathsomenesse with it, that other Sins have; the sincere man cannot close with it. Hence 1 *Joh.* 3. he is said, *not to sin*, in the abstract or generall: one Sin is as abhorred by *God* as another: The Spirit of *God* is grieved by one as well as another, and so the godly mans heart is opposite to one as well as the other: Not but that the godly may be sooner overtaken with some Sin then another, even as they excell in one grace more then another: Through their constitution, relations, and other temptations, one Sin is more hardly resisted then another. The wall may be weaker at one place then another, and so the enemy have more easily entrance, but yet still the frame, inclination and desire of the heart is against all. Seeing therefore there is no sin of which he may say, This is good, the law is not against this, God is not offended at this, therefore he dareth not commit it.

5. *Sincerity*

5. *Sincerity will not bear the dominion of any sinne, because of the finite and limited nature of the soul, and of the faculties and operations thereof.* The heart of a man cannot vigorously and strongly pursue two objects, especially if different or contrary: *You cannot serve God and Mammon*, Mat. 6. 24. Mat. 12. 35. Our Saviour doth there imply, every man hath a treasure, that which his whole soul is taken up with, and where that is, his heart is: He cannot have two treasures, but one. Now as from the same fountain cannot flow bitter streams and sweet, so neither from the same treasure can come good and bad; Either it's a good treasure and we do all from that; or a bad, and all is from that. The soul of a man is too narrow and limited to be intensely affected to different objects; If it cleaveth to God, thereby he is loosened from sin and the world; if to the world, thereby he is separated from God: You cannot therefore be under a twofold distinct dominion, either God, or the world and devil, will have the choise and vigorous affections of thy soul. 5.

6. *Sincerity will not abide the dominion of known sin, because they that have it are under the promise, in a state of grace*, whereby God doth often visit and affect their souls, that they may not be overcome by their spirituall enemies: This hath *Samsons* strength to break in pieces all those cords of sin that the godly are in danger to be bound with. As long as this heaven will drop fatnesse, so long their hearts cannot be a wildernesse. Alas, take the strongest Christian that is, let him be never so well fortified, yet if he had no more then his own power, he would quickly prove the prodigall, and spend all his stock; for do not *Adam* and the apostate Angels abundantly confirm us, That man liveth not a godly life by his own industry, but the quickning promise that makes the dead heart to live, the barren to be fruitfull, the strong to be tender and flexible. Thus the promise runneth, *I will take away the heart of stone*, Ezek. 36. and *I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall never depart from me*, Jer. 31. Here you see, its not any thing within a man but that which is wholly without, that doth thus preserve and keep grace alive in us; could they be thrown out of this Ark, this Covenant of grace, they would be tossed up and down with the waves of ungodlinesse as well as others. Here lieth the strength and hope of the godly man, even in the free gracious promise of God, that prevents sin, or recovers out of it; Insomuch that we may truly say; In vain is the heart watched and observed, unlesse the Lord also keep and deliver it. As *Aristotle* saith, if it were not for the motion of the heavens, every thing would be stricken dead presently; he thought that gave life and motion to all things. To be sure, were it not for this promise of grace, we should fall into the hands of our enemies, sinne and the devil, as well as others. 6.

Lastly, *Universall uprightnesse and a reigning sin cannot stand together, because that will put a man upon the constant and fervent use of all those means, which are to conquer sin.* For you must know though the godly have this promise to be preserved from sins dominion, yet it is in the careful and diligent use of the means, which are divers: There are generall means and more particular; Generall means are Preaching of the Word and Prayer, no lust can prevail over thee while thou art carefull in the discharge of these duties, sin cannot overcome the hearing and the praying Christian, these keep the devil and lusts at a distance: So a generall mean is watchfulnesse, and a diligent standing upon our tower, to foresee the enemies approach. This duty of watching the Scripture doth often command, as without which, by our sleepinesse and negligence, we shall with *Saul* lose our spear and cruse, our strength and comforts. The particular means are Faith, that is the shield, which above all, *Ephes.* 6. we are to take, as being most defensive against every mortall wound: For the souldier to throw away his sword, was no such dishonour, as to cast away his shield, because the one was offensive, this latter defensive. As Faith, so Zeal and fervency, that 7.

makes a man alwayes in action, that puts upon excerciſe, whereby many diſeaſes are prevented. The like may be ſaid of humility, and a godly fear, but I forbear. The next thing is, to anſwer an objection; May not the godly, though not totally or finally, yet for a while be overcome by ſome luſt or other? Do we not ſee *David* wallowing in his gore-blood? Is not *Peter* overcome by his inordinate fear, ſo as to betray Chriſt with fearfull ſwearings and curſings? The number of the godly will be exceeding few, if none be holy that are not ſometimes or other overcome by ſin; If then experience telleth this, why doth God ſuffer this partiall dominion of ſin? how cometh it about that the godly are foyled at any time?

Why God ſuffers the godly to fall into ſin.

The reaſons of this may be, First, *A carnall and ſinfull truſt in a mans righteouſneſſe or ſtrength, for which God leaveth him to himſelf.* Ezek. 33. 13. The righteous man comes to fall from his righteouſneſſe by truſting in it. Thus *Peter* was ſo ſadly overcome by the carnall confidence he had in himſelf, *Though all men ſhould forſake thee, yet he would not.* If the childe let go his fathers hand, no wonder if he fall in the mire. When we go out to ſee a godly man in and of himſelf, we go to ſee a reed ſhaken in the winde: Therefore while the godly man ſticketh cloſe to the rock, and layeth his faſt hold on this pillar, he will ſtand like a mountain that cannot be moved.

2. *They are left ſometimes to the dominion of ſin, that ſo they may diſcern between the drudgery to ſin and Satan, and the obedience to God.* The godly ſometimes finde a weariſomeneſſe, and tediouſneſſe in the worſhip of God; Its a grief to pray, to hear, to wait on *God*, therefore he lets them fall into the hands of ſin, that finding the bitter bondage thereof, they may the better eſteem of *Gods* ſervice. Thus *God* did with the Iſraelites, *Deut.* 28. 48. *They who would not ſerve God, ſhould be compelled to ſerve their enemies, in hunger and nakedneſſe, and all miſery*; by this means they ſhould ſee the great difference between *Gods* ſervice and their adverſaries: Thus *God* will make thee, with the Church to ſay, *I will return to my own husband, for it was better with me then, than now*, Hoſea 1. Oh the joy and comfort that I had in obedience to *God*, but now am forced to feed on huſks, while there is Manna in my Fathers houſe.

3. *They are ſuffered to fall, that their recovery may more demonſtrate the power and goodneſſe of God.* To cure a relapſe doth evidence the art of the Phyſitian; what rejoycing is there in heaven at ſuch a cure? *This our ſon was dead but is alive, was loſt, but is found.* Hereby alſo they can give real warning to all others to take heed by them: Take them for an example, leſt *God* make thee an example: This is to turn thee into a pillar of ſalt, that others may hear and fear, and take heed how they give way to the beginnings of ſin, leſt that at laſt cary all away captive.

Uſe. *Uſe of Inſtruction*, That all ſuch, how great or eminent in profeſſion ſoever, are to be arraigned for hypocrites, who live in the conſtant committing of groſſe ſins: Thou who giveſt ſuch a luſt peaceable poſſeſſion over thee; whatſoever thy parts, thy abilities, thy humiliations have been, yet thou art rotten in the bottom. *David* cannot think himſelf upright, till he hath caſt off the dominion of every preſumptuous ſin. How ſhould this enter like a two-edged ſword into the heart of many a man? Wilt thou pray, hear? wilt thou read the Scripture? be reputed of as godly? and yet give way to ſuch or ſuch a groſſe ſin, whether it be publique, or whether it be ſecret, the Lord knoweth, and thy own conſcience knoweth, therefore live no more in ſuch guile and hypocriſie. The Prophets of old conteſted with ſuch hypocrites, that would abound in ſacrifices, frequent the temple, yet live in whoredome, covetouſneſſe, and Idolatry: Oh conſider, if the treaſure of thy heart be any where but on God, though thou pray and come to the Church every Sabbath day, thou art deceiving of thy ſelf.

SERM. XXX.

Of the Aggravations of Sinne.

PSAL. 19. 13.

And I ſhall be innocent from the great tranſgreſſion.

THis is part of that benefit and great advantage which will accrew to *David* by that two-fold mercy he prayeth for, which was *remiſſion* of the guilt of ſinne, and *preſervation* againſt the power of it.

I ſhall be innocent from the great tranſgreſſion]. By the great tranſgreſſion ſome have underſtood one particular ſinne, *viz.* that againſt the *holy Ghoſt*, as if *Davids* meaning were, That this mercy of God keeping him from the dominion of Sinne would hereby alſo preſerve him from that unpardonable ſinne. The *Septuagint* tranſlate it, ἀπὸ τ μεγάλης ἁμαρτίας, as if it were ſome high and notorious ſinne; as he is called, The Prophet, which was ſo in reſpect of excellency, above others. But the Hebrew word for *great*, doth ſometimes ſignifie the *greatneſſe of quality*, and at other times the *greatneſſe of quantity*. Therefore in the margin you have *much* for *great*, and we may well take in both here, *I ſhall be innocent from every great tranſgreſſion*, and from *multiplying many tranſgreſſions*; for commonly when a man falls into one Sinne, its like tumbling down the hill, he cannot ſtop, but falleth from one to another, till he come to the very bottom. As the Apoſtle ſpeaks of a chain of graces, 1 *Pet.* 1. *We muſt to faith add temperance*, &c. So there is a chain of ſins. Men adde one vice to another, and ſo of themſelves would never ſtop till they were in irrecoverable deſtruction; ſo that it is both the *greatneſſe of quality*, and *greatneſſe of quantity* that *David* would be innocent from.

Doct. *That its a very great mercy to be kept from great tranſgreſſions.*

Such make a greater wound upon the heart, greater eſtrangement from God, and make the cure more difficult. To purſue this point: Conſider

Of great and little ſins.

1. *That all ſins are not equal*, as the Stoicks thought, and as the Papiſts do calumniate the Proteſtants for ſuch a Doctrine; We hold indeed every Sinne deſerveth eternall damnation, but that doth no more imply we make all ſins equall, than they do all mortall Sinnes equall, when yet every one of them, they ſay, merits eternal wrath. That Sinnes do differ, that one is farre more grievous then another, appeareth, in that the Scripture ſaith, ſome have ſinned more then others. Thoſe that delivered Chriſt to *Pilate*, are ſaid to have a greater Sinne upon them then *Pilate*, John 19. 11. So ſome Sinnes are compared to a *Camel*, others to a *Gnat*; ſome to a *Moat*, others to a *Beam*, Mat. 7. 3. Some are called Sinnes of daily incurſion, others conſcience and ſoul-waſting Sinnes, by Divines. There is therefore a great difference among Sinnes, and greater Sinnes if not repented of, will have greater ſtripes, greater puniſhment; or if repented of, they require greater ſorrow and humiliation, its a greater matter to get the pardon of them, they interrupt that ſweet Communion and holy fellow-ſhip the ſoul hath with God; and although it be all one to God, to pardon great Sinnes as well as leſſe, and the blood of Chriſt doth

as

as easily drown these Camels, as these Gnats, yet God hath commanded greater humiliation for some Sinnes then others, because hereby God is more dishonoured, and the afflicted soul may hereby testifie the greater griefe it hath, because God is displeased. *David* is said to do all things according to *Gods heart, save in the matter of Uriah*, 1 King. 15. 5. *David* had many other failings, but that was a great transgression, had *David* been innocent from that, his bones had not been so sore broken.

2. *It cannot be denied, but that even from little sinnes, it is our duty to be kept innocent, neither doth a godly heart use to account any sinne little.* We see *Paul* greatly humble for the sinfull motions and thoughts of his heart. *David* did but cut off *the hemme of Sauls garment, and his heart did smite him for it*, 1 Sam. 24. 6. *Hezekiah also humbled himself for the pride of his heart*, 2 Chro. 32. 26. These are such little motes, that the worlds throat would swallow down without any pain, but the godly cannot account any Sinne little, *nihil est in hoste despiciendum*, sinne being Gods enemy and thy souls enemy, nothing is to be contemned in it, as a little matter, to say as *Lot* of that City, *Is it not a little one?* Mat. 12. 36. *Of every idle word a man shall give an account at the day of judgement.* Can that then be accounted little, for which a man must give an account at the day of judgement, which could not be pardoned without the blood of Christ, God and man? There must be a price of infinite worth laid down to cleanse it away.

3. *As wicked men use to extenuate their sinnes, to make them little or none at all: so the godly many times through tendernesse do aggravate their sins, and look upon them as too great; they look through a multiplying glasse upon them.* Thus the wicked and the godly are in two contrary dispositions. The wicked man makes nothing of all his great transgressions, he thinks it a folly to be troubled about them. Though he did sinne, yet with *Saul* he hath this and that excuse to diminish the guilt of it; but thus do not the godly. *David* in his penitentiall Psalms hideth nothing from God, speaks the utmost against himself, yea sometimes the godly are *too much cast down* about their Sinnes, as we see in the incestuous person. Though the godly may look upon some Sinnes as great, yet they must take heed of *Cains* speech, to think *They are greater then they can bear*, greater then Gods great mercies, or Christs great obedience. Oh let not the devill and thy own unbelief so farre seduce thee, as to make thee heighten thy own fears and Sinnes beyond all due considerations, *Cui absolvitur, qui sibi non est innocens?*

4. *We can hardly, in an absolute sense, say, this sinne is greater then another, but in a comparative and respect sense*: So that Sinne which exceedes another in haynousnesse, from one circumstance, may by the same Sinne be exceeded in another respect. We say, the Sinnes against the first Table, are greater then the Sinnes against the second Table, and yet in some circumstances some Sinnes against the second Table may be greater then some against the first: So that a Christian is diligently to weigh every circumstance in confession and repentance about Sinne. As some respects make such a Sinne very heavy, so it may be other respects do much take off from the burden of it.

These things premised, let us consider *from whence the greatnesse of a sinne may arise*, or what are those particulars that make one Sinne greater then another, and so may denominate a man a great Sinner. And

The aggravations of sin.

1. From the matter of them.

First, *Many sinnes are great from the matter of them.* Their very nature doth consist in a great deformity and contrariety to all goodnesse. The Apostle doth *Rom.* 1. & 1 *Tim.* 1. 3. and in many other places, make a large enumeration of such Sinnes. Though every Sinne be a transgression of the Law, yet some Sinnes do it more notoriously then others; as every disease is a privation of health, yet some do in a helplesse manner deprive of health more then others.

Thus

Thus some Schoolmen say, though a meer privation doth not *recipere magis* or *minus*, yet *ratione materiali*, because of the subject or foundation of it, so it may: as the disease meerly in that it is privative, doth not receive more or lesse, but because of the matter of it, which is humours in the overflowing of them, so it doth. So that if you would judge whether a man be a greater sinner, consider the nature of the Sinnes which he liveth in; Are they such as do *grosly and manifestly oppose all honesty and piety*; Then this man hath nothing to hide, or cover himself withall, he is under a great transgression, and such are the Sins that are generally committed every where, not your little petty ones, as the word deemeth them, but great notorious ones; they are plague sores, not little spots. The Apostles Catalogue of Sins are in all Towns, in all Families almost committed: Sins of prophane impiety against God, of horrible injustice against man, do fill most places, these are called crying Sins; that is an excellent expression which the Scripture giveth to some Sins rather then others. Thus *Gal.* 4. 10. *Abels blood crieth*, and *Jam.* 5. 4. *The unjust defrauding of the poor Labourer crieth to God.* Oh what a dreadfull thing is this! in many mens lives you shall hear no prayers, no teares, no cries because of their Sins; but their Sins they cry; they importune aloud for justice and vengeance. Thus in stead of crying prayers they have crying Sins. The greatnesse of a Sin is then most remarkable, when the nature of it is most notoriously contrary to what is good. The Schoolmen do well call the greatnesse of Sin, *Gravitas peccati*, a metaphor from heavie and weighty bodies, which do incline and carry downwards; so Sin presseth and weigheth down the soul towards hell, which was made to soar upwards and enjoy God. Hereupon they give us a good distinction of a twofold weight of Sin, the one is essentiall, the other accidentall; Essentiall is that which the very nature of a Sin cannot be without, but whensoever that Sin is committed, it carrieth a very great, heavie weight with it, such are *perjury*, *blasphemy*, *adultery*, *murder*, &c. Accidentall is that, which of it self is not so great, but from other extrinsecall respects, becomes to be most heavie. Thus *Adams first inventing of the forbidden fruit*, said to be the heaviest of all Sins, not from the essentiall nature of it, but the accidentall considerations about it, such as *Adams* creation in Gods Image, and thereby having no *fomes peccati*, no seed of Sin to encline him, as also the great hurt and damage which came to mankind by it, putting them both in a morrall and damnable estate. The essentiall weight and greatnesse of a Sinne must alwaies be distinguished from the accidentall.

2. From the object against whom they are committed.

Secondly, *Transgressions become great from the object against whom they are committed.* Thus *Caeteris paribus* all Sinnes immediately committed against God, are farre greater then those that are against man, and so against man, those Sins that are against his life, are greater then those that are against his wealth or riches. This is very necessary to consider, because that men make no matter of Sins against God, especially if not punishable by the Laws of the Land where they live, for people do commonly judge of a Sins greatnesse by the temporall danger they are in, and the punishment they are obnoxious to, by the Laws of the Land. Hence if they live in a Nation, where some Sins are made a Law, they make no matter of them: The former *Romans* worshipped God without Idols or Images, because he was a Spirit, but the later with them: So with some an oath was holy and inviolable: Others did not punish perjuries: The *Lacedemonians* allowed of artificiall theft: The Laws of the *Persians* allowed the incestuous marriages of mothers and daughters: The Laws of the *Tribunes* was to throw old decrepit men from high mountains, and *Plato's* Law was to have women common. Thus where the Laws of a Nation allow or command wickednesse (though indeed such are not Laws, but corruptions and Sins) therein the common people make no scruple, they have no trouble. But this you must know, when you would go to find out the greatnesse of a Sin, you must

not

not presently judge of it by the Laws of a Land, for Magistrates many times regard the hart of the Commonwealth, more then the dishonour of God. Thus perjury is not punished by death, when theft is, yet perjury is a farre more hainous Sin; so that we are not to regard the danger that the Law of the Land may put us in, so much as the danger that the word of God speaks of. Now that is clear for this, Those sins that are immediately committed against him, his person, name and Majesty, or Ordinances, they are far greater then other sins against men, because the object is infinitely more excellent then any man: So that as an offence done to a man of honour, is greater then to a poor prasant, so any offence against God, cloathed with such Divine Majesty, and whose Glory is to be preserved though in the destruction of the whole world, must needs be greater then any against mortall man; 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. *If one man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him, but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?* *Eli's* sons did sin against the Lord, because they offended against his worship, and polluted the Ordinances by grosse prophanenesse, who can intreat for such? saith *Eli*: Here you see, sins immediately committed against God or his name, or worship, are very hardly pardoned. Hence *David*, Psal. 51. in those sins of murder and adultery, was most troubled, because God was offended by them; *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done evill in thy sight.* Did he not grievously sin against *Uriah*, first wronging him in his wife, and then taking his life from him? Yes certainly, but that which did most stick upon him, and inwardly wound him, was Gods displeasure. Thus *Matth.* 18. 24. our Sins against God are compared to *Talents*, but our sins against man to *Pounds*: Oh then that the people of this age would consider that the greatnesse of a Sin lieth in the immediate offence of it to God! Therefore curling and swearing, and blaspheming are grievous Sins, heresies and damnable doctrines, denying the Deity of Christ, the Authority of the Scripture; as also the contemning of the Sabbaths, the Ministry and Ordinances; all these are great transgressions, because they do more immediately reflect on God or that which directly relateth to him, then other Sins do: Oh consider, thou that art a curser and a swearer, or an Heretick, or a prophaner of Gods day and his Ordinances, thou art a great and grievous sinner, look upon thy self so, and let thy repentance and humiliation be as great!

3. From the light against which they are committed.

Thirdly, *The greatnesse of a sin doth arise according to the light more or lesse that we have to discern them to be sins.* The more easily, even without any teaching or much institution we can know a Sin to be so, and yet commit it, in that respect we make our transgression a great transgression. The *rape* committed by the *Benjamites* upon the *Levites wife*, Judg. 20. is made an astonishing Sin, the like was never heard of. And the *incestuous person committed such a sin as was not to be named amongst the Heathens.* Now why were these so great sins? became the naturall light ingrafted in every mans conscience doth condemn such wayes. Thus the Apostle *Rom.* 1. doth speak of *unnaturall sins*, yet the world is full of such Sinnes as are condemned by the light of nature, thieving, lying; unjust buying and selling, adultery and fornication; These are condemned by the naturall conscience within a man; You need no Preacher, no Bible to convince thee of this, yet how disobedient are men to this unquestionable light? Thus Childrens disobedience to their parents, contemning them in their old age, or not honouring of them with due maintenance, is an unnaturall sin; For the husband to spend his estate in drink and upon whores, while his Wife and Children are in great extremity; The Apostle calls such a man *worse then an Infidel*, its an unnaturall sinne, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. It would be too large to instance in all the kinds of unnaturall sins, there are sins called *bruta peccata* beastly and sinfull that not to be named; yet oh that such Sinnes which the Heathens would abhorre, were not practised and delighted in by Christians!

Thus

Thus for naturall light, so the more spirituall light we have: The more the Sunne of the Gospell doth arise in our Horizon, discovering any one Sinne more then another, if yet we do it, we sin the *greater transgression*: What is the reason that unbelief is so great a sinne, the damning sinne; and faith on the contrary, whether in the acts of knowledge, assent, or fiduciall application, are such great duties above all others, but because the Gospel-light doth instruct us herein? If thou art affected with the weight of thy sinne, and doest not believe on Christ for pardon, This unbelief is thy great sin, as *Augustine* said of *Judas*, *Pejus de peccato pœnituit, quàm peccavit*, his unbelieving trouble and sorrow for his Sin was worse then his Sin: why then cometh it about, that as honey though honey, yet is very troublesome to a sore wound? so these precious truths of the Gospel, like so much honey should yet create even doubts and troubles in thee? Some have not been afraid to say, that no Sin damneth but unbelief; their meaning is, its not any Sin committed, if repented of, could damn thee, if thou by faith didst relie on Christ: Oh know that unbelief in Gospel-light, and where Scripture-revelation is, is the great Whale-sin, as it were devouring thy soul, and making Christ wholly ineffectuall and unprofitable; As if a patient should take that potion, he knoweth would perfectly cure him, and spill it on the ground.

I shall only name a fourth particular at this time, which aggravates a sinne, making of it great, and that is, *The worse a mans end is in committing wickednesse, the more malicious and spitefull he is at godlinesse, the greater is his sinne.* If a man vex and trouble a godly man, because of some personall injuries or supposed wrongs received by him, its not so great a Sin, as to hate him for his godlinesse, and because his waies are more holy then thine. The Pharisees sins against Christ were great transgressions, because they did all against him out of envie, and from that conviction upon them, that the Doctrine and life of Christ was above theirs. Thus if a man should be so wicked to tempt another to Sin, meerly that he might damn that mans soul, its a farre more hainous Sin, then to tempt him for some delight or profit he shall receive thereby, *Bodinus lib. 5. de Repub. cap. 6. p. 951.* relateth an high kind of wickednesse to this kind: Briefly this, An *Italian* was at deadly feud with one once his familiar friend, and for ten years sought occasion to satisfie his wicked revenge, but being frustrated of his hope, pretended reconciliation, and having one time an advantage, sets on the man, overcometh him, and is going to kill him; The miserable man desireth him to spare his life; the revengefull man said, he would do it, on condition he would renounce God, and all the benefits of his soul; Though this was hard to the poor man, yet fear of death makes him renounce God and salvation, upon which that wretched malicious enemy killeth him with this boast, *Now he had satisfied his revenge, for he had not only killed his body, but damned his soul.* By this you see, that even among wicked men, some have more devilish ends then others, and there are too many that have such sore eyes, that they cannot endure the bright beams of a godly mans life, which doth so much discover their darknesse, and condemn it. Indeed these ends are only known to God, and therefore thou mayest be a great transgressour before him, when applauded before men. Therefore the more wicked thy end is in sinning, the greater transgression it is; for although the Schoolmen say, *Propter finem operantis non auctum peccata speciem quæ sumi potest ex fine operis*, that the end of a man in sinning, the more corrupt it is, the more defiled it makes the action.

Use. Of Instruction. Although none are to give way to, or to slight lesse sinnes, seeing they are against a great God, and the hell they deserve is not a little hell; yet this doctrine doth awaken great Sinners, of which all places are full, that their repentance and humiliation be likewise great. Are thy sins crying sins? Oh be frequent in crying prayers! All that the wicked man doth, is to excuse

his sinne, to make it so little, that they may not seem great; but when once thy conscience shall be awakened, then nothing will appear greater than thy sin to thee. Then *Cain* crieth, *its greater then he can bear*: great sins must have great sorrow, and great reformation: such a Camell as thou art, canst not go through a needle, till thy bunch be taken off. Cry for great mercy, say, O Lord, they must be great mercies that must cover these great sins.

SERM. XXXI.

More Aggravations of sinne.

PSAL. 19. 13.

And I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

IT remaineth that we deliver unto you further particulars, from whence the greatnesse of a sin doth arise: And

5. From Mercies received.

First, *The greater mercies and favours we have had from God, the more kindnesse we have received from him, the greater is our transgression when we do offend him.* Ingratitude doth greatly aggravate sin towards God, as it doth also amongst men: Therefore Unthankfulnesse is in the black book of those dismall sins *Paul* enumerates, *Rom.* 1. See this notably in *Joseph*, when sollicited to lust by his Mistresse, *Gen.* 39. 8. he aggravated all the kindnesse and honours he had received from *Potiphar*, *My Master* (saith he) *hath committed all things to me, There is none greater in the house then I, neither hath he kept any thing from me save his wife, How then can I do this great wickednesse and sinne against God?* He calls it a great wickednesse, because it was accompanied with such unthankfulnesse to *Potiphar*: Hence it comes about, that all the sins of Christians are greater in this respect then any heathens sins, because you have received more love from God, he hath done more for you then for them? Therefore there is greater wickednesse and rebellion in your sins, *Mat.* 11. 23. *Thou Capernaum that art lifted up to heaven, shalt be thrown down to hell*: Those that were exalted above others by the means of grace, and externall dispensations of Gods love, should be exalted below others: Hence also such as beleeve not nor are reformed by the Word of life, they are made to be worse sinners, and in a more dreadfull estate, then those of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*: This then is a true saying, and worthy of all your attention, The more love, the more spirituall dispensations you live under, the more bloody are your sins: you that enjoy the Gospell of Christ, your Oaths, and drunkennesse, your lusts, and unrighteousnesse, are farre greater sins then those of the heathens, you are weeds in a garden, you are ground ploughed and sowed, and yet are as barren as a wildernesse. Oh that the great God would convince you of the truth. Thou a Christian, thou a professor of thy faith in the Gospel, and yet a grosse sinner, All thy sins are as red as scarlet: There is this condemnation upon them, that thou stumblest in the light; In the midst of all Gods grace thou retainest thy beastly pleasures; *Moses* and the Prophets were so astonished at such ingratitude and rebellion in the *Israelites*, that they cry out to the heavens and the earth to take notice of it. Oh beloved, There is an astonishing and amazing consideration to be had of all prophane wickednesse by those who live under the Gospel; When we see a grosse sin

ſin we ſhould lift up our hands to heaven as at ſome amazing wonder; Oh heavens, O earth, that a man do theſe things, and yet know the Scriptures, live where the Goſpel is preached! *David* aggravated the injuries he received that they were from a friend, from one who had bin often in ſweet communion together: & thus certainly the Lord may aggravate every Chriſtians ſins, Thou haſt been baptized, received into the Church, ſeparated from the world; taken the badge of Chriſt upon thee, ſworn Allegiance to him, & for thee to forſake him, & riſe up in rebellion againſt him is a great tranſgreſſion: & *truly even thoſe that are indeed godly in this reſpect have more aggravation in their ſins then any wicked man can have*, becauſe they have received more from *God* been entertained in his private chamber, admitted into the *Holy of Holies*, when others have bin in the outward Courts; The more Priviledges, the more experiences they have, the greater in this reſpect are their tranſgreſſions. Thus *God* aggravated all his kindneſſe ſhewed to *David*, when he had done ſo foulely in the matter of *Uriah*; Therefore as *Abſolom* ſaid to *Huſhai*, *Is this thy kindneſſe to thy friend?* ſo may we ſay to the godly man apoſtatizing or decaying, Is this thy kindneſſe to *God*? to that *God* who hath revealed his glory to thee, who hath taken thee to the mount of transfiguration ſometimes, not admitting others? Is this thy kindneſſe to Chriſt, for all thoſe tears, and all that blood he powred out for thy ſake? Oh let us all conſider, that this particular may ſend both the wicked and godly away wounded in heart; for all their tranſgreſſions are great, becauſe all within the Church have had great priviledges.

6. Spirituall ſins greater then carnall.

2. *Spirituall ſinnes taken in their own nature and* cæteris paribus, *are greater then carnall bodily ſinnes.* The Schoolmen have a ſaying, That ſpirituall ſinnes are of a greater guilt, but bodily ſins of a greater infamy or reproach. Now ſpirituall ſins, we call all ſuch as do immediately lodge in the ſpirit and ſoul of a man, though ſometimes demonſtrated by outward actions, ſuch are *pride*, *envy*, *malice*, *hereſie*, *Idolatry*; theſe are all ſpirituall ſins, though externally vented, becauſe they are immediately ſeated in the ſoul, What makes the devils ſuch great ſinners? they are called unclean ſpirits, becauſe they are the *ſpirituall wickedneſſes in high places*; Epheſ. 6. The devils being ſpirits are not capable of bodily ſins, and yet they are full of great wickedneſſe, becauſe their ſpirituall natures are defiled. The Phariſees were worſe ſinners and further off from heaven then Publicans and harlots, becauſe the latter were carnall ſinners, the Phariſees were ſpiritually wicked, and therefore ſaid in a peculiar manner *to be of their father the devil*. Thus *Idolatry* is a very great ſin. When the *Iſraelites* had made *a golden Calf*, they are ſaid, *Exod.* 31. 31. *To have ſinned a great ſinne*: and commonly Idolatry is called βδέλυγμα, *The abomination*, for the ſoul nature of it. The ſin againſt the *holy Ghoſt* is of a ſpirituall nature; conſiſting in the malicious enmity of the heart, and againſt Chriſt and all his wayes, in ſelf-righteouſneſſe, and ſelf-fulneſſe, whereby we are kept from hungring and thirſting after Chriſt and his benefits, all theſe are ſpirituall ſins: Now as *God* becauſe he is a Spirit, delighteth in thoſe who are ſpirituall worſhippers of him, who ſerve him in their Spirit, ſo the devil doth moſt delight in thoſe wicked men, uſing ſuch as the fitteſt and ableſt inſtruments to promote his Kingdome, who are ſpiritually wicked: this may be called the wickedneſſe of wickedneſſe, as the Hebrew phraſe is excellent, *Hoſ.* 10. 15. Their Idolatry and *ſpirituall ſinfulneſſe*, is called in the Hebrew, the evil of evil, as the *Song of Songs*, *the Lord of Lords*, *malitia malitiæ veſtræ*, as it is tranſlated: Oh then, though thou art no Publican, no harlot, thou canſt thank *God* thou art no prophane or debauched man; yet thou mayeſt be a ſpirituall ſinner like the devil, one, whoſe pride, malice and envy, is wholly againſt godlineſſe and good men, and this is the evil of evils, This is the tranſgreſſion of tranſgreſſions; bodily ſinnes make us to be accounted of as beaſts, but theſe as devils.

7. Sin is aggravated by the greatneſſe of the ſubject that commits it.

3. *The greatneſſe of a ſinne doth ariſe from the greatneſſe and eminency of the ſubject who does commit it.* All great mens ſins, are great ſins; The Eclipſe of the Sun is a prodigious ſign; if the foundations be rotten all the houſe muſt fall: Hence you ſhall read the Prophets ſharply reproving ſins of great men in place and power, as being the head and cauſe of all evil to others. The ſins of Magiſtrates, of Miniſters, of noble men and rich men are according to their place more offenſive and diſhonouring of God then other mens ſins are. Hence *Lev.* 4. the Prieſts ſacrifice for ſin was as much, as the whole Congregation was to offer; and ſo the Rulers ſacrifice for ſin, was a male-kid, whereas every private perſon, was only to offer a female. By the difference of ſacrifices we might gather the difference of ſins. What an antidote would this be againſt great mens ſins, if rightly conſidered? For thou that art above others in place and dignity; thou art above others in their ſins likewiſe; Thy ſpots are more lothſome, thy ſins are more conſpicuous, as any deformity in a fair body. Thy life ſhould be as much above others in exemplary godlineſſe, as thy eſtate and honours are: for thee to ſwear, or be unclean, or drunk like one of the vile and mean ones of the world, is a diſhonour to thee; Magiſtrates are called gods becauſe of that holineſſe which ſhould be in all their adminiſtrations; That was an admirable ſaying of a great man, *Pereat magis totum regnum, quàm ut ſemel contra Deum peccem.* *Ariſtotle* ſaith, the perpetuall duration of things cometh from the ſimple and daily motion of the Sun from the Eaſt to the Weſt, but the corruption of things is becauſe of the oblique motion of the Sun through the Zodiaque. The oblique motion of thoſe that are of great place and dignity works great corruption in all others: *Nuga* are *blaſphemie* in the mouth of a Miniſter, ſaid *Hierom*: But how contrary is the world to this truth? Great men think Religion below them, wickedneſſe is a graceſull thing with them, and thoſe who would be aſhamed of the practicall ſelf-denying way of Chriſt, glory in the works of the fleſh and the devil. But remember God is greater then thou art; and, *potentes potenter punientur.*

8. From the ſcandall and offence that may be in a ſinne.

4. *The greatneſſe of a tranſgreſſion doth ariſe from the ſcandall and offence that may be in it,* to ſeduce others and draw them on to ſin; All thoſe ſinnes that are ſcandalous, which encourage others to do the like, and make the name of God to be blaſphemed, muſt needs be heavier ſinnes then others: The greatneſſe of ſuch ſinnes our Saviour doth terribly expreſſe, *Mat.* 18. 7. *Wo be to him by whom offences come, It were better a mill-ſtone were hung about his neck, and he thrown into the Sea:* That expreſſion denoteth an extraordinary aggravation in ſuch ſinnes. It was for ſuch ſinnes that the Primitive Church required publique repentance and humiliation for, and this was the ſatisfaction ancient Writers ſpeak of, that afterwards the Papiſts abuſed to the diſhonour of Chriſt, *Paul* was ſo carefull to offend others this way, 1 *Cor.* 8. 13. that he ſaid, *He would eat no meat while the world ſtood rather then offend his brother*: Oh then how wilt thou plead for thy ſelf whoſe whole life is a ſcandall? Thou liveſt a reproach to God and to Chriſtianity, Many are the more hardened to do wickedly becauſe thou doſt ſo. As for a paſſive ſcandall, ſuch as the Phariſees took by corrupt miſ-interpretations of Chriſts doctrine and his way, none can help; nor are we to matter that: but an active ſcandall; that which is a plain undoubted ſin, and giveth juſt occaſion to others to do the like, Wo be to them that do ſo. God told *David*, by his ſinnes he had made *the enemies of God to blaſpheme*; and therefore his affliction was to be more bitter: And ſo the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 2. *The name of God is blaſphemed among the Heathen*: Oh take heed of ſuch ſins that have a peſtilential infection with them, They do not only damn thy ſelf, but thy children, thy neighbours, thy followers with thee.

9. The more conſent and delight in ſin the greater is the ſinne.

5. *The more conſent, delight, and contriving, or perſwading thou uſeſt to a ſin, the greater is thy iniquity.* The author and inſtigators to a ſin do more greatly tranſgreſſe

transgresse then the meer actors sometimes, *Joh.* 19. 11. Christ saith the Pharisees had a greater sinne upon them then *Pilate*, because they moved and instigated him to destroy that innocent one; Thus not *Joab* but *David* is severely chastised by God for killing *Uriah*, He was *the* murderer, He was guilty of innocent blood though he did not immediately kill him, because he counselled and commanded thereunto. *Rom.* 1. *ult.* the Apostle reckoning up divers kinde of grosse sinners, concludeth, They not only do such things but delight in them that do so. Therefore if thou art in thy self civil and sober, yet thou procurest and inticest others to drunkennesse, thou lovest their company, thou takest pleasure in their acquaintance, thou art a greater sinner then those beasts are, for thou counsellest or thou approvest and delightest in them; Whereas the Apostle, *Eph.* 3. commands us to have no *fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darknesse but rather reprove them*; yet these great transgressions are too frequent; men though they themselves will not do such or such wicked actions, yet they will secretly countenance or counsell, or do openly delight in them that do them, Know thou hast the greater sin. the greater it is.

6. *The greatnesse of a sinne may arise from the secret dissimulation hiding or covering of it.* To sin and yet to appear as if we were holy, or had done our duty; Therefore the saying is, *Simulata sanctitas est duplex iniquitas*; The hypocrite is a great sinner for although there be no scandall in his sin, and he avoideth that reproach to God by apparent and visible iniquity; yet as we say of some feavers, The colder and better temper he feeleth to be of, the greater heat he hath within, and therefore the more dangerous: So it is here, Thou art secretly and closely a sinner against God, yet outwardly dost appear good and laudable, thy wickednesse is the stronger within, the more poison is in thy heart: If thy wickednesse did break forth, it may be it would not be so ill with thee as now. See what an aggravation God putteth on *Achans* sin, *Josh.* 7. 11. They have taken of the cursed thing, and have stolen also, and dissembled, and have put it even amongst their stuff: This hiding, and covering, the more subtilty and craft to daub over the matter, argues the stronger corruption. *Davids* craft, and covering of the sinne about *Uriah*, was a bitter ingredient, and made his bones more broken, as appeareth, *Psal.* 51. by that passage, *Thou delightest in truth in the inward parts*, The more therefore thou covereſt and pleadest, the worse it is. 10. Hypocrisie in sinning doth aggravate sin.

7. *The more frequent a sinne is committed, and the oftner it is acted, this makes a transgression greater.* So we told you, the word Great doth signifie also Much, or many sinnes multiplied over and over. *Psal.* 78. 40, *David* makes this aggravation, *That the Israelites did often provoke God*, Idolatry, upon Idolatry, rebellion upon rebellion: and *Paul* puts this circumstance in to aggravate his wickednesse while *persecutor*, Acts 26. 11. He did often punish them: To fall once or twice into a sin, may be from infirmity, but frequently to commit such sinnes argueth an habit and a strong inclination to them; and should not this be as terrible as lightning and thunder to many auditors? Their oaths are frequent and often, their lascivious and unrighteous waies are a constant trade and practise; May they not say as *David*, they are more then the hairs of the head for number? oh that the devil should so farre bewitch thee and harden thee as to live quietly and merrily in the multitude of such sinnes committed by thee; one of them were enough to make thee go bowed down and mourning all the day long, but thou art secure when an Army of sins compasse thee about. 11. From the frequent committing of a sinne.

8. *Apostacy or falling from our former graces, our former love and zeal to God, is a great transgression*, as appeareth *Revel.* 2. where such are bid to repent quickly; oh make haste to get out of those decaies and relapses; God will make those sins bitter to thee: The not entertaining or receiving the Word of God at first, is not so great a sin as, after the entertainment of it a while, then to go back 12. Apostacy from Gods waies is a great sin.

back again, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21. you have a Beacon ſet on fire there to warn all: *If thoſe that by the knowledge of Chriſt are again intangled in their luſts, their latter end is worſe, for they had better never had known the way of Righteouſneſſe then to go from it at laſt*; and well may Apoſtacy be called a grievous ſinne, becauſe there is ſo much perfidiouſneſſe in it; We break our promiſe and covenant made with God, and then hereby we proclaim a diſlike of God, and a kinde of repentance that ever we entred into his ſervice, as if there were more pleaſure and content to be had in the world and ſin, rather then in God: Hence God asked what fault they could finde in him when they forſook him and did cleave to Idols; for men that never taſted of the ſweetneſſe of grace, and never had communion with God, to refuſe him and cloſe with the world, is no wonder, for there is duſt to duſt, like to like: but for thoſe who have had a ſight of *Canaan*, though they have not entred into it, to return to *Egypt* again, is very intolerable; oh then take heed of decaies and conſumptions in the way of grace, for theſe do greatly provoke God.

13. Luke-warmneſſe.

9. *Lukewarmneſſe in matters of Religion makes a man a great ſinner before God*; To ſee a man active in the world, hot in purſuing his own intereſts, but then for matter of Religion to be meerly indifferent; as *Eraſmus* profeſſed himſelf when he ſaid, that if the Church ſhould determine *Arrianiſm* or *Pelagianiſm* to be true Chriſtianity, he would aſſent to it. Moderation is a grace, but lukewarmneſſe and indifferency in Gods glory or our own ſoul, is an high ſin, oppoſite to one of the choiſeſt graces of Gods Spirit, which is zeal and holy fervency; ſuch a lukewarmneſs, *Eliah* who went up into heaven in a fiery chariot, a fit reward for his zeal, cried out againſt, *Why halt ye between two? if God be God ſerve him, if Baal be God ſerve him*, 1 King. 18. 19. The deteſtableneſs of this lukewarmneſs, is wonderfully deſcribed, *Rev.* 3. 16. *Becauſe thou art neither cold or hot, I will ſpue thee out of my mouth.* We have ſcarce ſuch an expreſſion in all Scripture, and it is to inſtruct us how loathſome ſuch men are to *God*, That are any thing, and will do any thing to the diſhonour of *God*, to ſave themſelves: This, as a wiſe man ſaid of a middle way in political matters, That many times they who go in ſuch a neutral way, they do neither *amicos parare* or *inimicos tollere*, is alwaies true here; They make not *God* their friend, neither is the devil or conſcience their leſſe enemy; But as they ſay of the Bat which is neither Mouſe nor Bird, but pretending to either, is devoured of both.

Uſe of Exhortation, To pray that that thou maiſt be preſerved from every great tranſgreſſion; though thou canſt not be without ſin, yet that thou maieſt not have thoſe ſcarlet ſinnes, thoſe camell ſinnes may not be ſwallowed by thee: Oh know as thy ſin is great, ſo *God* is a great *God*, his anger is great anger, and he hath appointed a great day to judge ſuch ſinnes; what then ſhall ſuch little ſtubble as thou art do, before ſuch a conſuming fire? The generall ſinnes that moſt men live in are great ſins, & therefore no wonder if God bring his ſore and great judgments upon us, when we ſin grievouſly we are puniſhed grievouſly.

Uſe of Direction, To thoſe who cry out of their great ſins, ſo great they ſay, that they cannot bear them, they overwhelm them, ſo great, that the very terrour of them doth ſwallow them up, let ſuch conſider firſt, there muſt be great humiliation, as *Mary Magdalene* was a great ſinner, and her mourning was great; The inceſtuous perſon committed a great ſin, and his repentance was great; Not that the greatneſſe of ſorrow muſt ſatisfie God, no, Chriſts blood, and not thy tears muſt do that, but becauſe hereby thou doſt manifeſt the truth & heartineſſe of thy ſorrow; judge thy ſelf a great offender, few have diſhonoured *God* as I have done, the chiefeſt ſinner of many thouſands I have been: Oh this will ſet open the floudgates, as it were, of thy ſoul. But

2. Remember the mercies of *God* are great and many mercies, Thou haſt multitude of ſins, he hath multitude of mercies; Thou haſt great ſins, and he hath mercy as great as himſelf, which is infinite and incomprehenſible; when thou haſt thought and thought, yet thou art not able to comprehend his mercy, but it is as far above thy ſins as his nature is above thine.

3. The

3. The Obedience and ſufferings of Chriſt they are of a great vertue; Can it be for a little thing, that the Son of God ſhould be incarnated and ſuffer for? If thy ſins be great, his ſufferings were great, his obedience was great, Let not Sin be great and Chriſt little.

Laſtly, Let thy faith be great, that it may be ſaid, O man, O woman, great is thy faith: Great ſins need great faith.

SECT. VII.

Of the Life and Power of Godlineſſe in Churches, Perſons, Duties; in oppoſition to Hypocriſie, Deadneſſe and Formality.

SERM. XXXII.

Of Gods Omniſciency, as a Motive to the Truth and Reality of Grace.

REVEL. 3. 1.

I know thy works, that thou haſt a name that thou liveſt and art dead.

THis laſt Book of the Scripture called the *Revelation*, doth it ſelf need great revelation, to expound thoſe many difficult and myſterious paſſages in it, which made ſome Commentators paſſe it over, as *Calvin*, profeſſing that it did need *divinum ingenium*, to expound it. But this third Chapter and the ſecond are very plain, being the matter of ſeven Epiſtles commanded by Chriſt to be written to ſeven Churches in *Aſia*; Why to theſe and no other, or whether by theſe is not intended a type of all Churches in future ages, is not my intent to diſpute. The Text I have choſen is part of the fifth Epiſtle, which is to the Church in *Sardis*; and in this we may conſider the Preface, the Body or ſubſtance of the letter, and the Concluſion. The Preface conſiſts of thoſe attributes given to Chriſt, which declare his Majeſty, and ſuitable properties for thoſe duties he requireth of the Church; becauſe he hath the ſeven Spirits, and the ſeven Starres, therefore let the Angel of the Church diſpenſe his duty with great vigilancy and induſtry. Whether by the ſeven Spirits, be meant the holy Ghoſt, in the ſeverall and manifolded gifts and operations thereof, Seven in the Scripture being a number to ſignifie plenty. *The barren hath*

hath born ſeven: Or whether we are to underſtand reall and true Angels, thoſe celeſtiall Spirits, which in great multitudes attend *God*, expecting his commands, as *Chap.* 5. 6. ſeemeth to imply, I ſhall not diſpute: So neither will I enter into that controverſie, Whether by Angel of the Church, be meant a true proper Angel, or one ſingle Paſtor in degree above other Miniſters; Or whether it be taken collectively, for many Paſtors, who joyntly did govern the Church: or laſtly, whether it be the Church it ſelf: Theſe Diſputes I wave & come to the matter or ſubſtance of the Letter; and there we may firſt obſerve a reprehenſion of the Angel's ſin, which alſo belongs to the Church, as appeareth, *cap.* 2. *v.* 7. and that is, They were dead, though they had a name they lived. Secondly, Here is the evident conviction of this ſinne, *I know thy works*, though other Churches did highly approve of them, and they had a fame over the world for their faith and piety; yet ſaith Chriſt, *I know thy works*, I ſee thy Religion and Piety is an empty, dead thing: Now in that Chriſt is ſaid here to know their works, we have a plain argument for the Divine nature of Chriſt, for none but *God* knoweth all the works, that is, thoughts, counſels, ſtudies and actions of all men, as appeareth, *Jerm.* 7. 10. Hence we read that Chriſt many times knew what the thoughts of men were, eſpecially *John.* 2. 25. *He needed not that any ſhould teſtifie of man, for he knew what was in man.* But I ſhall not inſiſt on this: My purpoſe is to carry on the generall matter I have in hand, *viz.* The diſcovery of the guile and hypocriſie that is in mans heart, *eſpecially in maſters of piety and religion*, for which this Text is very pregnant, and therefore Obſerve,

Obſerv. Of Gods omniſciency.

That God's or Chriſts omniſciency, whereby he knoweth all things in us, ſhould greatly move us to the truth and reality of grace. We ſhould not waſh the outſide only, but indeavour a ſound inſide, becauſe we have to do with a *God* that knoweth all things, we cannot hide our ends or principles from him, all our thoughts and motions of ſoul are plain and open to him. To diſcover this truth take notice,

God beholdeth with one ſingle act all things paſt, preſent and to come.

First, *That ſuch is Gods knowledge, that by one ſingle act he doth behold all things, paſt, preſent, and to come, as together.* So that to us, although there is ſuch a difference of time, as paſt and future, yet to *God* there is not: Therefore when we attribute preſcience or foreknowledge to *God*, that is in reſpect of us, otherwiſe *God* beholds all things as preſent, without ſuch difference. Thus 2 *Pet.* 3. 8. *Be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day with the Lord is as a thouſand yeart, and a thouſand years as one day.* Be not ignorant of this, ſaith the Apoſtle, implying thereby the conſequence of this truth. Therefore *Gods* knowledge is called *ſimplex intuitus*, a direct beholding and looking on all things, as we do with our eye upon one particular object: Even as if a mans body were all an eye, he would ſee as well backward as forward, and the different poſitions of things would be no impediment to his ſight; or as a man on an high Tower, that ſeeth many paſſengers going by, one after another, though their motion be ſucceſſive, yet the caſt of his eye beholding them is in one moment. Hence the very Heathens called *God*, *totus oculus*. Thus you ſee *God* is omniſcient, nothing is hid from him, and that he beholdeth all things in the moſt perfect and infallible manner, which great and glorious attribute the Scripture doth often ſpeak of, as that which we often ſhould meditate upon, but though in the generall this truth be ſo great a motive to truth and ſincerity of grace, yet ſome particulars about this knowledge do more cloſely work in this matter, As

I. He knows all our ſecret works.

I. *That not only our publique manifeſt works are known to God, but all our ſecret works, whether good or evil.* *Davids* murther and adultery were carried on in ſecret wayes, yet *God* beheld him all the while; thou didſt it ſecretly, ſaith God, but I will puniſh thee in the open ſun. Thus *Mat.* 6. concerning private alms and private prayers, *God* is ſaid *to ſee in ſecret*: Now what a ſharp ſpur and goad ſhould this be to all uprightneſſe? If I ſinne in ſecret, though I hide it from all the world, though no man living knoweth of it,

in, yet *God* he knoweth it, and we are more to tremble under his eye beholding of us, then if all the world did look upon us. The woman of *Samaria* was amazed, when ſhe heard Chriſt admoniſhing her concerning the adulterer ſhe lived with, *Come* (ſaith ſhe) *and ſee him that hath told me of all thus ever I did, John* 4. Oh ſet this conſideration deeply upon thy heart, why ſhould I commit this ſecret ſin? why ſhould I be ſo carefull to hide it? *God* knoweth all that ever I did.

2. *Gods* knowledge is not only of our ſecret works, as well as publique, but *he knoweth the bottome and inſide of our works, as well as the outſide*: He ſeeth to the core, as well as the skin, and this is chiefly meant here. Chriſt knew her works; why, what are thoſe works? for the outward appearance very good and religious; elſe how ſhould ſhe have ſuch a name, ſuch a repute, ſo that there was nothing externally blame worthy, but all the fault was within; it followeth, *I have not found thy works perfect*; the originall is, *filled up*, there was much emptineſſe and vanity in them, they were not weighty and ſolid, there was an image but there wanted life. And thus the Phariſees were alſo diſcovered, they had a name, who but they, for externall obedience to the Law; but our Saviour complaineth of their inſide, *within they were ravening Wolves*, within they were *noiſome ſepulchers*, though painted without: Therefore are they ſo often preſſed to make clean their hearts, and their inward parts. This (Beloved) is of great concernment; we think to put off *God* with the number of our duties, ſo many prayers, ſo many Sabbaths; but *God* takes none, accounts of none, before he weigheth them, *If they be ſuch as come from ſound and deep principles of grace, if they are from a regenerated nature, then they are received, otherwiſe they are caſt away as empty chaff*. Oh then remember there is no religious duty, no holy performance, not this thou art about in hearing of the word at this time, but *God* ſearcheth to the bottom of it, he knoweth the inward worth of it, whether it have all that juyce and moiſture of grace, which ought to be in all our duties; and herein it is, that *Gods* judgement and mans is ſo different, *they judge according to outward appearance*, they love and honour ſuch for godly men, whom it may be *God* abhorreth as unſound and rotten hypocrites: *That which is highly eſteemed amongſt men, is abomination before God*: Our Saviour ſpeaks it in this very point, and giveth this reaſon, *For God knoweth the heart*, Luk. 16. 15. And the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 2. *ult.* ſpeaks admirably to this, when he tells us of a *circumciſion of the heart, whoſe praiſe is not of men but of God*. Oh this is comfortable, when in all thy religious waies thy praiſe is of *God*, he approveth thee, he liketh thee: As for the repute and eſteem of men, that is a very deceitfull thing, they cannot look into the heart.

2. He knoweth the bottome and inſide of them.

3. *God* doth not onely know the inſide as well as the outſide of our works, but *he knoweth the heart, the ſeat of all our thoughts, and the principle of all our actions*: As *Jer.* 17. 10. *I the Lord ſearch the heart, and try the reins*. Even as the Artificer that makes a watch, he knoweth all the parts and motions of it; this cloſet of the heart, none hath a key to unlock it, but God himſelf; ſo that before ever any thing cometh to works, before ever it be in thy practice, God ſeeth it in the womb as it were, and conception: As if a man could tell where the arrow would hit, before it be ſhot out of the bow: This knowing of the hearts of all men is attributed to God as his property onely. 1 *Kings* 8. 39. we reade of *Eliſha* diſcovering what was in *Gehezies* heart, but this was becauſe the Spirit of *God* did manifeſt it to him; even as one man may know another mans heart, if he manifeſt it to him; but *God* of his own ſelf knoweth the hearts of the children of men, hearts of wiſe men as well as fools; thoſe who have the deepeſt counſells, and the moſt ſubtle turnings of ſpirit, God knoweth all theſe; Therefore the Church doth well from this argument to make her ſelf take heed of idolatry in a private way, *Pſal.* 44. 21. *Shall not God ſearch out this?* for he knoweth the ſecrets of the heart: Oh let every man uſe this good; If I give way to ſuch ſecret ſinnes, if I uſe ſuch craft and diſſimulation in any

3. He knoweth the heart and ſeat of our works.

ungodly way, ſhal not *God* ſearch out this, for he knoweth the ſecrets of the heart?

4. And all the moſt ſubtle effects and products thereof.

4. God doth not onely know the heart, the ſeat of all the thoughts and motions of the ſoul, the ſhop where every thing is hammered into one ſhape or other, but *all the moſt ſubtle effects and products thereof*: The leaſt motes cannot eſcape being eſpied: Now of all effects flowing from the heart of man, there are two things that are moſt ſubtle, that if it were poſſible, would not be diſcovered by any knowledge humane or divine, and they are, firſt, Our thoughts. Secondly, Our aims and intentions: Of all the motions of the heart, there are none ſo unperceivable as theſe are, yet *God* knoweth all theſe.

I. Thoughts.

Firſt, *For the thoughts of a mans heart*; what millions are there of them in a day! The twinckling of the eye is not ſo ſudden a thing as the thinking of a thought; yet thoſe thouſands and thouſands of thoughts which paſſe from thee, that thou canſt not number or make any reckoning of, they are all known to *God*, *Pſal.* 139. 2. We have there a notable Pſalm, wherein *David* is greatly affected with this omniſcience of God, *Thou knoweſt my down-ſitting, and upriſing, thou underſtandeſt my thought afarre off*: that is, God though afarre off in the heavens, ſo that we would think he did not take notice of what is done in the earth, yet he ſo farre underſtands all things, that our very thoughts are known to him; or elſe, our thoughts while they are farre off, before they come to be expreſſely conceived and formed, while they are in the Chaos, in the confuſed womb of the ſoul, God knoweth them; he knoweth what we will think, before we do think: Surely this ſhould refrain men, not only from ſinfull lives, but alſo ſinfull thoughts; this ſhould make you be conſcientious, not only about your actions, but your inward thoughts: Do not think them free. Did not our Saviour many times ſpeak to the Phariſees againſt their thoughts & reaſonings within themſelves? *Think not to ſay within your ſelves*, ſaid *John Baptiſt* alſo, *Mat.* 3. 9. The very Heathens thought a vertuous man would take heed what he thought, as well as what he did; how much rather ſhould Chriſtians, who have Chriſt himſelf expounding the Law of God to the very thoughts of men, ſo that unclean thoughts are adultery, malicious thoughts are murder. Hence *Mat.* 6. 25, 27, our Saviour ſpends a whole Chapter againſt *ſinfull, diſtruſtfull and careful thoughts*: And obſervable is that of *Peter* to *Simon Magus*, Act. 8, 22, *Repent, if peradventure the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee*; as if his thoughts had been a greater ſin then all his other wickedneſſe; ſo *Deut.* 15. 9. *Beware there be not a thought in thy wicked heart*, &c. Thus you ſee the Scripture makes it a neceſſary part of godlineſſe to take heed of all kinde of ſinfull thoughts, he that is not godly in his thoughts, is not truly godly in his actions; for if he refrain from wicked practiſes, it is in reference to men, and for outward conſiderations; if it were becauſe of God, he would alſo mortifie all ſinfull thoughts, becauſe God doth as eaſily behold them as our actions: If therefore thou wouldſt have this teſtimony of a ſincere and upright man, obſerve how thou giveſt any lodging or entertainment to evil thoughts: Is not thy heart as full of proud, earthly, luſtfull, or vain thoughts as the ſea is of water, as *Egypt* was once of locuſts and caterpillars? Oh mourn under this, becauſe God knoweth all thy vain and ſinfull thoughts.

II. Aims.

The ſecond effect from the heart, which is ſo difficultly found out, *are the aims and intentions of mens hearts*, to know why they do things: Certainly theſe are ſo ſubtle that men are not ſooner deceived in any thing, then about their aims; they think they do all for God, they comfort and ſupport themſelves, as if every thing were in reference to *God*, when as (alas) they know not the hypocriſie and rottenneſſe of their hearts. The Phariſees they *did all things to be ſeen of men*; yet, Did they perceive this, or were they convinced of it? Did *John* think they were only carnall and ſelfiſh motives, that drew him out in all that zeal he ſhewed for *God*? Oh what godly man may not lye down with great ſhame and ſay, there is ſuch a myſtery of iniquity in his heart, that he

he knoweth not how to underſtand it? Well, though we do not many times diſcover our aims and intentions, yet *God* doth thy vain glory, thy worldly intereſts, they are all plain to him, he puls off the vizor that is upon every mans heart, he draweth the curtain, and looketh upon things as they are: *Heb.* 4. 12, 13. the Word of *God* is there ſaid *to divide between the joynts and the marrow*, that is, the *intima* and the *minima*, and is *a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, ſo that every creature is open in his ſight; as when a ſacrifice was opened and divided into pieces, all the inwards of it were diſcovered. This conſideration then muſt needs greatly provoke to ſincerity of grace, for hypocriſie is in nothing more then in a mans ends: This hath been the great miſcariage of many, who have ſeemed to be in the ready way to heaven; They followed Chriſt for his *loaves*, They *knew Chriſt after the fleſh*; and thereupon afterwards diſcovered they had no true root: but when we come to reaſon with our ſelves, *God* he knoweth why I pray, why I hear, why I walk in more ſtrict profeſſion of Religion than others do; *God* knoweth what my aim and motive is in all this, whether it be principally for *God*, and from a love or delight in him, or whether it be from any corrupt and inſincere reſpect: This will be of great conſequence to us.

5. As *God* knoweth the thoughts and motions of our hearts for the preſent, ſo alſo *for the future, what we will think and what we will do*; and this doth wonderfully exalt the knowledge of *God*; from all eternity he knew what thoughts, and what affections thou wouldſt have. Thus Chriſt he told *Peter*, that he would *deny* him. Hence are all thoſe admirable predictions in the Scripture, which did propheſie many hundred years before the men were born, what they would do in time; yea *God* doth not onely know the future abſolute actions of men, but the conditionate, what they would do, if put into ſuch and ſuch conditions: As *God* revealed to *David* what the *men of Keilah* would do, if he came down thither; but this muſt rightly be underſtood; There is not ſuch a *ſcientia media*, as the Jeſuites and Arminians make, as if *God* did foreſee what man would do if put in ſuch or ſuch a condition, *viz.* beleeve, or not beleeve, antecedently to any decree of *God*, and thereupon they make *God* to predeſtinate ſome to ſalvation upon faith thus foreſeen: No, we ſay ſuch a knowledge cannot be, becauſe the object cannot be *ſcibile*, or have any truth in it, till *Gods* decree be to give it ſome being; but when this is preſuppoſed, then we ſay, *God* knoweth what man will do when he is in ſuch an eſtate, ſuch a temptation; Thus the heart of a man is all open, as it were of glaſſe to *God*.

5. He knows all things for the future.

6. *God, becauſe of his infinite being, knoweth our works, our thoughts, and our hearts, better then we do our ſelves.* We are more known to him then to our own ſpirits: Thus the Apoſtle, 1 John 3. 20. *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts, for he knoweth all things*: So that if the corruptions and ſinfulneſſe we eſpy in our ſelves, be ſo great in our own eyes, what are they in *Gods* moſt pure eyes? He ſeeth more pride, more unbelief, more guile and falſhood then ever thou couldſt diſcern.

6. God knows our works and thoughts better then we do.

7. *God doth not onely know our hearts and works, by a ſingle bare beholding of them, but as a Judge, giving either approbation or condemnation.* Thus *God knoweth the way of the righteous*, by approbation, to reward it; and *the way of the wicked*, by condemnation, to puniſh it: So that this knowledge will produce great effects either of comfort or terror.

7. God beholds our hearts and works, as a Judge.

Uſe of Admonition, Doth God thus know all things, all thy ſinnes, all thy duties, all thy thoughts and ends? then be thou quickened up to all ſincerity in the wayes of godlineſſe, what a vain thing will the applauſe of men, their good words do thee? When *God* ſhall ſay, Depart thou hypocrite into everlaſting fire: What a dreadfull thing is it, for thee to applaud thy own ſelf, and others to bleſſe thee; and *God* to curſe thee becauſe of thy unſound and rotten heart? Oh conſider that all things are naked and open to that *God*, whom thou

ſerveſt, to whom thou prayeſt, with whom thou haſt to do: what Sermon, what truth will enter like a ſword into thy bowels, if this do not? Doeſt thou think to put off God, as thou doeſt put off men? will he make no deeper ſearch into all thy waies of wickedneſſe then they do? *Auſtin* ſaid, Many that were dead are praiſed for Saints in heaven, who yet, it may be, as roaring are damned miſcreants in hell. Therefore the Apoſtle giveth us a good rule, *Gal.* 6. 4. Let every man prove his own work, that ſo he may have rejoycing in himſelf, and not in another; Its a weak and unſafe thing, to build all thy hopes of Salvation upon the good repute others give of thee; though they be Miniſters and godly friends, they know not what is in the bottom of thy heart: Their charity makes them judge well, when it may be God knoweth, it is otherwiſe with thee.

Uſe ſecond, *of Conſolation* to the godly, That moun under their ſinnes and failings, bewaile their hypocriſie, and tremble under this truth. Though the world be apt to call thee an hypocrite, to miſconſtrue all thou doeſt, to charge all guile upon thee, yet God knoweth all things, he knoweth thy integrity, he ſeeth how much thou hateſt thoſe ſins they blame thee for. Oh its well for the godly, that God knoweth them.

SERM. XXXIII.

Of having onely a Name *to live, a Repute of being Religious, without any true Life.*

REVEL. 3. 1.

I know thy works, that thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, and art dead.

WE have already declared the arraignment and inditement of the Church of *Sardis*, and the evident conviction of the ſinne charged upon her, to be the two main parts of this Epiſtle. The *Evidence* hath been conſidered of. We come now to the *Inditement* it ſelf, and that is for ſuch a ſinne as cannot be accuſed in humane Courts, nor is puniſhable by mans Laws, *viz.* *Hypocriſie* and *Inſincerity* in the duties of Religion; Had all the Neighbour-Churches been called to give in their verdict, they would have paſſed a clean contrary cenſure, and acquitted her with great applauſe, but *God ſeeth not*, or *judgeth as man doth.*

The Bill of the Arraignment runneth thus, *Thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, and art dead.* Life and death are here taken ſpiritually and myſtically. *Life* is for that ſtate of grace, whereby we move and are active in the things of God; *Death* is a ſtate of ſinne, whereby we are wholly ſenſleſſe either of our miſery, or any heavenly remedy, and we are unable to move or ſtirre one foot to heaven, and alſo are ſo many noiſome and unclean carcaſſes before God. Thus we that fear bodily death, when it is *the King of terrours*, ought much rather to tremble at this ſtate of ſin in our ſelves, and to bewail our Father, Children, Friends, in this Spirituall dead condition, more then for corporall death: So on the contrary, The life of grace deſerveth onely the name of life, the godly man liveth, for he doth both *vivere* and *valere*.

Now

Now this Churches diſeaſe is a deceitful conſumption, rotten intralls, with a ruddy face, a ſeeming life, but a reall death; flouriſhing and ſprouting branches and leaves, yet a dead root. And that we may take notice what a glorious ſeeming life of Religion ſhe had, the expreſſion is, *She had a Name that ſhe lived.*

Name] in the Scripture is often put for the perſons themſelves, as *verſ.* 5. and *Act.* 1. 15, but this is a meer Hebraiſm, the Grecians do not uſe to do ſo. But.

2. It doth not meerly ſignifie a perſon, but a perſon under ſome glorious fame and great repute, *Numb.* 16. ſtrong men, men of names, *i. e.* famous men. Thus *Job* 30. 8. Children of baſe men, are called men of no name: And thus the Latines uſually, *Nullius nominis*, and *Vive tibi*, *& nomina magna fuga*: So then to have a name, doth denote the great fame and glorious repute this Church had for her piety, yet in the bottom of all there was nothing but emptineſſe, they were not perfect or filled works, as *v.* 2.

That a Church or particular perſon may have a great eſteem and repute for piety and holineſſe, and yet be inwardly dead and deſtitute of all grace. They may be pictures without any life, clouds without water, *Sodoms* Apples, fair to ſee to, but nothing ſave aſhes if ye touch them. We reade of *Laodicea*, another Church to whom an Epiſtle is directed, *She was poor, naked, and miſerable, when ſhe thought her ſelf rich, full, and wanting nothing*, but that it was her own particular deceit and overweening of her ſelf. This Church of *Sardis*, not only her ſelf, but others alſo thought her ſo, when God knew the contrary. *Obſerv.*

I ſhall treat on this not as it belongs to a Church, but as to a particular perſon, and ſo it will better advantage our ſouls, let us therefore conſider firſt what goeth to make up this *Name* of an heavenly and religious life, when yet there is nothing but death. And

What goes to make a man reputed heavenly and religious.

First, *There muſt be an innocency and freedom from ſcandalous or infamous ſinnes*: For theſe foggy vapours will quickly darken and becloud the bright luſtre of a religious name: The prophane man cannot have a name that he liveth, but his own conſcience, and the conſcience of all others doth condemn him for a dead man. Therefore ſuch are to be caſt out from this ſociety, as we bury the dead that they may not annoy the living: Even as *Origen* telleth us of the *Pythagorians*, who were a ſtrict ſect, and kept rigid diſcipline amongſt themſelves; if any amongſt them committed a foul offence, they caſt him from among them, and ſent him a Coffin, as unto a dead man. Now this is the caſe of many Chriſtians, they have no other name but of wretched and dead men in their ſinnes, they are noiſome carcaſes all over the place where they live; Let not then theſe dead flies fall into thy box of ointment, for they will make all unſavoury. 1. Freedom from infamous ſins.

Secondly, *As there muſt be freedom from great ſins, ſo there muſt be a conſtant performance of all religious duties, and the ſolemn obſervance of the Ordinances Chriſt hath commanded*: For meer negatives are not enough to raiſe the name of a man for godlineſſe: There muſt be poſitives alſo, the not doing good is doing great evil in Chriſtianity; therefore God threatens this Church *to come as a thief in the night*, that is, terribly and ſuddenly, not for any prophaneneſſe or impieties, but meerly for emptineſſe and deficiency in holy duties; Its not wild fruit, but only the good fruit is not ripe enough, as *Matth.* 13. The temporary believer is ſaid, *That he doth not ſucceſſively bring forth fruit to perfection.* There is ſome fruit, but it is not kindly, it is not ripe. If then God be angry with prayers and duties not filled up with grace, how much more for the total omiſſion and neglect of them? Oh then conſider this, and lay it to heart, you cannot ſo much as have the name of a godly man, unleſſe there be a conſtant performance of all thoſe duties and religious worſhip which God requireth, *A name indeed thou haſt*, by thy very Baptiſm and externall profeſſion, but not ſuch a *Name* as this Text 2. A conſtant performance of all religious duties.

ſpeaks

ſpeaks of, full of glory and repute with others, *If thou art not a diligent comer to Church, frequenter of the Ordinances in publique, a careſull obſerver of Family-duties in thy own houſe, thou art not yet come to have ſo much as a Name.* Thus you ſee a publick obſervance of religious duties, both publick and private, are neceſſary to make the *name* of a godly man.

3. And is ſuch a way as God hath appointed.

But thirdly, *It is not every kinde of religious way, nor all manner of devotion that makes this* Name, *but it muſt be in ſuch a manner and way, as God hath commanded.* We read of ſome called *devout Jews*, who yet were great oppoſers of Chriſts way, *Acts* 13. 5. *Paul* beareth witneſſe of the great zeal, the Jews had for *the traditions of the Fathers*, Rom. 10. 2. Yea *Paul* ſpeaks much of his own fervency this way, when he thought he was bound to do ſo many things againſt Chriſt, but did this make him have a name of Religion? No, but a name of the Perſecutor of it. This is alwaies to be obſerved, that the expreſſions of our piety and worſhip of God, muſt be according to what he hath commanded, and therefore are the *Iſraelites* ſo often forbid *to walk after the imaginations of their own hearts*, or to walk in the way which they ſhall chuſe of their own head, *In vain do they worſhip*, ſaith Chriſt, *when God hath not required it at their hands*, Matth. 15, 9. The Jews that were ſo diligent in their worſhipping of Idolls; The Phariſee that went up and down to make proſelytes; the Papiſt and heretick that is ſo induſtrious to deceive ſouls and infect others with the plague they themſelves have, cannot be ſaid to have a name that they live. Had this Church of *Sardis* been corrupted all over with idolatry and hereſie, it could have been no more a living Church, then a leprous perſon had been clean by the Levitical decrees: We ſee when *Iſrael* was thus apoſtatized from God to Idolls, *God gave her a Bill of divorce*, and would own her no more. Piety then and the worſhip of God, lieth not in ſuch devout expreſſions as every one ſhall be apt to fancy to himſelf, but in the rules and directions of Gods Word; otherwiſe if we will believe the Church of *Rome* upon her own teſtimony, her great pillars tell us, *She only lives*; true piety is only there; all that have departed from her, are dead and no Churches. We ſee therefore that men differ about what is piety, what is true religion, and as one man is an heretick to another, ſo one an Idolater to another, one Church no Church to another. We muſt come therefore to the ſure Word of God, as they did to *Solomon*, to know which is the live Childe, or the dead.

4. The name of Religion is the more famous, by how much the more extraordinary gifts and parts there are.

Fourthly, *This Name of Religion is then more famous and glorious when there are extraordinary parts and gifts, or miraculous operations, then the repute of piety is more eaſily believed.* As that *Judas* did become a Diſciple of Chriſt and profeſſed faith in him, was nothing ſo great for his name, as that he propheſied in Chriſts name and wrought miracles; This would make his name ſound every where. And indeed it is very hard to think where God giveth ſuch gifts of illumination and miraculous operations, that he doth not alſo beſtow the grace of ſanctification, but that theſe two may eaſily be divided and ſeparated, our Saviour *Matth.* 7. makes it very evident, and *Paul* 1 Cor. 13.

Signs whereby we gather that a perſon hath but the *Name* of being religious, yet is truly dead.

Theſe things premiſed, let us conſider what are the Signs or diſcoveries whereby we may gather that a perſon hath the name of living religiouſly, but is truly dead.

5. They uſually reſt in this *Name*.

And firſt, *They that are thus nominal and not reals, they uſually reſt in this Name.* They put confidence in this [illegible] and eſteem they have, not at all looking any further. The Apoſtle excellently deſcribeth ſuch an one, *Rom.* 2. 17, 18, 19, 20. He ſpeaketh there of a Jew, who was *inſtructed in the will of God, a guide and light to others, having a form of knowledge*, &c. and which was the deadly herb in the pottage, he reſted in this, and made boaſt of it. Its a wonderful thing to ſee how a man will put confidence in the meer form and bare ſhape of religion. The Jews generally were deſtroyed by this ſin, and certainly this is an epidemicall diſeaſe among Chriſtians, they reſt in the form of religion without the

the power, which is to take the ſhadow without the ſubſtance. In other things men would not content themſelves ſo, what is the form or picture of meat to to an hungry ſtomack? The ſhape and repreſentation of fire to a cold man? and thus indeed, were thy heart ſenſible of thy ſpirituall neceſſities and wants, thou wouldſt look to it more then the meer externall form of any duty, where is the life and power of it? as ſhe ſaid, *Give me Children, elſe I die*; ſo wouldſt thou, Lord, give me this life of grace, this power of godlineſſe in all my duties, elſe I am damned: Do thou then weigh all thy religious duties, for God will; and whatſoever is too leight, too empty, that hath nothing but cuſtom and a form in it, ſay, This God will not accept of,

Secondly, Where there is only a *Name* of life, and yet inwardly *dead*, *There the root and bottom, or ſpring of religious duties, is wholly withered and dried up.* That as it is ſaid of the Church *She is glorious within*, ſo on the contrary here, ſuch are glorious without, and rotten or withered within. What was in the bottom of the Phariſees hearts, notwithſtanding their prayers, alms and faſtings? nothing but muck and filth; compared therefore to painted Sepulchres, fair apples, but rotten at the coar. Now although man cannot ſearch into this, yet God can. He ſeeth what flowers grow upon thorns, and what grapes upon thiſtles, hence Chriſt *Luk.* 6. 45. makes the good treaſure of a man, to be his good and ſanctified heart, thy ſpirituall riches and wealth, lieth not in multitude of duties, nor excellency of parts, but in the ſpirituall goodneſſe of thy heart; and where this is wanting, though there may be ſome outward glory and hope, for a while, yet wanting a root, a ſpring, it muſt neceſſarily dry up. Oh then conſider whether thy heart be not a barren wilderneſſe, thy ſoul be not like the mountains of *Gilboa*, that have no dew on them? Pray thou doeſt, hear thou doeſt, acknowledge thou doeſt thy ſelf to be a Chriſtian, but thy inwards are altogether rottenneſſe. Are not thy duties like thoſe herbs that grow in a dry wall, though they bud and bloſſome, yet there is no root for them. I tell you, the marrow and very eſſence lieth in this, to have a root, a ſpring within! Every thing may be painted, but life: the ſhape and lineaments of body, theſe may be repreſented to your eye; but life and motion, Art cannot imitate. The hypocrite he can go as farre as the outward duty, but then the vital acts, and inward motions of grace, thoſe he cannot attain unto: Oh then that our hearers were wiſe to underſtand theſe things! Have I any more then a form upon me, while the Word is preached? Hath God ever yet breathed the ſpirituall life of grace in my ſoul? Am I not a very dead wretch for all my duties, of profeſſion to this very day? Oh it is to be feared that this is the caſe of many! All within is corrupt and ſenſleſſe, how glorious ſoever outwardly. When God promiſed temporall mercies concerning *Iſmael*, *Oh that Iſmael might live in Thy ſight*, ſaith *Abraham*, as if all outward mercies were nothing, unleſſe he had Gods favour alſo.

2. The root and ſpring of religious duties is dried up.

Thirdly, *Men of a name for piety, without the true power of it, they only attend to keep up this Name.* All their endeavour is to ſupport this repute and eſteem, not at all aiming at, and living to him: They take up *Machiavil's* wicked Counſell, *The opinion and repute of vertue is neceſſary and advantagious, but the reality of it is a burden.* No great thing can be done, no honour can be attained without the repute and form of religion: Therefore thoſe who abhorre the life of it, make uſe of the name of it. Now how farre was the Apoſtle *Paul* from ſuch a temper? 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 3, 4. He did not ſeek glory of men, but did ſo diſcharge his truſt, not as pleaſing men, but God which tryeth the hearts; Therefore if the Goſpel did flouriſh, and the ſouls of men were edified, though he were accounted as a caſt-away, he mattered it not: Oh then be afraid of thy ſelfe, when thou art onely carefull to keep up thy Name, thy Glory, but doeſt not regard the glory of God;

3. They only attend to keep up this *Name*.

God; thou mindest more the applause of men, and their good words, than the testimony of a good conscience before God. This vain-glory is a worm or catter-pillar that will quickly devour all that seeming fruit which groweth upon thee.

4. They have no true joy or delight in their approaches to God.

Fourthly, *Where there is nothing but a Name of life, there is inwardly no delight and true joy in our heavenly approaches to God.* There is no communion or fellowship with God in these duties; you may perceive by many of *Davids* Psalms, what happin. sse and joy he found in the Ordinances, which made him long for them, *as the Hart after the water Brooks*; This could not have bin if *David* had bin devoid of spiritual life: You see a dead man can take no delight in eating & drinking no joy in the company of those that were his dearest friends; and thus men spiritually dead in sin, though they pray, they hear, they have family duties yet they have no true delight in these things, they have no spiritual communion with God in the use of them. Oh consider this particular, for nothing will sooner discover whether thou art alive or dead, than this particular! In all Ordinances and holy duties dost thou by faith have communion with God? Is thy heart and affections ascending to him? Are his gracious influences descending upon thee? then here is life in thee: for these religious duties they are an heavenly commerce with God, though we do not, as *Moses, speak face to face* to God, as one friend to another, yet by faith in a spirituall manner the soul doth there enjoy God, and receiveth of his favours; so that all those duties are dead duties, and those Ordinances are dead Ordinances, when God and the soul have not this spirituall intercourse. But where is there the Auditor to whom this is not a riddle? Is not this a mystery unto most men? They draw not nigh to *God*, they are not believing in, or enjoying of *God* in their duties; its not *God* that they immediately close with; Its not Christ apprehended by faith, that their souls do imbrace in these times.

5. There is no spiritual effect of duties to such men.

Fifthly, Where there is onely a *Name* of life in duties, *There is no spirituall effect obtained by the daily exercise of them.* But they are still the same persons, their lives are still the same. Now this could not be, if our religious duties were performed with lively principles, for consider the glorious ends why Christ appointed praying, hearing, and all his other Ordinances in the Church, they are to beget and increase the life of grace in us, they are to make us grow and bring forth more fruit. But this dead formalist is alwaies at the same stand, his graces do not flourish more, he is not carried on to further perfection, but as he was ten or twenty years ago, he is still the same. Oh Beloved, this argueth we want reall life in our profession; for Christ would draw nigh in these dispensations, he would blesse our store, and make our five talents to increase to ten. We should find vertue coming from *God* into our souls by these duties as she did from Christ by touching his garment.

6. In such there is no stedfastnesse.

Sixthly, Where there is onely a *Name* of life and no more, *Vox & praterea nihil*, as he said of the Nightingal, *Jacobs* cloathes but *Esau's* body, *There can be no stability or stedfastnesse in the day of violent temptations*; and we may observe that our Saviour did greatly presse this upon his Disciples, to make them such as could abide all tempests; To this purpose *Luk. 6.* is that Parable of the foolish and wise builder, as also *Math. 13.* of the thorny ground that for a while did flourish, till the scorching Sunne arose, and why was all this Apostasie? because they had no root, they did not digg deep enough to build on a rock; where therefore there is no true life of grace within, all duties and every profession will vanish, like the land-floud it will quickly dry up for want of a spring. Take away the formall and carnall respects that moved him to religious duties, and then you take away the pillar of his building; put this rush from the mire, and it will not grow.

Lastly, Where there is only a *Name* of life, and not life it self, *There all the duties of religion are by the by, the accessory, the lesse principall; but earthly*

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contents and delights are the main and principal. Thoſe in *Amos* 8. 5. that did keep up the ſolemn duties God required, did them only for faſhion ſake, to keep up a name, for their hearts were not in them, they asked when the *new moons and Sabbaths ſhould be over*, that they might be in their earthly imployments; And if there were nothing but this, we might ſadly complain, that there is nothing but the name of Chriſtianity and religion every where. For who makes godlineſſe his main buſineſſe and imployment? who can ſay, with *Paul*, Gal. 3. *I no longer live but Chriſt in me:* Oh ſtrive to write after this Copie; take *Paul* for an example, *Not I, but Chriſt liveth in me:* why doth that proud ſelf, that worldly ſelf, that carnal ſelf live in thee?

Uſe. Of Examination, Let it come to the touchſtone and triall, be willing to drink down this jealouſie-water, go and weigh your perſons, your profeſſion in the balance of the Sanctuary; Oh be afraid leſt ſuch formality, deadneſſe, and dullneſſe that is in thee, make thee not appear too light, and ſo God refuſe thee; Oh that God would perſwade you to be faithfull in making a diligent ſearch; how many dead corps will there be in every family more then amongſt the *Egyptians*? and yet for one dead perſon, what crying and complaining was there? Would not *Rachel* give over weeping becauſe of her dead children? Why wilt thou then ceaſe mourning for ſuch Friends as are ſpiritually dead?

SERM. XXXIV.

The great Sinfulneſſe and Danger of having but a Name to live.

REV. 3. 1.

I know thy works, that thou haſt a Name that thou liveſt and art dead.

THe laſt day, we diſcovered the properties of ſuch who had a name only in Religion but were dead: In the next place, I ſhall aggravate the ſinfulneſſe of ſuch an eſtate, and ſhew the vanity and inſufficiency of it, though moſt men reſt in that alone; and firſt *A name without the reality of the ſpirituall life is very abſurd and ridiculous.* *Nomen* is of *noſco*, that whereby we know what a thing is; As *Abigal* ſaid of *Nabal*, 1 Sam. 25. 25. *As his name, ſo is he*; Folly is with him, as his Name ſignifieth: It's *Ariſtotles* rule from the names of things, we muſt come to make the definition of their natures: Its one argument that our Divines uſe againſt the Socinians, who hold *Adam* was created a very ſimple innocent man, even like an Infant; that he was indued with full knowledge and wiſdome, becauſe God brought all the creatures to him, & he gave them names; which proveth that he knew all their natures. So then the name and the nature ſhould agree, if thou art called a beleever thou ſhouldeſt live like the life of faith; if thou art named a Saint, thou ſhouldſt live as one that is holy to the Lord: If thou art called a Chriſtian, thou ſhouldſt have that ſpirituall anointment of all graces upon thee, otherwiſe thou art a Chriſtian by an *Antiphraſis, quaſi* no Chriſtian, as they ſay, *bellum quia minime bellum*: or as in the Hebrew, an whore is called a ſanctified or holy one,

The ſinfulneſs of having only a name to live.

I. Its is abſurd and ridiculous.

in a clean contrary ſenſe: Conſider then, how abſurd a thing it is for thee to have the name of a beleever, who liveſt as a Athieſt. Thou ſpeakeſt, thou doeſt, as if the Scriptures were not true, The ſentence runs thus, as if the promiſes were not faithful, or the threatnings ſure. God ſometimes changednames, but then he made a real change alſo. Thus *Abram* was called *Abraham*, & *Sarai Sarah*, ſo *Peter* was called *Cephas*: If it be thus with thee, that ſince thou haſt had theſe glorious Names, thou haſt had alſo a mighty change in thy converſation; this is good and comfortable: Its noted as a ridiculous imitation in the Popes, who upon their creation take new names, *Clemens* and *Urbanus*, ſuch pleaſing titles, be they never ſo cruell and oppreſſive of the truth. That Incendiary of the whole world would be called *Bonifacius*, though he was one of the worſt *Malefacias*'s that ever lived: Oh then let this make thee aſhamed out of thy impiety and wickedneſſe: Say, What an abſurd, fooliſh thing is it, that I ſhould take thoſe ſolemn and even dreadfull titles of a Beleever, a Chriſtian, upon me, and yet live like a Beaſt or a Devil?

2. It's a breach of the third Commandment.

2. *Its a Direct breach of the third Commandement, Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*, for which there is that ſevere commination. *God will not hold them guiltleſſe that do ſo.* To take Gods Name in vain is not onely by perjury and by that ordinary curſing and ſwearing amongſt men, but every thing by which God is made known to us, is Gods Name: Thus his Ordinances, his worſhip, his truth, theſe are his Name, and we take them in vain when we only keep up the externall form of them, not putting forth the life and power of them, Thus the Jews and all ſuch Gentiles as come into the outward profeſſion of Gods truth and worſhip, his name is ſaid to be called upon by them; ſo that an empty dead Chriſtian is a ſinner in an higher manner then at firſt we would think: Theſe Titles are ſacred and religious, They are *Gods* Name, and for thee to uſe it idlely and vainly, provoketh *God*, and he will not hold thee guiltleſſe: Oh how little do theſe dead formall Chriſtians think to finde themſelves out, in the number of perjured and prophane curſers at the laſt day? Thoſe would upon every occaſion take the name of God in their mouths and aſſume it, to witneſſe a lie; and thou doſt ſo continually, by having the name of Religion, but being deſtitute of the reall power of it.

3. It's a denying of God.

3. *Where there is only a name and no inward life, there is a reall and plain denying of God*, a renouncing of God, *Tit.* 1.16. They profeſſe they know God, but in works they deny him: God doth not matter thy profeſſion, thy religious worſhip, when he ſeeth thy works to the contrary: In the Civill Law, it's a rule, *Non valet proteſtatio contra factum*, much leſſe will thy bare proteſtation prevail againſt thy works, *Iſa.* 1. Thoſe Jews that did ſo much abound in externall worſhip, that they even wearied God, God profeſſeth his great hatred and abomination of them: The killing of a Sacrifice was as abominable as to *cut off a dogs head*, and why ſo? *They did not waſh them, or make them clean*; and therefore he calls them not Jews, as they were by profeſſion, but *Princes of Sodom and Gomorrah*, as they were by reall wicked actions. And thus the Apoſtle *Rom.* 2. ſaith that *Circumciſion is made uncircumciſion to him that obeyeth not the Law*: I tell thee thy prophanneſſe, thy lukewarmneſſe makes thee as if thou wert no Chriſtian, makes thee as it were an heathen and a ſtranger to the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*. Did Chriſt look upon it otherwiſe than a mockery and a reall renouncing of him, when they put a crown upon his head, and ſaid, *Hail, King of the Jews?* for by their actions they crucified him, though by their words they ſeemed to honour him.

4. It's a great reproach and diſhonour to God.

4. *A name without life is a great reproach and diſhonour to God*; for hereby the name of God is blaſphemed, and his truth derided, when mens lives are ſo contrary to their names. *Rom.* 2. The ungodly Jew made *the Name of God to be blaſphemed amongſt the Gentiles*; What unworthy and ſhamefull things any ſervants do, it redounds to the reproach of their Maſter; Now all men by their Chriſtian

Christian profession acknowledge Christ their Lord and Master: if therefore such do wickedly, Christ is immediately dishonoured by them. *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *Naomi* would not have her own name, because her condition was so contrary to it, *Call me no more Naomi, but Marah*; saith she, so maiest thou say, Call be not a Beleever, a Christian, for I have not the life of Christ, but rather I am unsavory salt, I am a spot and a blemish to Christ and the Church wherein I live. The honour then and glory of God should be a great motive with thee; How can I do this and blaspheme that holy Name wherewith I am called? This made *Ambrose* say, *Nomen inane* was *crimen immane*, an empty name was an horrid crime, because God is hereby reproached as if he countenanced and allowed such followers.

5. It's a vain thing, *for it cannot hide thee from the wrath of God*; He seeth through thy name into thy nature and life. God is not like *old Isaac* that takes *Jacob* for *Esau* because of his counterfeit Garments; But as *Jeroboams* Wife, though she had disguised her self, yet as soon as the Prophet heard her feet at the threshold said, *Come in thou Wife of Jeroboam*; so can God much rather say, Come in thou hypocrite, Come in thou worldling, thou proud man, though thou disguisest thy self by names and pretences. Do not then think of thy self as commended by this the more unto *God*: And as it is a vain thing in respect of *God*, so it is also as to thy comfort and good; The bare name of Christianity doth not give thee any soul-saving benefits; It brings not pardon of sin or interest to the Kingdome of glory, no more then the name of meat will feed an hungry man, or the name of rayment clothe a naked man. Therefore the Apostle in that Epistle to *James* cap. 2. doth on purpose set himself to shew the insufficiency of titular faith; if it be not accompanied with an holy life, it is a *dead faith*, and the man is a *vain man*. What wilt thou do then, O thou deceiver of thy own soul, in the day of death and *Gods* wrath will this bare name be proved sufficient to keep off the scorching heat of the Sunne? Will this administer any true peace and solid joy to thee? What if men call thee rich, when thou art extremely poor? What if they call thee sound and well, when thou art pained with exquisite torments? and what if others do praise thee, call thee a good man, a religious man, when thy conscience may condemn thee for a dead wretch? If then a name and nothing else be accounted a vain thing in other matters, why not especially in Religion which is wholly practicall? 5. It's a vain thing.

6. *The excellent promises and priviledges of Religion are not made to names and titles, but to realities*; We read in Scripture of great and glorious things promised, justification of our persons, adoption, boldnesse with *God*, assurance at the Throne of Grace, and an happy enjoyment of *God* for ever: Now who are they whom *God* will thus honour? Those that have a name and title only? no, but there must be the reall qualifications and conditions which *God* requireth. *Isa.* 44. 3, 4, 5. We have there an excellent promise of the Name and nature together; What refreshments and spiritual waterings they shall have that take *Gods* Name upon them, *I will pour water upon the thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground*: Here a man unsanctified is compared to a dry ground and a wilderness, and the grace of *God* to precious streams and floods poured out upon it, and they shall not only have the life of grace, but they shall flourish and grow as willows by the water-courses: Thus *God* will sanctifie their inwards and bless their outwards, and when thus qualified, then *one shall say I am the Lords, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the Name of Israel*: See here what kinde of persons those should be that call on *Gods* Name, and give themselves up to him, persons, powerfully and plentifully, wrought upon by the holy Spirit of God, who of a wilderness are become a pleasant paradise: 6. The excellent promises are not made to it.

We read that the Church ſometimes uſeth this argument, why *God* ſhould more eſpecially protect her and ſhew mercy to her, even becauſe ſhe calls on his name, *Jer.* 14. 9. *Why ſhouldſt thou be as a man aſtoniſhed as a mighty man that cannot ſave? yet thou O Lord art in the midſt of us, and we are called by thy name:* And *Jer.* 10. 25. the Prophet thinketh this argument enough *to powr out his wrath upon the heathen, becauſe they call not on Gods name.* But when a people have rebelled againſt *God*, and walked contrary to him; then this argument will not prevail till there be repentance and reformation, as appeareth by *Gods* dealing with the people of *Iſrael*; ſo then conſider with thy ſelf; To whom do thoſe promiſes belong of grace and ſalvation? who are they, that have the Lord for their portion and ſalvation? Even ſuch as with the name have the power alſo of Chriſtianity. Therefore beſides this open known Name of a Chriſtian or Beleever, we read of a new *ſecret Name which none knows but he that hath it*; and this is promiſed to him that overcometh, to him that is reall and powerfull in the waies of *God*, *Rom.* 2. 7. Oh then conſider whether thou haſt this new Name in a white ſtone. It's an alluſion, they ſay, to the cuſtome of Heathens, who uſed to acquit a man accuſed by a white ſtone, and writing his name therein: ſo that this is a glorious promiſe of an excellent Name, *viz.* to be the Sons of *God* in deed and in power, and ſuch knowledge they ſhall have of this, that they themſelves ſhall be certain of it, although they cannot expreſſe it to another. They cannot reveal it to another, becauſe of the unſpeakable ſweetneſſe and delight they feel among themſelves: As a man that taſteth and eateth honey can never expreſſe it by words ſo to another that knoweth it not, that he ſhall be able to perceive it. Thus we have alſo an excellent promiſe made, *Iſa.* 6. 5. to the godly Jews, called *Eunuches*, becauſe of their ſeparation into a ſtrange Land, and to without any hope of a poſterity after them, *I will give them a better Name then of Sons and Daughters*; and that was to be Gods Sons & Daughters: ſo that howſoever there be great names full of glory in the world, and comfortable names, as of father and children; yet if we have the power as well as the title of our Chriſtian names, they are more excellent and joyfull than all theſe. How ſhould this provoke you to have life it ſelf as well as the name of it, becauſe to it only theſe glorious things do belong?

7. It expoſeth a man to greater condemnation than thoſe who never knew the name of God.

To This Name to live, without life it ſelf, will bring a greater curſe, and doth expoſe us to a greater condemnation then thoſe who never knew this Name of God to be called on it. There is nothing more ordinary then out of Scripture to hear, that even heathens, yea, the worſt of Heathens, the Sodomites, ſhall be leſſe puniſhed then the Jew, who yet had the only name of Gods people in the whole world: Oh this very Name, this very Title will coſt thee dear: In *Valens* the Emperours time, an Oracle was bruited abroad, that one whoſe Name did begin with *Theod* ſhould be Emperour which made all thoſe of quality whoſe Name did begin ſo, *Theodorus*, or *Theodoſius*, or *Theodulus*, to be put to death: a meer Name coſt them ſo dear. Hath it not been made treaſon by the Laws of many Nations, to counterfeit the name, and pretend to be ſuch perſons to whom the ſupream power doth belong, when indeed they were counterfeits? Hath not ſuch Names and Titles coſt them dear? How then will *God* let it go unpuniſhed, when thou ſhalt aſſume his name and profeſſion upon thee, pretend to be his Son and Diſciple, yet be diſcovered to be a meer counterfeit? The greater torments in hell are prepared for wicked Chriſtians; Heathens and Pagans receive a leſſer condemnation: Know, that as his Name hath exalted thee above others, ſo it makes thy wickedneſſe greater, and thy judgements will depreſſe thee lower: Be then afraid rather then boaſt of that holy name whereby thou art called. Say, what a conviction and condemnation will this be to me at the day of Judgment? If I would not by my life obey his commands, why did I take that Name upon me? If I would not conform to his precepts,

why

why would I be accounted of his family? Out of thy own mouth, God will condemn thee.

8. *This Name of living without life it self, doth not only dishonour God, destroy thy self, but also doth a world of hurt to others*: It makes them rest contented with such formes and titles; They think there is no more to be done then to be baptized, and to professe we believe in Christ, let our conversation be never so prophane and wicked; The Pharisees by that name and title, drew thousand of proselytes into hell with themselves: There is no open enemy can do so much hurt to the way of godlinesse, as a formal, empty Christian, who walketh plausibly in the outward form of piety, but is negligent of the lively exercise thereof. This man makes all his family, all his acquaintance such painted Sepulchres, such glorious pictures; He keeps them all in dead duties and a dead Religion, they thinking it not manners or wisdom to be more fervent and zealous then such an one of so great a Name. 8. It doth a world of hurt to other men.

Now to these aggravations I shall subjoyn some few Cautions: As Cautions.

First, *A good name in Religion is to be maintained and kept up*, as *Solomon* Pro. 22. 1. preferreth it *above riches and gold*, and the excellency or use of this appeareth by Satan and his instruments, who have alwaies laboured to besmear the godly with ill names, hoping thereby to make the godly more odious; Thus the Christians were of old called βορβόριται, as if they were Swine wallowing in the mire, and some think they were called *calicolæ*, as if they worshipped the Heavens and the Clouds, because they had no Images or Idols: Our Saviour was traduced in his name as an impostor, as one that had compact with the devill; Thus a good name is to be desired, and to be kept up. I.

But Secondly, This is not to be done for vain-glory and the applause of men; but that hereby the Gospel of God may be honoured, and others encouraged to come in to Christ. *Trajan* the Emperour out of vain-glory would have his Name set up in every building: Therefore *Constantine* the Great called him *Herba parietaria*, the wall-gillyflower, because his name was in every Wall. And *Tully* observed it as a vain glorious act of those that wrote Books *De contemnenda gloria*, yet they would subscribe their names to be known. This ambition is ridiculous, but to keep up a good name and a glorious repute, that thereby godlinesse may be honoured, and others won to love the truth, is that which our Saviour expressely commands, when he saith, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may glorifie God*, Mat. 5. 16. II.

Yea thirdly, *It is not only lawfull thus to have a name, and to keep up the external profession of faith in Christ, but it is a duty.* No man may think it enough to keep a good heart though they make no expression of it, for *Rom.* 10. *With the heart man believeth, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation.* And this rebuketh two sorts of men: Some there are, that though their expressions are never so wicked, their lives never so foul, yet they say, their hearts are as good as any others, whereas *out of the evill treasure of the heart*, cannot but come evill things. Some again, and those godly, have been in such temptations, as not to speak or confesse of any good thing before others, lest they should be judged hypocrites: The devill hath for a while seduced some tender weak Christians, that they are unwilling to pray, to come to any Ordinances for fear of hypocrisie: But resist this temptation by faith, and never omit any duty for whatsoever Satan shall suggest to them. III.

Use of Exhortation, To make an happy agreement between your names and your lives; your name is Christian, let your life be so; your title is a Beleever, let your actions be full of this faith. Who would not be inraged, if any should say thou art no Christian, no Believer, and yet thy prophane life manifests it to all the world? As *Paul* doth allude to *Onesimus* his name, who before had wronged his master, but upon his repentance *Paul* desires *Philemon* to receive *Use.*

him

him again, assuring him now he will be ὄνησιος indeed profitable to him, his name and actions will agree: Thus do thou; Lord, if my former Heathenish and Paganish life may be forgiven, I will now be a Beleever indeed, a Saint indeed: Its your prophanesse that gives men occasion to dispute whether our particular Churches be Churches indeed: What, say they, can such be Saints, who are drunkards, swearers? then you may call white black, and black white, and all that can be answered is, That such are burdens, they are spots and blemishes, we pray that such old leaven may be cast out, that we may be a new lump. Well, if thou art free from this grosse wickednesse, take heed of secret hypocrisie, that thou art not dead in the root, that humane respects be not all the oyl that makes the Lamp of thy profession to burn; for they did not only build *Babel* to get themselves a name, but some may build *Jerusalem* also meerly to have a name; but God seeth into the heart, and knoweth the root of all thy waies: Therefore remember you have to do with an All-seeing God, not a partiall man.

SERM. XXXV.

The Arraignment of Formality: Shewing, that all Unregenerated men and their duties, are Spiritually dead; and that most men are in that estate.

REVEL. 3. 1.

Thou hast a name that thou livest, but art dead.

I. WE proceed to raise a third Doctrine from the sinne that the Church of *Sardis* is charged with; and that is,

Observ. *That it is not enough to keep up the observance of holy and religious duties, unlesse they come from a spirituall life within.* And thou art dead (saith Christ) There may be a dead Religion, a dead form of piety: for that as the body without a soul, though you should put glorious raiments on it, were only *cadaver*, a meet carkasse, so it is here, Though a man should have the tongue of men and Angels in holy duties, yea if the heart be dead, and destitute of the life of grace, they are not at all accounted of by God. As Christ himself is said to be *life*, so he giveth a spirituall life to all his members, *John* 6. 33. In so much that whatsoever duties, or holy actions come not from this inward life, they cannot be accepted of by God, no more then men can love or imbrace their dead friends; so that we are now upon the essentialls of godlinesse. This is the τὸ ἔσον in Religion, whether thy duties, thy praying and hearing come from a fountain of life within thee, whether thou art a cistern or a spring; whether it may be said of thee, as the Father did of his Prodigall, *This my son was dead, but is alive*, I was a dead man, in all my duties, my Religion

ligion and piety was a dead Religion, my faith and repentance were dead, but now God hath made me alive to righteouſneſſe.

To ſet this truth before you, conſider First, *That the Scripture delights to ſet forth the ſtate of an unregenerate man, deſtitute of the converting grace of God, under the expreſſion of death*, they are judged to many dead men, *Mat.* 8. 22. *Let the dead bury the dead. Epheſ.* 2. 1. *Dead in treſpaſſes and ſinnes, 1 Tim.* 5. 6. *She is dead while ſhe liveth.* Now this phraſe is very comprehenſive, and is uſed by the holy Ghoſt for many reaſons: As

I. God ſets out the eſtate of unregeneracy under the expreſſion of death.

1. *Death is a deprivation of all ſenſe and feeling*, They cannot any more perform any vitall operation. Should all the mountaines in the world be laid on a dead man, or all the exquiſite torments that can be invented, applied to his body, it will not make him give one groan or cry, he is dead and hath no feeling: Thus it is with every man deſtitute of Gods grace, he is not in the leaſt manner ſenſible of his ſinne, the danger and burden of it. But though he reade the Scripture, hear the word preached, and that about thoſe very particular ſins he liveth in, yet he is like an Idol that hath eys and ſeeth not, ears and heareth not: Every auditory is a *Golgotha*, *a place of dead mens ſkuls*, as it were; and they are like *Ezekiel's dry bones*, till God breathe life into them; were it poſſible that men ſhould hear and know ſo much, yet runne into all exceſs of riot, but that they are ſo many dead Corpſes, know not, feel not, the burden upon them? Wonder not then, to ſee men in the ſame wretched and ſenſeleſſe eſtate they were once in; for till God ſpeak as he did to *Lazarus*, Come out of the grave and live, they apprehend nothing at all. Therefore as it is to be ſhewed, no duties have life in them, which are not accompanied with a ſpirituall ſenſe and feeling of our own wants, and of the excellency and fullneſſe in Chriſt. Thouſands of duties which thou putteſt ſo much confidence in, are as the Scriptures expreſſion is, nothing but the *head of a dead Dog*, a moſt contemptible and abominable thing, till there be the life of grace.

1. Becauſe death is a deprivation of ſenſe and feeling.

2. As the ſtate of ſin is death, becauſe of the ſenſleſneſſe of it, ſo alſo *becauſe of the diſſolution of that union the ſoul had with God, in its creation.* Death is the diſſolution of that union the ſoul and body had, and ſo this ſpirituall death ſeparates the ſoul from God; in ſo much that they are ſaid, *Epheſ.* 3. to be *without God, and alienated from the life of God.* They are without Chriſt, and ſo, as branches ſeparated from the Vine, cannot flouriſh, or bring forth fruit; God is the life of the ſoul, as the ſoul is the life of the body: Thus then all men are dead, who are not united to Chriſt by his Spirit, and therefore let thy duties and Religion be never ſo famous in the world, if it come not from the Spirit of Chriſt in thee, uniting thee to him, they are dead and unprofitable duties. Thus *Rom.* 8. 10. *The Spirit is life becauſe of righteouſneſſe*: & v. 2. *ſanctification* is called *the law of the ſpirit of life*, as ſome learned men expound it. As long then as thy ſoul is thus divided from Chriſt, having no union or communion with him, thou art in the ſtate of dead men, and all thy Religion is a dead Religion: It muſt be the Spirit of God, that giveth life to thee.

2. Becauſe of the diſſolution of the union between the ſoul and God.

3. The Scripture calls this a ſtate of death, *becauſe of the ſpirituall uncleanneſſe and defilement that is upon us*, being impure, and making every thing impure: We ſee in the Leviticall rites, that if a man touched a dead man, or a bone of a dead man, or the grave only, he was unclean ſeven daies, *Numb.* 19. 16. Now this typicall uncleanneſſe, doth denote ſpirituall uncleanneſſe; and that is part, though not all the reaſon why ſins are called dead works, *Heb.* 9. 14. becauſe he there ſpeaks of being purified from them, by an alluſion to the Jewiſh ſprinkling of thoſe that were unclean, *ver.* 13. So then the Scripture calls thy unregenerate eſtate, *death*, to ſhew thy uncleanneſſe, thy defilement, that thou ſhouldſt be as loathſome and abominable to thy ſelf, as a dead carkaſs is to thee, that thy very duties and religious performances ſhould be utterly diſtaſtfull

3. Becauſe of the ſpirituall uncleanneſſe and defilement that is upon us.

full to thee: and certainly if the Church looketh upon her righteouſneſſe, though ſanctified, as menſtruous rags, with what loathing ſhouldſt thou behold all thy holy duties done in a ſtate of enmity againſt *God*? Oh the vaſt difference between thy thoughts and *God's*, concerning thy holy duties! That which thou calleſt holineſſe he deſpiſeth as a dead carkaſſe, ſo that thou ſhouldſt even remove theſe out of his ſight, as thou wouldſt thy ſinnes, even to fear, *God* ſhould behold thy praying, and hearing, becauſe of that ſpirituall uncleanneſſe upon thee, as well as curſing and ſwearing! Thou comeſt to the feaſt, not having a wedding garment.

4. It denotes what horror the ſtate of ſin ſhould ſtrike into every one.

4. This expreſſion of death, doth alſo denote *what terrour and amazement the ſtate of ſinne ſhould ſtrike into every one.* If corporall death be called *the King of terrors*, how much rather ſpirituall? Art thou afraid to dye, why not then to be kept in the bonds of this ſpirituall death? If the Phyſitian tell the diſeaſed patient, he is a dead man, all the world cannot help him; what fear and trembling doth this beget? Now though the meſſenger of God tell the unconverted man, lying under the power of ſinne, that he is a dead man, even a damned man, in reſpect of Gods curſe, till repealed upon repentance, he is not moved at all: Oh then be awakened upon this truth, Am I not dead in my ſinne? Can I be in a more wretched and terrible eſtate then I am? If I were to be carried to the grave, all my friends weeping over the hearſe, its not ſo miſerable as now it is with me; may not all godly friends mourn over me, as a dead man? How long ſhall we hear theſe things, and yet be as dead men? Do thou flatter and applaud thy ſelf, yet remember thou art in the terrible eſtate of a ſpiritually dead and miſerable man.

5. Becauſe unregenerated men cannot perform any vitall actions.

5. They that are in a ſtate unregenerated, may well be called Dead, *becauſe they cannot perform any vitall actions.* They cannot underſtand ſpirituall things, they cannot love, will, or imbrace them: But as *Ariſtotle* ſaith, A dead eye, or dead hand, is an equicocall eye or hand, it hath onely the name, but not the operation of thoſe faculties: Thus it is with all unconverted men, They are believers, they pray, hear, repent, equivocally, they have the name of theſe things, but not the proper operation; they do not underſtand, believe, delight or reioyce in holy things; and indeed this is properly to perform holy duties, without a principle of ſupernaturall life, when there are not thoſe divine workings and operations of the heart in them; The minde is not ſpiritually inlightened, the will is not ſanctified, the affections not mortified, and the whole indued with principles from above. Come we then to the marrow of all godlineſſe, ſee with what hearty principles of life all thy duties are accompliſhed; Is life in thy minde, in thy will, in thy affections? then God ſmells a ſweet ſavour in all thy duties, otherwiſe thy duties are but as ſo many flowers cut from the root, that preſently wither and loſe all their ſweetneſſe. Give me then a Chriſtian that beſides meer praying, hearing, coming to Church, doth ſpiritually underſtand and powerfully will and imbrace heavenly things; that he be not a golden image that hath no life within.

6. Becauſe ſuch have no communion with God or the Saints.

6. The Scripture calls this, a dead eſtate, *becauſe there is no communion or fellowſhip with God or the Saints.* For as the dead do no more converſe with the living: Therefore *Heman* deſcribing his ſolitary condition, ſaith, he was a dead man, as one forgotten. The dead and the living can have no ſociety or communion together: Therefore the godly are ſaid, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. to be *lively ſtones built up to a ſpirituall houſe*: If we ſpeak of God, alas, the unregenerate man, though he pray, and hear, yet he hath no communion with God, becauſe dead in his ſinne: As *Hezekiah* in another caſe ſaid, *The living, the living he ſhall praiſe thee*; ſo it is here, The living, the living he ſhall pray to thee, he ſhall hear the Word preached to advantage. Or as in the matter of the reſurrection, God is ſaid to be *the God of the living, and not of the dead*, its true of the ſpiritually dead, as well as the corporally dead; *God* is not worſhipped,

ſerved

ſerved, or loved by them, but they are ſtrangers to *God* and know him not, even while they draw nigh to him, and call on his Name: And as he is not in communion with God, ſo neither in communion with the Saints, but as dead members in the whole body, or withered branches in the tree; ſo are they in the Church of God; he doth not quicken up others, or is quickened by others; he doth neither impart good or receive good, but is as a dead tree in Paradiſe, whereas every godly man is a tree of life therein, living in himſelf, and inſtrumentally making others to live.

Laſtly, Unregenerate men are ſaid to be dead, *becauſe of their utter impotency and inability to do any good action.* Can *Lazarus* raiſe up himſelf from the grave? no more can we from ſin; we are not onely ſaid to be blinde or deaf, but even dead, that ſo all may be given to the power and grace of *God*. The *Arminian* and *Pelagian*, even all that are enemies to grace under the praiſe of nature, they love not to hear of this expreſſion; they think if rigidly urged, it overthroweth their ſandy foundations: therefore they will make it a partiall death, or no death, and ſeveral waies wreſt and ſubvert the text: but if *God* be the ſole author of our naturall life, can we be the authors of ſupernaturall life? We that could not make our ſelves men, which is the leſſe, ſhall we make our ſelves holy men? which is the greater: We that cannot make a fly or worm, ſhall we cauſe grace? For the making of a man godly is a creation, and a greater then the creation of the whole world, as *Auſtin* expreſſed it: So that this very expreſſion may fill us with great confuſion, we ſhould lye on the duſt, and bewaile our ſoars, our impotency to any duty. *John* 15, our Saviour doth excellently purſue this truth, *That without him we can do nothing*, no more then the *branch without the Vine*: No more then *Adams* body, which was a lump of earth, could move or ſtirre till *God* breathed life into him, and made him a living ſoul. But you will ſay, If the dead can do no good thing, How comes it about that this Church could have a name; ſhe did pray, ſhe kept up the externall obſervation of all *Gods* worſhip, therefore certainly ſome good thing ſhe did. To this the anſwer is eaſie, That there is a twofold good work, *bonum internum*, which is eſſentially good, as to believe, to repent, to love *God*; and *bonum externum*, an outward good work, ſuch as to hear, to pray, to come to Church, theſe duties may be outwardly done, by the power of nature; but the firſt ſort cannot. And even theſe latter, though they may be done, yet they cannot be done well, in a right and holy manner; they pray, but not well; they hear, but not in a right manner: and thus it is no wonder, if men, though dead in ſinne, may yet do thoſe outward actions, which for the nature of them are good, but not in a godly manner. And this is the firſt thing conſiderable.

7. Becauſe of their utter impotency and inability to do any good action.

Secondly, The Scripture doth not only ſay, mens perſons are dead, thus diſtinguiſhing of living men and dead men, *but it alſo makes ſuch a diſtinction of graces*; it tells us of a *dead faith* and a *living faith*; not that a dead faith is a grace, or faith indeed, but becauſe it appeareth ſo; as the ſpirit which appeared is call *Samuel*, becauſe it came up like him: Or as the *Angels* did eat ſometimes when they appeared, which could not be a vitall action, for an Angel was only a Form aſſiſting, not informing the bodies they aſſumed. The Apoſtle *James*, cap. 2. tells us ſeverall times of a *dead faith*, and makes it that which is not accompanied with all the good works that God requireth; ſo by this, we may as well ſay, there is a dead Chriſtianity, a dead Baptiſm, a dead Religion, when with theſe we do not ſee ſanctified and reformed lives. So *Act.* 11. 8. Thus we reade of *a repentance unto life*, which doth ſuppoſe a dead repentance, ſuch as *Ahab* had; *Judas* had; they repented, but it was not to life: Even as *Auſtin* called the perſecutions that the Hereriques, *Arrius* or others ſuſtained for their hereſies, *Steriles perſecutiones*, barren perſecutions, becauſe they did make up the carnall glory, they

II. The Scripture maketh the like diſtinction of graces. There is a deah faith.

A dead repentance.

did not bring any heavenly advantage: Thus is a dead and barren repentance. Again the Scripture, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. tells us of a *lively hope*, whereby we may gather, there is a *dead hope*. So that there is no true living grace, but the appearance and similitude of it may be called a dead one. You see then there is a dead faith, a dead hope, a dead repentance, and therefore it behoveth every one with the more care to consider of it. As they did, before *Solomon*, *strive* about the *dead Child and the living*, no lesse do thou in prayer to God, that the live Child may be given to thee.

A dead hope

III. Thirdly, *This dead Religion and dead duties is the estate that almost all live in*, except those few whom God hath indowed with a spirituall life, and vouchsafed great zeal and fervency unto; the most part of Christians have a meer dead profession; our Congregations may be called *Acheldamaes*, the Church-yard and the Church both alike; one is full of the corporally dead, the other of spiritually dead: What dead praying, publique and private? what dead hearing? In all these is not thy heart like *Nabals*, a very stone within? The Hebrew expression for the water of a spring, is to call it *living water*, whereas the water of pools and ponds, having no motion, are *dead waters*: Where a people have not a fountain of grace springing up within them, they are dead and destitute of Christ; they are the *mare mortuum*, the dead sea; there are not those zealous and fervent motions of the soul to God: Oh take heed of dying corporally in this spirituall death! all thy Religion, thy duties, will be dead things to thee, of no use or power, as vain as to cry to dead men to help thee.

This dead Religion and dead duties, is the estate that almost all live in.

IV. Fourthly, *Even the people of God, though they have an inward life of grace within them, yet through negligence and carelessnesse they may be dead as to their own sense, and the judgement of others.* As the tree in Winter outwardly seemeth dead, but there is a secret root under ground, that keeps in life. Thus it is here; outwardly it may seem as if all their graces were withered, they have not the sense, the quicknesse, the joy, the delight, the communion with God, that once they had. As *Sarahs* womb was called a *dead womb*, so their hearts are dead hearts, they bring forth no fruit. As life is either taken *pro actu primo*, the fountain or root of life, or *pro actu secundo*, the motions and expressions of life; now as some diseases, the lethargy and the like, make men dead in the second sense, but not in the first: so thus it is with the godly, if you take life for the actuall motions and expressions of it, they are exceeding dead, you can hardly perceive any breathing in them, only there is a root under ground, and God in due time, he will quicken them, but when this deadnesse and senselessnesse is complained of there is an expression of life. As *David*, Psal. 119. prayeth God would *quicken him* often. So that there is a partiall and graduall deadnesse, which the people of God do often labour under, but this is not the deadnesse in the Text.

Use of Admonition. Let us all look to this truth, whether our Religion and duties come not from a dead heart, whether thou art not dead at root, for all the leaves that are upon thee! If there be any truth that we would wish you to think of (neyther and morning) to meditate on eating and drinking, it should be this, Am not I dead in the root all this while? Blame not the Ministry, or thy earthly imployments, but thy own heart. *Si rivus deficit, culpa est non alvei sed fontis.* If the stream dry up, the fault is not in the channell but in the spring. If thy duties, thy performances be barren, dry and empty, its because there is not a spring in thy heart. Why art thou so afraid of corporall death, and feareſt not this, which only deserveth the name of death? Oh the number of dead men that are every where! Those that lye buried in their graves are not more devoid of naturall life, then most men are of spirituall life. As therefore they were so solicitous to have Christ come and raise their dead friends, so be thou for thy self, in all that belongs to thee: Oh that this dead Child, dead husband or friend might be raised to a spirituall life.

Use.

SERM. XXXVI.

An Alarm for Drouſie Profeſſors: Setting forth the Signs of a Religion, or Duties, that are without ſpirituall Life.

REVEL. 3. 1.

Thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, and art dead.

THat which remaineth is to give us the evidences or ſignes of a Religion without life, of dead duties, of a dead faith and a dead repentance. And although the conſideration of the converſation of moſt within the Church, may abundantly teſtifie what this is; for where is there, if not in the Church, titles without realities, names without ſubſtances, forms without power? inſomuch as we may call them *Chriſtians without Chriſt*, *Believers without faith*; They pray, and do not pray; they hear, and do not hear. Though (I ſay) this were enough to bid thoſe who would know what a dead religion is, to go to our publick Aſſemblies, to our Family-duties, and behold the generall deportment of moſt men: Yet to ſet this the more powerfully upon you, I ſhall give you ſome plain evidences of it. *Signs of a Religion, and of duties without life.*

And firſt, *Thoſe duties never come from any life of grace within, that are upon feigned and forced outward motives*, when nothing within, but many outward conſiderations do move a man, There is nothing more ordinary then this, and yet nothing is a ſurer ſign of death. Thus the people that followed *Chriſt becauſe of the loaves*, *Judas* that was Chriſts Diſciple, becauſe of the *Purſe*, *Jehu* that did the great works God commanded, becauſe of temporall advantages; theſe had a name only, no life, becauſe the principle of motion was without: There are many things that by art and power we make to move as wheels or bowls, yet this is not a motion of life, becauſe the principle is without, and the Philoſopher defineth nature to be the principle of motion within and of it ſelf; then therefore thy duties are duties of life, when they are upon genuine and unfeigned motives, when the love of God, the excellency of Chriſt make thee move and be active for God, then thou doeſt ſhine with thy own light not with a borrowed light: Of all things life cannot be painted; the Painter can reſemble the body, and all the parts thereof in a moſt excellent manner, but when he cometh to the life of a thing, there he is loſt: So thou mayeſt with great reſemblance and applauſe, pray, hear, and approach to the Ordinances, but when it cometh to the life of them, there thou canſt not go any further: Do then the proper and eſſentiall qualities of grace move and work upon thee in thy duties? It is not cuſtom, formality, education, applauſe or eſteem in the world, but godlineſſe for godlineſſe ſake, Chriſt for Chriſts ſake, this is comfortable; But if they be accidentall or forced conſiderations, then its no more life, then if you ſhould take a dead mans arm, and by force move it up and down: Is it with thee in holy things, as with the devill and wicked men

I. Thoſe duties that are from forced outward motives are dead.

in evil things? The devil when he sinneth, it is from his own inclination, he is not tempted nor forced; if he were to choose, he would do thus; our Saviour doth fully expresse it; *John* 8. 44. *When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own.* Is it on the contrary with thee, when thou prayest, when thou hearest, these are of thy own; outward things do not move thee meerly? So for wicked men *Rom.* 8. they are said *to live in the flesh*, Why? because the sweetnesse and pleasures of the flesh do move them, if there were no others to tempt and allure them, yet they have enough of themselves to be carried out to evil: So it is with the godly, though there were no outward encouragements to godlinesse, yet the meer lovelinesse of them, it would draw out their hearts. Oh then remember, this is a great matter, when our religious duties are not from forced outward principles! *As he that is born of God*, is said, *not to sinne*, because it is not from a true and proper principle within him, his heart and nature being sanctified is otherwise inclined. So he that is in the state of sin, he doth not pray or hear, because though he doth them outwardly, yet the frame and inclination of his soul is farr otherwise.

2. When we are not united to Christ the fountain of life.

Secondly, *Then is all our Religion and seeming graces dead, when we are not united to Christ the fountain of all life.* Whatsoever we do, not joyn'd to him must necessarily be dead. Hence doth the Scripture so often compare him, to a *Vine*, and to an *Head*, and all because as the members and branches separated from these cannot live, or bring forth any fruit; so neither can a man, separated from Christ. So that this union with Christ, this ingrafting into the *fat Olive tree*, is first to be looked at, for till there be this vouchsafed, we are as to many dead or dry bones. Even as the Sunne is the fountain of all the heat and life in sublunary things, and if that were taken away, all things would be cold and dead: Thus it is here, Christ is the *Sunne of righteousnesse, he ariseth with healing in his wings*, Mal. 4. 2. Ephes. 3. 12. *He dwelleth in the heart by faith*; insomuch that *Paul* saith, *He no longer liveth, but Christ in him*, Gal. 2. Do then all thy religious duties come from that powerfull union with Christ? Thou doest not these duties solely of thy self, but Christ inables thee; not that Christ believeth or repenteth in thee, but his presence and power within enlivens thee to these things. So that before every duty make inquisition into this principle, Am I united to Christ? Doth heavenly vertue and power come from him into me?

3. Those duties only live that are accompanied with a tenderness and a sensibleness both of our wants and the remedy.

Thirdly, *Those duties do indeed live which are accompanied with a tendernesse and heavenly sensiblenesse both of our spirituall wants, and the excellency of spirituall remedies.* Where no sense or feeling is, there cannot be any life ordinarily; and a Christians sensibleneese discovers it self in these two things.

I. *A fresh and hearty feeling of the weight of sin, and all the terrible consequents of it.* Even as the childe, as soon as ever it cometh into the world, begins with tears, because of its indigency; so its here. As soon as ever any spirituall life is infused into the heart, the first discoveries of it are by sighs and groans, till it be, as *Moses*, delivered from these waters, by the love of God pardoning sinne. *Davids* Psalmes are full of life, because of the sensibleneese and affectionate tenderneese in him. Thus *Mary Magdalen* manifested the life of grace by those streams of tears that ranne from her. Not that all tears argue the life of grace, no more then all water is sweet. The water of the sea is not; that of the clouds falling from heaven, is. The extremity of our miseries and calamities may make us weep and cry in a very sensible manner, but this argueth only a naturall life, not a spirituall life. If we are sensible of the evil of sinne, of the wrath and displeasure of God, and do tenderly mourn, because *God* is thus offended, then he is a living spring within us, from whence these waters flow.

I.

II. In the next place also, *There must be a sensibleneese of the remedy, hungring and thirsting after Christ, as new born babes desiring this milk*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. Thus and

II.

thus

thus only are our duties and graces living, when they come from such tender apprehensions and sensibleness with it, & one duty performed from such a principle, is worth ten thousands babled over without any spirituall motion and feeling at all.

Fourthly, *Then is our Religion and our holy duties flowing from life, when the Spirit of God doth move and work in us, and upon us:* For to pray or hear in our own strength and abilities, though never so excellent, is as insufficient, as *Samson*, when his hair is cut off. *No man can say, that Jesus is Christ, but by the Spirit of God.* Hence *Act.* 2. *The Spirit of God in fire and mighty windes*, denoteth that it only makes the Ministery a lively Ministery, and hearing a lively hearing. Thus *Rom.* 8. The Spirit of *God* is that which *mortifieth sinne*, which *helps our infirmities in prayers*, and works those *unutterable groans*. Alas, all our duties are empty unlesse *Gods* Spirit doth overshadow the soul. As the Spirit of *God* in an extraordinary way did raise up and work upon the Prophets, making them above themselves; so the Spirit of *God* in an ordinary way, doth sanctifie and renew our natures, it filleth the soul with power, and enableth it by such divine assistance, that the things which by nature could never be done, by grace are performed with great ease and delight. The same Greek word πνεῦμα is attributed both to a mans spirit or soul, and to the holy Spirit; now as that giveth such motions and operations to the body, which of it self it could never perform; So doth the Spirit of God to those who partake of it. Hence *Stephen* and others when they performed any notable exploit of grace, it is said, *They were filled with the holy Ghost.* This fire will presently make the cold ice to melt. That which *Solomon* said of hot sinfull lusts, *Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his cloaths not be burnt?* is also true of this holy and divine fire. It cannot be in a mans heart, but the heavenly flames thereof will appear in our duties: Oh then pray that thou mayest be *the Temple of the holy Ghost*, thy heart the Altar upon which all thy spirituall Sacrifices shall be offered, and love the fire, to make thee an whole burnt-offering. That as in the Jewish administration, every *Sacrifice* was to be with *salt* and *fire*; so there may be such a spirituall seasoning of the whole man with a ready offering up of our selves to God, that as *Eliahs* body was carried up with a *whirlwind*, and *a fiery Charist to Heaven*; so our souls may be exalted in every duty.

4. Then is our Religion, and holy duties flowing from life, when the Spirit of God doth move and work in us.

Fifthly, *Then are our religious duties without life, when there is no setled, fixed or constant way in them*: For life is a sure, stedfast, and even principle of motion, but when men are religious upon other grounds, they move as uncertainly as their earthly interests do. The *Israelites* were a dead people in this sense, *In their afflictions they would seek God early, they would howl upon their beds*, for the losse of their *Corn* and their *Oyl*; but all this was not, because God was provoked; and therefore the *Psalmist* saith, *They quickly turned out of the good way, and their hearts were not stedfast within them*, Psal. 78. 37. All this is for want of a living spring within thee: The Sunne and Starrs they are constant in their motions and operations, because fixed by God, but blazing Starres and meteors they are wholly uncertain, because of the various matter of which they are compounded. Constancy and immoveableness in godly duties is a good evidence of life, *The hypocrite will not pray alwayes*; The cistern will not alwaies have water in it. The Land-flood will at last dry up. The herb that wants root will quickly wither; and thus it is here, where there are not living springs of grace within, you shall see the outward streams dry up; sometimes Family-duties, and then no Family-duties; sometimes private prayer, and then none again. These uneaven and uncertain motions argue all thy Religion is not *per se* but *per accidens*, as we say. Thou prayest and seekest God, as a man that unexpectedly findes a treasure, or as *Balaams* Asse spake upon an extraordinary oppression, which made her say, Did I ever so before? So thou under some extraordinary cala-

5. Then are religious duties without life, when men are not fixed in the constant performance of them.

calamities or occasions, Wilt thou call to pray, have thy family pray, but didst thou so ever before? Or is this thy constant and stedfast course, as the Sunne every day rejoyceth like a Giant to run its race?

It is wont not.

6. And when they keep a man in the same posture he was in many years ago.

Sixthly, *Duties and Religion from a life within, are such as keep a man in the same posture he was in many years ago.* His minde is no more enlightned, his heart is no more sanctified, his graces have not attained to one cubit higher then they were before, and I know no particular a surer evidence of a name, or form without life and power, then this. There is no encrease or growth, no hungrings and desires after an higher stature in Christ, but as the pictures in the house are alwaies of the same length and breadth they were; so are these: But growth in grace, the Scripture doth often command; and for this end is the Ministery as well as for conversion, *Ephes.* 4. 12. And for this end are those afflictions *God* laieth upon us. *Every branch is purged, that it may bring forth more fruit*, John 15. And we see the Apostle *Heb.* 6. terribly reproving those believers, that still staid in their *first principles*, and were not carried after perfection: Therefore cast up thy accounts, see how all thy duties further thee, and make thee increase in holinesse: Doest thou not pray and pray, hear and hear, come to Church an hundred times, yet art as earthly, proud, sensuall, as dull and negligent in holy things, as ever? Oh, if there were life within, *Thy five Talents would gain ten*, thou wouldst say with *Jacob*, *I came over Jordan with a staff, and now I am made two bands*, Gen. 32. 10. I began poor, but God hath made me rich!

7. And then there is no fervency and zeal, but lukewarmnesse in duties.

Seventhly, *When duties come not from life within, there is no fervency, no zeal, but meer lukewarmnesse.* And indeed in our common expression we call zeal and fervency, life. That Sermon is a dead Sermon which is lukewarm, and is not both burning and shining; so is all that Religion and all that profession very dead, which is cold, formall, lukewarm. Hence *Rom.* 12. *Be fervent in spirit serving the Lord*, boyling over, as the pot doth with an hot fire under it. The Church of *Laodicea* was a dead Church as well as this of *Sardis*, and it appeared by her *Lukewarmnesse*. As, this temper is very often, men pray as if they had no minde to it; they hear as if they did not much regard it; so it is very loathsome and abominable to *God*, it is a temper he cannot abide, when life goeth out of the body, then it groweth stark cold; and thus where the life of grace is not, the heat and all the duties of Religion are altogether cold: no zeal, no joy, no vigor of soul in the discharge of them. Awake then thou that sleepest, pray that *God* may give thee light and life, tremble at thy coldnesse, dulnesse. Oh think, Did the godly that lived to God shew no more affection and zeal to *God* then I do?

8. Also when our duties are empty and not filled up.

Eightly, *Then are our duties without life, when they are empty and not filled up as they ought to be.* This Christ doth instance in, as the main argument to prove she was dead, *I have not found thy works perfect filled up*; there was much emptinesse & defectivenesse in them. Now the emptinesse of Religion ariseth many waies; There may be a defect in the *principle*, when we do it not from supernatuall grace within; but from humane strength and power, this emptinesse must be filled up. Again, there is defectiveneſse *in the end*, when, what we do, is not for *God* in reference to him, but wholly to our selves. *Israel is an empty vine, bringing forth fruit to himself*, Hos. 10. 1. This must be filled up, so there may be defectiveneſse, because of worldly and *earthly distractions*. Thus the heart is like a vessel full of holes, there are many empty cranies, these must be filled up. Thus it is an exact thing to perform any holy duty; Deficiences and empinesse may arise many waies, and therefore it behoveth us to fill up these with all grace and holinesse. A remarkable character *God* giveth *Caleb*, Numb. 14. 24. *That he followed him fully*, there was no empties, nor void places in his heart.

9. When there no life of grace,

9. *Where there is no life of grace, there Religion and all duties are easily done.* There is no opposition without, from Satan to hinder thee; nor any contrariety from within,

within, but where the the life of grace is, there is alwayes a combate and conflict, as *Rom.* 7. & *Gal.* 5. *The ſpirit is willing, but the fleſh is weak.* The traveller that is poor feareth not, nor is moleſted with theeves. The Pirate marketh that Ship which is fraughted with gold. The devil lets thee pray, and hear, and never troubleth thee all the while thou art under his power, all the while there is nothing but fleſh in thy performances, there is no oppoſition; but when once thou goeſt about theſe duties in a ſpiritual heavenly manner, then, as Chriſt was ſought for as ſoon as ever he was was born by his enemies, ſo are thoſe beginnings and initialls of grace oppoſed and conflicted with the remainder of corruption; Inſomuch that the godly cry out, *Who is ſufficient* to pray, to hear? They mourn under their daily ſins, under their iniquities in holy things, being farre more troubled for not praying ſo fully and ſpiritually, then the wicked are for not ſpraying at all. Theſe things are ſo plain and undeniable, that it may put you all upon examination of your Religion, of your piety and devout duties, whether from a principle of heavenly life within or no. And as *Socrates* ſaid, he had done enough, if he could but provoke his diſciples to be deſirous to learn: ſo if theſe things do but thus farre inflame you, as to ſay, Oh Lord, if I be yet in a dead empty way, If my duties and performances do come ſhort of grace and glory, I heartily deſire to have a better way; The Lord open my eyes to ſee it, and give me an heart to embrace it.

there duties are eaſily done.

If thus farre (I ſay) the Word preached may prevail, here is a good foundation laid; And therefore let the Uſe be, to commune with your own hearts. Though we are not to queſtion the Principles of Arts, and to doubt of them, yet there are many practicall principles that all lay down about their piety and ſalvation, that its great wiſdom to doubt and queſtion about them; as in this particular, Thou comeſt to Church, thou praieſt, thou heareſt, and accounts this a Religion, a piety that will ſave thee, not at all diving and ſearching deeper, but from what root do theſe ſpring? What is that which giveth nouriſhment to all theſe things? With what life and zeal are theſe things performed? Oh it may make many a hearer to tremble at his emptineſſe and formality here in! Never therefore crie out of this thing or that, my company, my worldly imploiment, my earthly buſineſſes, theſe dead me; for thy dead heart within, makes all without dead. Now the means to obtain this ſpiritual life, is

1. Diligently and ſtudiouſly to depend upon the preaching of the Word, for that is the word of life, we are begotten a new by it. He that deſpiſeth or neglecteth the Miniſtery is a murderer of his own ſoul. God hath appointed this fooliſh and contemptible way to make dead men come out of the grave of ſinne, and live before him.

2. Apply thy ſelf to Chriſt, who is the bread of life, yea who is the reſurrection and the life. He that did ſo eaſily raiſe the corporally dead, can as eaſily thoſe that are ſpiritually dead. If the touching of his garment could prevail ſo much, how much more applying him by faith?

Laſtly, Be much with thoſe that have life and are lively, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *Lively ſtones* beleevers are called, As live-coals put together, make the dead coals alſo to live; Thus it is here, Be much with thoſe that have a ſpiritual life, they will make thee ſpiritual; their heat will beget heat in thee.

SERM.

SERM. XXXVII.

The Leaven of Hypocriſie.

LUKE. 11. 2.

Beware ye of the leaven of the Phariſees, which is hypocriſie.

WE have at large diſcovered *the vanity and inſufficiency of a titular and nominall Religion, without any ſubſtance and reality.* And that this whole way of counterfeit or unſound grace may be laid before your eyes, I ſhall at this time lay the axe to the root of the tree, diſcover *the bottom of all unſoundneſſe*, by treating on *hypocriſie in religion*, which is here forbidden by our Saviour.

In the words we ſee Chriſt himſelf induſtriouſly prohibiting his Diſciples from one ſinne above all others, giving a very forcible reaſon againſt it.

For the diviſion of the words, conſider, 1. The circumſtance of time expreſſed, *In the mean time, ἐν οἷς, inter quæ*, while theſe things were in acting, *viz.* Our Saviours plain and bold Sermon to the Phariſees, Scribes and Lawyers, arraigning them for their hypocriſie, which did ſo inrage them, that they craftily layd wait for his life, provoking him to ſpeak of many things, that they might have wherewith to accuſe him: Thus they act hypocriſie, even at that very time they are reproved for it: Upon this our Saviour beginneth the more terribly to deterre from this ſinne.

2. You have the occaſion of this diſcourſe, which was a great *number of people gathered together*, an innumerable multitude, *μυριάδες*, ſo that they trod one upon another: This is the fitteſt ſubject to be preached upon, if the whole world were auditors, To take heed of hypocriſie.

3. You have the more immediate and direct ſubject, he ſpeaks to, *his Diſciples*: He began to ſay to Them: Thus you ſee not only Phariſees and Scribes, profeſſed hypocrites are reproved, but even the Diſciples of Chriſt in the higheſt forme; they are to look this worm breeds not in their beſt flowers, that they ſwallow not poiſon mingled with ſweet wine.

4. There is the ſinne forbidden expreſſed, 1. Plainly, *hypocriſie*, of which more hereafter. 2. Metaphorically, *leaven*, *Beware of the leaven of the Phariſees*: Hypocriſie is here compared to leaven, that as leaven hath two main properties, *acorem & tumorem*, a *ſowring* and a *ſwelling* quality, thus hath hypocriſie.

5. Here is the circumſpect and induſtrious manner of prohibition of it, *Beware ye*, as of that which is very dangerous, and yet by which we may eaſily be ſeduced; Its a ſin, though very peſtilentiall and deſtructive, yet very unperceivable: And then *πρῶτον*, firſt of all, or above all other things, beware of this. Hence *Matth.* 16. 6. where is the ſame admonition preſſed; our Saviour addeth two words, *Take heed*, and *Beware*, Look with both your eyes, as we ſay; when prophaneneſſe cannot, take heed hypocriſie doth not damn you.

6. Here

6. Here is the kinde of hypocriſie forbidden, and that is, of the *Phariſees*; thoſe who were moſt renowned and exalted by all, Chriſt who knew their hearts charged them with this; now it was deformed and very abominable in them, as appeareth by their oſtentation, in prayer, alms, and faſting: Thus as the *Lacedemonians*, to make their Children abhorre drunkenneſſe, would preſent before their eyes, their ſervants drunk, that ſo in them they might ſee what a loathſome brutiſh thing it was, which was likely to work more upon them, then many longer exhortations to ſobriety: So our Saviour repreſenting to his Diſciples the affected and proud vain-glorious way of the Phariſees in all their duties, would hereby make them the more in love with humility and meekneſſe.

Laſtly, Here is the efficacious argument againſt hypocriſie, *For there is nothing covered that ſhall not be revealed*, &c. This our Saviour ſpake once or twice upon divers occaſions; as being a truth full of life and power. Now the queſtion is, *What is that hypocriſie, which is here forbidden?* for, *Matth.* 16, the Apoſtle doth expreſſely interpret it of the doctrine of the Phariſees, and here it ſeemeth to be of their heart-hypocriſie, and not doctrinall. To open this, conſider, That the word *leaven* is uſed in the Scripture ſometimes in a good ſenſe, and ſometimes in an evil; In a good ſenſe, ſo *Matth.* 13. 33 the Word of God preached is compared to leaven hid in the meal; that as leaven little in quantity, yet is great in efficacy, and ſo makes the whole lump to taſt of it, when it hath diffuſed its virtue: Thus the Word of God, though mean and contemptible, yet is of great life and vigor, able to put a new reliſh and ſavour upon the whole man, yea upon an whole Family, an whole Town, an whole Nation. But in the ſecond place, it is more frequently uſed in an ill ſenſe, and then it is applyed either to errors and falſe doctrines, for they are an hypocriſie, pretending to be of God, and having the colour of divine truths. Thus *Matth.* 16. 11. *Gal.* 5. 9. Errors are like leaven, as well as truths, they quickly infect people, and their contagion runneth over a Nation immediately. And ſometimes this is applied to *ſinne and wickedneſſe*, as 1 *Cor.* 5. 7. where either ſin in the heart, or a wicked perſon ſuffered in the Church of *Corinth*, and not caſt out, is called the *old leaven*, and the Apoſtle doth plainly call it, *the unleavened bread of ſincerity*: So that leaven was a ſign of hypocriſie. Now as God did univerſally prohibit all leaven, it was never to be uſed in any ſacrifice; ſo hereby God would teach us, that all duties not performed in the truth and ſincerity of grace, were altogether abhorred by him, and we are to be as careſull that we throw that out of our hearts, before we go about any duty; as the *Iſraelites* were to cleanſe their houſes from leaven, before they did eat the paſſeover. We therefore take the leaven, the hypocriſie here forbidden, in both the ſenſes, both doctrinall and practicall: for *Matth.* 6. we there ſee our Saviour prohibites all practicall hypocriſie, in praying faſting and almſgiving, and ſtill he ſaith, *Be not as the Phariſees.* Thus *Mark* 8. 15. he bids his hearers, *Beware of the leaven of Herod*, which was practicall, for Chriſt called him a *Fox*, and he pretended to be for the Jewiſh Religion, when he only aimed at temporall greatneſſe. Obſerve,

Firſt, *That hypocriſie is a ſpirituall leven, ſouring and imbittering all our Religion.* *Obſerv.* God would have no leaven in any Sacrifice, becauſe it was of a bitter, puffing and inflating nature, called therefore in the Greek ζυμὴ ἀπὸ ζέω, as *fermentum, a fervore*: And this alſo was the reaſon why God forbad honey alſo in every Sacrifice, becauſe it was ζυμώτικον inflating, and puffing; only ſalt was commanded to be uſed in every Sacrifice, becauſe it did preſerve from putrefaction.

To handle this, let us conſider,

1. What is in the metaphor or ſimilitude. And
2. What is ſimply and plainly implyed in it. And

Why hypocriſie is compared to leaven.

1. First, *Hypocriſie may be compared to leaven, becauſe of its puffing and inflating the whole lump.* This is ſo proper to leaven, that the Latins to expreſſe a man ſwelling with anger and diſcontent, ſay, *Totus in fermento eſt*; and *David* in ſome Pſalms, when he ſaith, *His heart was troubled and grieved within him*, in the Hebrew it is, it was levened within them: and thus doth all hypocriſie, it puffeth up and makes the heart ſwell through vain-glory, pride and ſelf-righteouſneſſe, *Matth. 6.* Our Saviour taxeth the Phariſees for this thing, *They did all things to be ſeen of men*; ſo that no proud woman did more endeavour to ſet out her beauty, and to make it viſible to others, then they did their religion in faſting and almſgiving: and this you may ſee to be the conſtant diſeaſe of all the Phariſees, they juſtified themſelves, *They were not as other men*, and therefore our Saviour told them, *They could never love him*, ſo as *Mary Magdalen* did, becauſe they could not think themſelves ſuch ſinners, and therefore that more was forgiven them then to others, yea the whole Nation of the Jews laboured under this diſeaſe: as appeareth by the ſeverall complaints of the Prophets, and hence it is that none are at ſuch an enmity and contrariety to Chriſt and his grace, as theſe learned men. *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the *Galathians*, and other places doth ſeverely and profeſſedly diſpute againſt thoſe that truſted in the works of the Law, that thought to be juſtified, or to have life by them; and all ſuch they were hypocrites in this ſenſe: They were puffed up with a ſelf-fullneſſe and a ſelf-righteouſneſſe, ſo that they found no inward neceſſity of Chriſts grace. Take heed then of this tumour, this tympany within, *Quod tumet videtur magnum, ſed non eſt ſanum.* This may ſooner damn, than open and groſſe prophanenеſſe. All diſeaſes come with a fullneſſe of humours, and the great deſperate diſeaſe of the ſoul cometh by a ſelf-love, This hypocriſie is leaven in thee.

2. Secondly, *Its compared to leaven, becauſe it doth ſour and make bitter all the duties we do.* They are unpleaſing and diſtaſtfull to God. They are wilde grapes, for it cannot be otherwiſe then thus abominable to God, becauſe hypocriſie makes a man do duties upon other motives then to pleaſe him. They that did pray and faſt to be ſeen of men, regarded the applauſe of man more then Gods love: Now this muſt be needs a ſinne highly provoking God, when we take thoſe gifts and duties which God enables us unto, and would thereby commend our ſelves to men; As if a woman ſhould take the rich gifts her husband out of love giveth her, and make her ſelf pleaſing thereby to another man, how will the jealouſie of an husband rage at this? So it is with thee, God enableth thee to pray, to preach, to faſt, to give alms, and thou by theſe things art lifted up; Its becauſe of men and not of God that thou art diligent herein: *Yea it is very hard to perform publick religious duties, eſpecially which are much admired in the world, and not to loſe all the comfort of them by vain-glory*; yea though a man did at firſt ſet himſelf to ſuch duties upon true and genuine grounds, yet in the progreſſe of the duty, ſome carnall and ſelf-reſpects are apt to obtrude themſelves. Therefore *Gregory* did well compare this hypocriſie, whereby we look to vain-glory or any humane reſpects, to a ſubtill and coſening thief; who joyning himſelf to a traveller upon the way, at firſt makes as if he were to go the ſame with him, but then afterwards, when the innocent traveller is moſt ſecure then he ſeizeth upon him, and robs him. Thus doth hypocriſie, thus doth vain-glory, earthly reſpects, at firſt they make as if they went the ſame way with grace, as if they and godlineſſe were all one, as if all were done for God, but in the progreſſe this hypocriſie diſcovers it ſelf, or in the later end. As men ſometimes begin to eat or drink from meer neceſſity, from meer hunger and thirſt, but then gluttony and drunkenneſſe doth afterwards creep in. Now all the while hypocriſie is thus imbittering and ſouring every thing we do, God muſt needs loath us, *This is not to me*, ſaith God, *This is not for me*, thy heart is ſtolen away from God. As *Abſoloms* great ſinne was to ſteal the hearts of the people from *David*, Hypocriſie is a great ſinne, and a greater thief;

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it steals thy heart from God and sets it upon the Creature. Whosoever seeketh to be praised *per id quod suum donum est, fur & latro est*, said *Augustine*, By that (*Lord*) which is thy gift, he is a thief and robber: How then can they but provoke God instead of pleasing him?

Thirdly, *Hypocrisie is leven, because as that corrupts and alters the true and proper nature of the lump, where it mingleth its vertue: so doth hypocrisie, it wholly alters and changeth all thy duties, and even all thy religion.* That which in its nature was to be for God, only to relate to him; thou turnest to unworthy and earthly respects, that which would have been gold, hypocrisie makes drosse; That which would have been wine, hypocrisy makes water. *Simon Magus* because of his hypocrisie was in a state of gall & bitternesse, he desired the gifts of the holy Ghost, that he might appear some great one: So that now thy piety is not piety, thy religion is not religion, but doubled and trebled iniquity: Oh how should this make us tremble at a false and guilfull heart! This turneth all thy sweet waters that would refresh thee into blood, as the *Ægyptian* plague was. As they gave Christ vineger to drink in stead of comforting wine; so doth hypocrisie instead of comfort from thy duties, from thy graces, it will represent nothing but terrour and horrour to thee: Oh tell me not what I have done, for all was in hypocrisie and unsincerity, so that there is such a spirituall curse by hypocrisie upon all thy religious wayes, as the Prophet *Haggai* speaks of the Jews temporall mercies, *Hag. 1. 6. Ye have sown much and bring in little, ye eat but have not enough, ye drink but are not filled, ye cloath, but there is no warmth.* Thus it is with thee, thou prayest but hast not the spirituall benefit of prayer, thou namest God and callest on him often, but thy soul is not filled with good things from him; certainly this should much prevail upon all, *God delighteth in truth in the inward parts*, and to such as are so, all duties and religion it self is full of marrow and fatnesse, but to the hypocrite every thing is a shadow and empty, his heart is like a vessell full of holes, no true joy or solid peace poured into him can be retained. Fear therefore this hypocrisie that doth thus change and alter all thy religion, that makes a starre a dunghill, a pearl into dirt, and thy religion to be nothing but meer impiety and wickednesse. 3.

Fourthly, *Hypocrisie is leven, because though little in quantity, yet it will quickly infect and assimilate a great lump into its own taste*: For this end, the word of God is called leven, because by its power it doth transform and change Towns and Cities, as at first propagation of the Gospel; and thus hypocrisie also is leven, because though but little, and creeping in at first, yet it will presently infect the whole man. This leprosie on the forehead will quickly spread over the whole body: This cloud as big as an hand, will quickly darken the whole skie; You see it in *Jehu*, in *Judas*, by giving way to hypocrisie, How quickly did it diffuse it self through all they had? And when hypocrisie hath seised upon the whole man, then whatsoever it pretends for God, yet it can do nothing but referre all to it self; so that whereas the first foundation in Christ Disciple, is self-deniall, the first stone in hypocrisies building, is self-seeking. Oh take heed then of swallowing down but a little of this poyson! Insincerity and hypocrisie will quickly make thee all over so; as a man that giveth way to lying, will quickly have truth quite estranged from his lips. 4.

Fifthly, *Hypocrisie may well be compared to Leven, because as that doth secretly and insensibly diffuse its vertue to every part*, So of all sinnes hypocrisie is most subtill and latent: we are so when we think the clean contrary. Who could have perswaded that Pharisee, *Who thanked God he fasted and gave alms, and was not like that Publican*, that he was an hypocrite? who could have perswaded *Paul* before his conversion, that all the zeal & religion he shewed, it was only hypocrisie? Indeed, I shall tell you of a twofold hypocrisie; 5.

A groſſe, and ſtudied one, when men do on purpoſe pretend Religion to act impiety, and thi is a convinced hypocriſie: And ſecondly, There is a more ſubtill and cloſe one, when men do not things from holy and ſpirituall grounds, yet think they do ſo, and ſuch an one *Paul* was, The temporary believer, *The foolish Virgins* they were ſuch; Now this kind of hypocriſie cleaveth to us, and ſecretly creepeth into all that we do: He muſt be much in praying, ſtudying and ſearching of his own heart, that would get this Serpent out of his bowels. This is like *the Arrow that killeth at noon-day*: Oh be afraid of this indiſcernable diſeaſe! Little worms will quickly eat out the heart of a ſtrong tree.

Thus you have heard what is implied in the metaphor. In the next place what is plainly without any figure intended. And

1. *Here we ſee the deſtructive nature of hypocriſie, it turneth Honey into gall, Wine into poyſon, Religion into wickedneſſe.* The Phariſees ſhall be condemned for all their duties they truſted in, as well as all their oppoſition againſt Chriſt. This hypocriſie in the heart like an ill ſtomack, turneth the beſt food into matter of diſeaſe. Why (in *Iſa.* 1.) had thoſe religious duties of the Jews ſuch loathing expreſſions uſed againſt them? Why doth the Lord ſeem to be as much againſt them, as againſt their prophane impieties? Only becauſe of their inſincerity and hypocriſie in heart and life. Faith is an excellent grace, becauſe it turneth ſtones into bread; a man may find much comfort in hard afflictions, but hypocriſie turneth bread into ſtones; Thou canſt not have any profit, or comfort from thoſe things that are infected by this ſinne.

2. *The dangerouſneſſe of this ſinne is intended alſo, becauſe it is ſo ſubtill and latent.* Theſe wormes breed in the gourd, and conſume it of a ſudden; other ſinnes come like a roaring Lion, this like a glittering ſliding Serpent; Therefore you heard, our Saviour bids before all things *Beware* of this; when the Devill hath no hope to undo thee by prophaneneſſe, he will endeavour it by hypocriſie. The more latent and creeping this diſeaſe is in thee, do thou the more pray and ſtrive againſt it. Not that the diſcovering of hypocriſie, if we do bewail it, ſhould make us judge our ſelves hypocrites, as the godly are apt to bear falſe witneſſe againſt themſelves: No, *Non nocet ſenſus, ubi deeſt conſenſus*, the ſenſe and feeling of hypocriſie with gnawing and ſtriving againſt it will never hurt, if we do not allow our ſelves in it, and give way to it: This ſhould not deject the godly, but awaken them and ſtirre them up. In conflict with other ſinnes, I can ſee my enemy; I can behold and obſerve his turnings; but this ſin gets within me, whether I will or no.

3. *The power and efficacy of it*, for it ſeizeth on the heart, it ſurprizeth the ſtrongeſt Fort there; and then the devill will let thee pray, hear, do all rare and extraordinary duties, as long as this is in the heart, *with their lips they draw nigh to me, but their heart is farre from me.* God complained ſo of the hypocrites, yea the devil will then inſtigate and put thee on to duties; for the more extraordinary in them, the more hypocriſie, and ſo the greater offence to God: Leaven doth therfore ſo ſour and infect, becauſe it getteth into the midſt of the lumps and thus it is here, inſincerity and hypocriſie ſokes into the inwards, and ſo by degrees it comes to poſſeſſe all.

Uſe of Exhortation. Be careſull to caſt out this leven from thy heart. As the Serpent caſts out its poiſon before it goes to drink; ſo do thou, this infecting and poyſonous ſinne, before thou go to any duty. The Archer fixeth his eye upon the mark before he ſhoots, he ſhuts the left eye, that the ſight may be more intenſe; ſo do thou ſtedfaſtly faſten thy eye upon God; Its for him, for his glory and honour that I do theſe things; and let the left eye of carnall reſpects be cloſed up; Think not this ſinne is very rare and ſeldom to be found; The whole Nation of the Jews was greatly guilty this way once, and now all Chriſtians are in this reſpect as much

much vanity: Should ye take away carnall and self-respects; Would you not remove the pillar upon which most duties do lean? How few are there, who, because of God, and wholly in reference to him, do become his Disciples? How many are like *Simon* the *Cyrenian*, that was compelled to carry Christs Crosse, he did it not willingly? Of how few may it be said, *God who seeth thee secretly will reward thee openly?* Oh that you would remember, Without Truth and Repentance all thy Religion is become thy bane! All thy Duties, thy Alms, nay, if it were Martyrdome, is rejected and sent away without an eternall Reward; Consider that which followeth, *There is nothing hid which shall not be revealed.* God will one day make them transparant, every Atome in thee will be discovered, and thou that art now so confident, will one day neither please *God*, nor thy self either.

SERM. XXXVIII.

Of Such Opinions that carry a man no further, then Hypocrisie.

LUKE 12. 1.

Beware of the leven of the Pharisees, which is Hypocrisie.

WE have already discovered the Reasons of this metaphorical expression, Why *Hypocrisie* is compared to *Leven*. In the next place we informed you, That *Hypocrisie* doth comprehend both a *Doctrinall* and *Practicall* sense. Doctrinall, all such opinions, which make a man go no further then an hypocrite in holy duties; yea their power and genuine effect, is to make their Disciples hypocrites. Now although every false corrupt doctrine be in it self formally hypocrisie, it's pretended truth, is appearers in truth's colours, and dare not shew it self in its own likenesse, yet I shall not consider it under that notion, but rather *effective*, as our Saviour doth, as false doctrines do lead and direct one into hypocrisie, so that a man may all his life time be a professed scholar to such opinions, & yet never step one foot further then an hypocrite; even as learned and judicious *Perkins* wrote, That a Papist, as a Papist, cannot be beyond a reprobate. Popish principles *qua* Popish, carry us to no further an expression of godlinesse, then what even reprobates have, or may attain unto.

That there are such corrupt and false opinions in Religion, that carry the followers of them no further then to hypocrisie. Those that sit at the feet of such Doctors, they never go but to the bottome of the mountain, they are not admitted with *Moses* to *Gods* presence; They never have more then the shell and do not eat the kernell. As they themselves are whited Sepulchers, such are their Disciples; so great a matter is it to look what are the Theological principles that a man is brought up with. As truth is *Cibus animæ*, the food of the soul, and thereby its sanctified, so falshood is the poison of the soul, and many have such principles of Religion, that by them they are made fit fuell for hell: So that as it is of great consequence, what Nurses milk the Childe sucks; no lesse is it what doctrinal principles in Religion thou art instructed in. We see many men living *Observe.*

living onely in formality, and a meer carcaſſe of Religion; they have a glorious form, and yet are nothing, and all becauſe corrupt doctrinall opinions put ſuch an empty varniſh upon them: Now as there is a twofold hypocriſie.

1. A groſſe, affected and intended one; its his avowed principle to keep up ſimulation and diſſimulation. And

What opinions carry no further then hypocriſie.

2. A more ſecret and unknown one: ſo there are principles which are like oil to the flame, that breed and nouriſh ſuch vermin within us. *Groſſe hypocriſie* theſe corrupt opinions do maintain.

1. The opinion of conforming to any way, ſo a man keep that faith, he thinketh true, in his heart.

Firſt, *They that hold it lawfull to ſwear and forſwear and to communicate in any evil way, ſo as they reſumed that faith they thought true in their own hearts*: For not only Atheiſticall Politicians have cried up that wicked Maxim. *Jure perjuro, meum ſum injuratam gero*, but even ſome hereticall monſters in Divinity; ſuch were the *Priſcillianiſts* of old, that held a lie, though joined with perjury, was no ſinne, which did ſo move *Auſtin*, that he wrote a book *De Mendacio*, to confute that wicked aſſertion. Now theſe *Priſcillianiſts* by reaſon of ſuch abominable opinions, that it was lawfull to lie and forſwear, aſſerting that prophane ſpeech,

Jura, perjura, ſecretum prodere noli;

they would never diſcover what Doctrines they held. Such opinions then as theſe are, muſt needs put men upon known and damnable hypocriſies, and that both towards God and towards men: Were not the devil the father of lies reigning in mens hearts, we would think it impoſſible that ever any men ſhould be delivered up to ſuch deteſtable aſſertions; But where any ſuch deadly herbs as theſe ſhall reign in any mans heart, it muſt needs put a man upon all groſſe hypocriſie: How is it ſuch men do not tremble at the ſevere judgement inflicted upon *Ananias* and *Saphira* for lying in ſuch hypocriſie unto the holy Ghoſt?

2. Equivocation.

Secondly; There is another doctrinall opinion called the doctrine of the *Nicodemites, who think it lawfull for to communicate in unlawfull worſhip and to joyn in many ſuperſtitious uſages, if ſo be they keep their judgments right, that ſuch things do not at all avail us, or make us the more acceptable to God.* Theſe are called *Nicodemites*, becauſe as he came to Chriſt by night for fear of the Jews; ſo theſe out of meer fear to loſe their outward eſtates, conform to ſuch unlawfull waies, which their own hearts condemne. As *Seneca* ſaid of his own practice in the *Roman* worſhip, he did thoſe religious things, *Non tanquam Diis grata ſed legibus juſta*, meerly to obey the Laws of the Land, not that he thought thoſe things were acceptable to God: It appeareth by ſome Tractates or Epiſtles of *Calvin*, that many were of ſuch a minde, who thought they might continue in Popery, and frequent the Popiſh worſhip, ſo that they kept a true faith only in Chriſt for juſtification, and did look upon all thoſe ceremonious waies, as meer unprofitable traſh: Many (I ſay) out of an inordinate love to their worldly eſtates, wrote to *Calvin* about this Conſcience: but he ſaid, they asked counſell of him, even as *Balaam* conſulted with God, as if he would fain have known whether God would have curſed *Iſrael* or no, when his heart was ſet wholly to do it; whatſoever God ſaid, though he was outwardly reſtrained. But ſuch doctrines teach hypocriſie: we read of thoſe *ſeven thouſand in Elijahs time, that had not bowed their knee to Baal*, they would not outwardly diſſemble any worſhip, not by the knee or mouth to kiſſe the Image, and the three Worthies would not outwardly worſhip the golden Image, though it was to ſave their lives. When *Julian* the Emperour cauſed his own Image to be put upon the Idols, that while the Chriſtians did give externall obeiſance to that as a civill expreſſion of honour, they might thereby be thought to worſhip the Idol, they generally refuſed it, becauſe *as with the heart a man believeth,*

believeth, so with the mouth confession must be made unto salvation, Rom. 10.

Thirdly, A third doctrine which teacheth professed hypocrisie, is, *That Jesuiticall equivocation and mentall reservation, which by the Jesuites* (though opposed by some other Papists) *is maintained as a lawfull, yea as a prudent, defence.* 3. It is needlesse to trouble you with their Assertions in this matter, and they do not only affirm this lawfull in humane and civill promises, but also in sacred and inviolable oaths; certainly those Disciples who are committed to such Doctors cannot be Christs sheep, but the Devils Foxes. The Devil is compared to a Dragon, and all his instruments to a serpentine and viperous brood, not onely for their poisonous cruelty, but also their crafty subtility. The Devil first tried equivocations to *Eve*, telling her she should be like God, knowing good and evil; which was true, but in a farre other sense, than she intended. Let not then those Doctors who teach this, hold themselves of the Society of Jesus, who said he was truth it self, and in *whose mouth there was no guile*. Thus the Pharisees they also were subtil in doctrinal opinions, about breaking of oaths, for which Christ doth expressely reprove them. Such Doctrines as these cannot but make men of vulpine dispositions, and most artificial matters in all kinde of jugling hypocrisies.

I come in the next place to such doctrinal opinions, as may make a man a *close* and *latent hypocrite*, in respect even of his own feeling; insomuch that there are many tenents and positions, beyond which if a man in his practical Religion do not go, he can never surpasse an hypocrite. As

1. *That corrupt doctrine which denieth original sinne, and such an universall pollution of the whole man*, as the Scripture teacheth must, needs make a man a meer outside Christian; That man can never go deep enough in his duties of humiliation and sanctification, who is not perswaded of such an horrid defilement upon him. *Nicodemus* was a Master in *Israel*, a teacher of the Law, yet he understood not a sincere, gracious working of any duty in his heart; and why? he did not see the necessity of Regeneration, he was ignorant, that being born of the flesh, he was wholly flesh. Alas, there is no man doth any more then pare the nails, or wash the face in religion, he doth not change the vitals and the inwards, that is not affected with this naturall pollution: What made *Paul* in that religious zeal he shewed, account himself to be some great body, when he was nothing but an empty shadow? was it not, *because he did not know lust to be sinne*, Rom. 7. He was alive till that knowledge enlightned him, as a man seeth not the Toads and Serpents in a dark Dungeon, till the Sunne shine into it. Would you therefore be true inside and inward Christians? go to the heart and root in every duty: Lay thy foundation even in this deep of thy spirituall vilenesse; Say, Its not a leprosie of the skinne or forehead onely, but of the very heart and vitals. Now this corrupt doctrine doth still flie like that pestilentiall arrow at noon-day, and in whose heart it doth soke in, it cannot but dry up all the hopes of true grace in such, if alwayes persisted in. The denial of original sin.

2. A second corrupt doctrine, which makes an hypocrite, is, *Concerning the Law of God, that it requireth nothing but external obedience; if so be that a man doth outwardly conform to it, he hath done all that is required.* This was a poisonous doctrine among the Pharisees; Now as the fountain, if that be poisoned, all that drink of it are indangered, so it was then. The Pharisees had poisoned all the springs the people were to drink of, and by no principle more then this. Therefore our Saviour *Matth.* 5. was thought to preach great paradoxes, when he told them of an *heart-adultery*, of an *heart-murder*; and, *unlesse their righteousnesse exceeded that of the Scribes and Pharisees, they could never enter into the Kingdome of Heaven.* If then people are perswaded, that a meer civil deportment, and an outward abstinence from sin, is all that God looketh at; that the skinne of the beast is enough for Sacrifice, without the flesh; this man cannot That the Law of God requires nothing but externall obedience.

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they would never diſcover what Doctrines they held. Such opinions then as theſe are, muſt needs put men upon known and damnable hypocriſies, and that both towards God and towards men: Were not the devil the father of lies reigning in mens hearts, we would think it impoſſible that ever any men ſhould be delivered up to ſuch deteſtable aſſertions; But where any ſuch deadly herbs as theſe ſhall reign in any mans heart, it muſt needs put a man upon all groſſe hypocriſie: How is it ſuch men do not tremble at the ſevere judgement inflicted upon *Ananias* and *Saphira* for lying in ſuch hypocriſie unto the holy Ghoſt?

2. Equivocation.

Secondly; There is another doctrinall opinion called the doctrine of the *Nicodemites, who think it lawfull for to communicate in unlawfull worſhip and to joyn in many ſuperſtitious uſages, if ſo be they keep their judgements right, that ſuch things do not at all avail us, or make us the more acceptable to God.* Theſe are called *Nicodemites*, becauſe as he came to Chriſt by night for fear of the Jews; ſo theſe out of meer fear to loſe their outward eſtates, conform to ſuch unlawfull waies, which their own hearts condemne. As *Seneca* ſaid of his own practice in the *Roman* worſhip, he did thoſe religious things, *Non tanquam Dijs grata ſed legibus juſta*, meerly to obey the Laws of the Land, not that he thought thoſe things were acceptable to God: It appeareth by ſome Tractates or Epiſtles of *Calvin*, that many were of ſuch a minde, who thought they might continue in Popery, and frequent the Popiſh worſhip, ſo that they kept a true faith only in Chriſt for juſtification, and did look upon all thoſe ceremonious waies, as meer unprofitable traſh: Many (I ſay) out of an inordinate love to their worldly eſtates, wrote to *Calvin* about this Conſcience: but he ſaid, they asked counſell of him, even as *Balaam* conſulted with God, as if he would fain have known whether God would have curſed *Iſrael* or no, when his heart was ſet wholly to do it, whatſoever God ſaid, though he was outwardly reſtrained. But ſuch doctrines teach hypocriſie: we read of thoſe *ſeven thouſand in Elijahs time, that had not bowed their knee to Baal*, they would not outwardly diſſemble any worſhip, not by the knee or mouth to kiſſe the Image, and the three Worthies would not outwardly worſhip the golden Image, though it was to ſave their lives. When *Julian* the Emperour cauſed his own Image to be put upon the Idols, that while the Chriſtians did give externall obedience to that, as a civill expreſſion of honour, they might thereby be thought to worſhip the Idol, they generally refuſed it, becauſe *as with the heart a man believeth,*

believeth, so with the mouth confession must be made unto salvation, Rom. 10.

Thirdly, A third doctrine which teacheth professed hypocrisie, is, *That Jesuiticall equivocation and mentall reservation, which by the Jesuites* (though opposed by some other Papists) *is maintained as a lawfull, yea as a prudent defence.* 3. It is needlesse to trouble you with their Assertions in this matter, and they do not only affirm this lawfull in humane and civill promises, but also in sacred and inviolable oaths; certainly those Disciples who are committed to such Doctors cannot be Christs sheep, but the Devils Foxes. The Devil is compared to a Dragon, and all his instruments to a serpentine and viperous brood, not onely for their poisonous cruelty, but also their crafty subtility. The Devil first tried equivocations to *Eve*, telling her she should be like God, knowing good and evil; which was true, but in a farre other sense, than she intended. Let not then those Doctors who teach this, hold themselves of the Society of Jesus, who said he was truth it self, and in *whose mouth there was no guile.* Thus the Pharisees they also were subtil in doctrinal opinions, about breaking of oaths, for which Christ doth expressely reprove them. Such Doctrines as these cannot but make men of vulpine dispositions, and most artificial masters in all kinde of jugling hypocrisies.

I come in the next place to such doctrinal opinions, as may make a man a *close* and *latent hypocrite*, in respect even of his own feeling; insomuch that there are many tenents and positions, beyond which if a man in his practical Religion do not go, he can never surpasse an hypocrite. As

1. *That corrupt doctrine which denieth original sinne, and such an universall pollution of the whole man*, as the Scripture teacheth must, needs make a man a meer outside Christian; That man can never go deep enough in his duties of humiliation and sanctification, who is not perswaded of such an horrid defilement upon him. *Nicodemus* was a Master in *Israel*, a teacher of the Law, yet he understood not a sincere, gracious working of any duty in his heart; and why? he did not see the necessity of Regeneration, he was ignorant, that being born of the flesh, he was wholly flesh. Alas, there is no man doth any more then pare the nails, or wash the face in religion, he doth not change the vitals and the inwards, that is not affected with this naturall pollution: What made *Paul* in that religious zeal he shewed, account himself to be some great body, when he was nothing but an empty shadow? was it not, *because he did not know lust to be sinne*, Rom. 7. He was alive till that knowledge enlightned him, as a man seeth not the Toads and Serpents in a dark Dungeon, till the Sunne shine into it. Would you therefore be true inside and inward Christians? go to the heart and root in every duty: Lay thy foundation even in this deep of thy spirituall vilenesse; Say, its not a leprosie of the skinne or forehead onely, but of the very heart and vitals. Now this corrupt doctrine doth still flie like that pestiliential arrow at noon-day, and in whose heart it doth soke in, it cannot but dry up all the hopes of true grace in such, if alwayes persisted in. The denial of original sin.

A second corrupt doctrine, which makes an hypocrite, is, *Concerning the Law of God, that it requireth nothing but external obedience; if so be that a man doth outwardly conform to it, he hath done all that is required.* This was a poisonous doctrine among the Pharisees; Now as the fountain, if that be poisoned, all that drink of it are indangered, so it was then. The Pharisees had poisoned all the springs the people were to drink of, and by no principle more then this. Therefore our Saviour *Matth.* 5. was thought to preach great paradoxes, when he told them of an *heart-adultery*, of an *heart-murder*; and, *unlesse their righteousnesse exceeded that of the Scribes and Pharisees, they could never enter into the Kingdome of Heaven.* If then people are perswaded, that a meer civil deportment, and an outward abstinence from sin, is all that God looketh at; that the skinne of the beast is enough for Sacrifice, without the flesh; this man cannot That the Law of God requires nothing but externall obedience.

not go beyond hypocriſie in any religious duty. In popery, though they hold, Gods Law commands the heart as well as the hand, *Yet all thoſe inſurrections and rebellions thoughts which are againſt Gods will, if not conſented to, they ſay are no ſinnes*, whereas *Paul*, Rom. 7. doth ſeverall times in that Chapter call them truly and properly ſinnes. Certainly ſuch doctrines as theſe, make men but half Chriſtians; they bring down the exact and ſpirituall obligation of the Law to a very low degree. Thus godlineſſe is not ſo choiſe and excellent a frame of heart, as the Scripture repreſents it. In vain by this opinion did *Paul* cry out of himſelf as *miſerable*, for thoſe luſts and motions of ſinnes, to which he yet gave no conſent, but earneſtly withſtood them. Take heed then of ſuch a dangerous principle as this, to think, Thou haſt done thy duty, the Law is obeyed, when thou haſt performed the outward duties of them, Thou ſanctifieſt the Sabbath in all the outward exerciſes; Thou honoureſt thy parents; Thou abſtaineſt from all groſſe ſinnes forbidden, and thereupon ſayeſt with the young man, *I have done all theſe*, Mat. 19.20. and what is wanting? even many things are wanting to thee; not onely the river or ſtream, but the fountain is to be cleanſed; Thou art but a painted Sepulchre all the while, ſuch rotten, noiſome luſts are within thee. It were impoſſible men could abide themſelves, and have ſo good an opinion of their waies, if they did look into the pure and perfect glaſſe of the Law, they would then with *Paul* cry out: The Law is ſpirituall, but I am carnal; This pleaſeth me, but doth it ſatisfie the Law? Is it as holy and as perfect as the Law requireth?

The doctrine of free-wil.

Thirdly, *This Doctrine will make a man go no farther then an hypocrite, that maintaineth and advanceth Free-will*, for this puts nature in the room of *ſanctifying grace*. This is a wooden member inſtead of a lively one; this puts water inſtead of wine: All that men do in Religion, though never ſo glorious, *yet by the power of Nature onely, workes but a humane faith, an humane repentance, an humane abſtinence from ſinne*; Whereas we ſee our Saviour preſſing to *Nicodemus* a doctrine he underſtood not, *John* 3. *That a man muſt be born again*. There muſt be a ſupernatural being, and from thence are to flow ſupernaturall operations. So that the doctrine of freewill doth not onely deſtroy the grace of God without us, but the inherent grace within us, whereas *we are in Chriſt to bear fruit, and to walk and live in the Spirit of God*, John 15. Rom. 8. Gal. 5. By this we come in our own ſtrength, and go out in our own name: Now as the Painter cannot make a naturall apple of plum, but the repreſentation onely, ſo neither can the ſtrength of man inable man to do thoſe things which are indeed holy and heavenly, onely the outward appearance of it. He therefore that would be carried beyond hypocriſie, muſt acknowledge a neceſſity of regeneration, that a man muſt be made anew, that he muſt be *ingraffed into the Olive tree*; and when this perſon is thus changed, then his duties will be of a more noble and lively nature; and truly the want of this keepeth thouſands in a conſtant way of inſincerity and hypocriſie. They attend not to that neceſſary and noble work of regeneration; they dare not but pray, hear, faſt, &c. yet they never conſider whether theſe come from a ſanctified and renewed nature within or no. Do not then magnifie *Liberum arbitrium*, but *liberatum*, that which is made free by Chriſt, that which is ſet at liberty from thoſe inares of luſts it was incangled in, *Tee which was dead, but is now made alive*; account nothing religiouſly done, which ariſeth not from ſuch a ſpring within; unleſſe thou art made a *good tree*, *thy fruit cannot be good*. It may be, all thy Religion hitherto hath been without ſuch a bottom, and then thou art to begin a new foundation.

The doctrine of merits.

Fourthly, *That doctrine will keep a man in hypocriſie, which maintaineth meritorious and ſatisfactory compenſations to God*. He will never be humble, and attend to ſpirituall mortification of ſin, eſpecially he will never advance the way of Chriſt and faith in him, that thus confideth in his own doings, and ſufferings.

This

This hypocriſie you heard was leaven, that doth greatly puff up with ſelf-righteouſneſſe, and ſelf-fulneſſe; now to hold meritorious and ſatisfactory works; this makes the ſwelling bigger, this takes off from Chriſt, and ſetteth a man more in himſelf. *Act.* 15, the heart is ſaid to be purified by faith, then pride and ſelf-confidence do abaſe and make it impure; you ſee all thoſe doctrines that mingle or joyn any thing to Chriſt are abominated by the Apoſtle, and this about merit and ſatisfaction, notwithſtanding all their ſubtil diſtinctions, doth divide between man and Chriſt, he is his own Saviour in part: Now Chriſt will not admit of a copartner, in the work of Redemption: There cannot be two Sunnes in the firmament; whatſoever is not of Chriſt, and in Chriſt cannot be accepted with God, neither are ſuch genuine duties; Therefore ſuch proud opinions as make us to give ſome recompence to God, muſt needs be chaffe in ſtead of wheat, and droſſe inſtead of gold. Thus alſo when men live in groſſe and foul ſinnes, and yet think praying or receiving the Sacrament, though there be no real Reformation of the life, is enough, this makes a man perſiſt in hypocriſie, how often were the Jews charged for this unfaithfull dealing? They would bring many Sacrifices, they kept the ſolemn faſts and Sabbaths, but yet they would not waſh them, or make them clean; and this diſcovered their hypocriſie. This is great though ordinary hypocriſie, to reſt upon duties, as making amends for our wickedneſſe, though there be no reformation of life.

Fifthly, *To preſſe an extraordinary non-inſtituted way as a ſpeciall matter of Religion, is very notorious to make a man an hypocrite.* The Phariſees commanded ſeverall acts of worſhip, which God never commanded, and by the daily exerciſe of theſe, how were they puffed up? And indeed this was a great part of the Phariſees leven, they had conſtant waſhings, they had many kinde of worſhips wherein they trained their Diſciples, and for theſe extraordinary things which others did not, they looked upon themſelves as the onely religious men. 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. the Apoſtle doth here ſpeak excellently to this purpoſe, for mentioning ſome falſe teachers, he ſaid, *They taught lies in hypocriſie*; and why, in hypocriſie? Becauſe thoſe commands they urged, Not to marry, Not to eat of ſuch meats, ſeemed to have extraordinary ſanctity in them, whereas indeed they did only puffe up with pride and inſincerity, and of this we have palpable inſtances in Popery. All their ſeverall Monaſteries and Orders, and all thoſe ſtrict Rules they live by in their Orders, are but to make men hypocrites in Religion; its to attend upon outward Formalites, and to neglect true mortification in the inward man. They buſie themſelves in not eating, not drinking, not touching, not wearing; whereas even in thoſe differences of meat God had appointed, the power of grace did not conſiſt, much leſſe in theſe vain inventions of men.

Non-inſtituted wayes in Religion.

Sixthly, *Every doctrine that ſets up any thing beſide the Scripture, as the rule of faith and worſhip, muſt needs make a man an hypocrite*; for the word of God, that onely is able to *make wiſe to ſalvation*, 1 Tim. 3. The teſtimonies of the Lord are upright, and they teach uprightneſſe, whoſoever walketh not by this rule, they cannot have any true peace on them, *Gal.* 6. 16. Now there are many rules ſet up by men in ſtead of theſe, all which work not truth at the heart; Cuſtome and education they onely reach the outward man; and ſo the Laws of the Land they do outwardly reſtrain. If a man ſet up Traditions, its but an humane worſhip, a fear and reverence taught by the doctrines of men, which God abhorreth; and ſo pretended revelations and raptures of the ſoul, thoſe lead men into hypocriſie, while they glory and boaſt in theſe things, and follow them, they forſake the Scripture which is only the true guide.

Uſe of Exhortation. If thou wouldſt go beyond hypocriſie in Religion, look to ſound doctrinall principles; You do not regard the Emperick that healeth the ſore, but the Phyſitian that will remove the inward cauſes. Its not enough to

be taught that thou muſt abſtain from groſſe impieties, but thou art to remove the cauſe, to go to the inward cure; ſound principles about godlineſſe and religion are a ſpeciall meanes to make a true ſanctified man, there may be ſuch preaching, and thou mayeſt reade ſuch books, as will never make thee go farther then a reprobate may do; ſo that you are in the firſt place to conſider, What principles am I trained up in? How have I been inſtructed, are they ſuch as direct me to the life and power of godlineſſe? May I not go in a meer road, and ſpeak like a Parrot in Religion, things I underſtand not, and feel not the excellency of, and all becauſe I have not ſound principles to direct me? Alas, it may be many a man or woman, if they knew there were a better and a more powerfull way of Religion than they have, they would preſently imploy themſelves therein; but now they never knew, or heard of other, and therefore they take droſſe for gold, poor ſouls! The Lord give ſuch blinde, eyes to ſee, and wiſe guides, to direct them.

SERM. XXXIX.

The Properties of a groſſe Hypocrite in matters of Religion.

LUKE 12. 1.

Beware ye of the leaven of the Phariſees, which is hypocriſie.

I Now come to the third Doctrine, which may be gathered from theſe words.

Hypocriſie you heard was taken either for corrupt doctrines that did teach it, or practiſed hypocriſie in religious duties; ſo that the ſinne our Saviour would have even his Diſciples, and that above all things, *Beware*, is hypocriſie. The Greek word is acknowledged by all to be an alluſion to thoſe that do act in playes, that repreſent the perſons of other men; a poor man acts the part of a rich man, a baſe man of a nobleman. Thus it is in the matters of Religion, when we have the form, and appear as if we did pray, did believe, did repent, when we do nothing leſſe; ſo that its ſaid the word comes of ὑποκρίνεσθαι to compare (as συγκρίνειν) and ὑπὸ is a diminutive particle, as if hypocriſie were nothing but a faint and empty compariſon to another thing. The hypocrite's hope is as it were no hope. The hypocrite's prayer is a faint likeneſſe of a prayer, but not a prayer indeed; and the Hebrew word חנף uſed *Job.* 8. and in many other places, which ſignifieth an hypocrite, comes of a root that ſignifieth to die a thing with another colour then is naturall, or to paint a thing over that the true colour may not appear, This is hypocriſie. Its a painting, its a dying of the whole man with another colour then what is proper and genuine. Thus you ſee the nature of hypocriſie lieth in a ſimulation and counterfeiting in matters of Religion, ſuch outward holineſſe which inwardly is not in the heart; and this you heard is either *latent* and *ſecret*, not known to him that is ſo, ſuch as *Paul*, who thought he was bound to do what he did againſt Chriſt; or elſe groſſe, affected and convinced, ſuch as the Phariſees generally were

were, ſuch an hypocrite is called *Job.* 36. 13. *An hypocrite in heart*, tranſlated by ſome, a mocker, a meer deluder, his own heart knoweth he makes but a ſhew and a pretence to the duties of Religion; his inward hearty love and affection is not to it. Now becauſe this was the Pharisees hypocriſie, therefore I ſhall firſt treat of this groſſe, convinced hypocriſie: Only obſerve,

Obſerv. *That hypocriſie of all ſorts, is in the reſt and chiefeſt place to be avoided by all in matters of Religion.* Firſt of all, *Beware of this*, ſaid our Saviour to his Diſciples.

The properties of hypocriſie in religion.

I ſhall begin with *Phariſaicall or induſtrious and affected hypocriſie*; and to handle this, I ſhall lay open the Properties of it, and then the Aggravations of it. Now we may find out the Properties by obſerving the Pharisees, for they are the inſtance our Saviour mentioneth ſo often. As

1. The groſſe hypocrite may be carefull to do the outward duties in religion.

Firſt, *A groſſe hypocrite may be carefull to look to outward duties of Religion, which are ſeen and taken notice of by the world, but never attends to his heart, looks not to keep that pure and clean towards God.* Thus *Matth.* 23. 25, 26, 27, 28, our Saviour doth admirably ſpeak of this to the Phariſees, *They made clean the outſide of the platter, they were whited Sepulchres, but within they were full of hypocriſie and iniquity.* This then is a ſure note of hypocriſie, when a mans eye is onely upon his outward actions, he would not do any thing that men ſhould reproach or blame him for, to account him a wicked and ungodly man, but then for his heart that is a noiſome dunghill, that is a pudled hole. There are proud, earthly, unclean, malicious thoughts and affections reſting within. Therefore our Saviours counſell to ſuch is, to begin with the heart, to cleanſe them, to purifie them; all outward waſhings without this are unprofitable: God he calls for the heart *Prov.* 4. 23. and therefore let a man be never ſo glorious in his life, yet if he keep not a pure, heavenly, upright heart towards God, he is nothing worth. Do not then think your ſelves ſafe, becauſe men cannot blame you, they judge only concerning outward appearance, Remember you have to do with a God, who knoweth and tryeth your hearts, and therefore if all be not right and ſound there; better all the world knew thy falſhood then God; pray therefore, and hear, and profeſſe as unto God, as in his ſight, and having to do only with him.

2. He is full of oſtentation and vain-glory

Secondly, *The groſſe hypocrite is full of oſtentation and vain-glory, he is not contented with Gods knowledge or approbation, but he is unquiet till others know what he doth.* He is very diligent and over-buſie, as he ſaid, *Non amo nimium diligentem*, like *Solomons* flatterer that riſeth betimes in the morning, and is more then ordinary in bleſſing, when yet inwardly he curſeth. Therefore the *Platoniſt* ſaid, the ſuperſtitious man was Gods flatterer, not his friend. Thus the Phariſees, how buſie and active in many voluntary worſhips of their own, as if this had been great piety and zeal, but Chriſt did not like this great diligence, *Who required theſe things at your hands?* eſpecially you may ſee their deſire of oſtentation to ſet out themſelves, *Matth.* 6. In their alms they would blow a Trumpet, that is, they would have it known of all; and when they prayed, it ſhould be in the open places of the ſtreets; when they faſted they would diſfigure their faces. Thus hypocriſie made them as actors on the Stage, they did all things θεαθῆναι to be gazed and looked upon, *Ambitio ſcenam deſiderat*, they would not have done ſuch things privately. As when *Diogenes* the Cynick in an open place ſtood naked, and imbracing an heap of ſnow in the cold, one asked him, if he would do ſo, and no body ſhould ſee him: But how contrary is this to our Saviours direction, who doth order all private religious duties to be ſo ſecretly performed, that the very left hand ſhall not know what the right doth? Search then into your ſelves, if you have Family duties, if you perform any laudable thing, Are you not quiet till this be known? Would you have it come to the ears of ſuch that you reſpect, what you do in private in your

families? Is not this hypocrisie? thou doest it not out of love to God.

3. He will constantly & boldly approach to God in holy duties, and yet live in any sin.

Thirdly, *Grosse hypocrisie is a constant and bold approaching to God in holy duties, yet we love and live in our sinnes, which are so hated by God.* This is notorious hypocrisie, to hear, to pray, to come to Church, as if you were Gods people, and desired to serve him, when thou livest in thy beastly and prophane courses; That cursing and swearing tongue all the week long comes to praise or pray unto God on the Sabbath: Oh wretched hypocrisie! That body of thine polluted with uncleanesse and drunkennesse in the week dayes, is on the Sabbath day brought to worship God. Oh thou bold hypocrite! Is there no fear of God before thy eyes, that thou darest thus to mock God to his face, though he is not mocked? Therefore thou who art so apt to judge such for hypocrites who walk in a more strict and self-denying way then thou doest; look upon thy own wales, and thou wilt find no hypocrisie like to thine. If you should come into a mans presence constantly, and professe love and respect to him, and then in his absence do all the acts of hatred and malice against him, Would not all the world call thee hypocrite? And is not thy hypocrisie towards God as palpable? Thou prayest, thou hearest, thou professest an outward respect to God, but all thy life is a proclaimed hostility and enmity against him. As *Solomon* calls every wicked man a *fool*; so, in the Book of *Job*, every ungodly man is called an *Hypocrite*: No such hypocrites as notorious wicked men, for they will call upon God, and outwardly seek to him, but in their lives deny him.

4. He is scrupulous in lesser matters, but careless in greater.

Fourthly, *Notorious hypocrisie is seen about a scrupulous tenderness in things of least consequence, but in matters of greater moment there they are careless.* Not but that the true upright man is conscientious of lesse duties as well as great, and he avoideth little sinnes as well as great, but yet he doth not with the hypocrite so attend to lesser things, which are easie to be done, that he neglects the greater; our Saviour indeed saith true, He that is not faithfull in little, will neither be, if more be committed to him; and he that is not godly in those things the world judgeth minute and petty matters; neither will he be godly in greater duties, but yet it doth not follow on the other side, that every one who is diligent in lesser things, is also for greater. The Pharisees were *carefull to tithe cummin*, Mat. 23. 23. and other seeds; now our Saviour tells them, *these things they should not leave undone*, but there were greater things of *righteousnesse and judgment which they omitted*. Thus when they were full of cruelty and bloodinesse in putting Christ to death; yet they were scrupulous about entring into the *Judgement hall*, John 18. lest they should be thereby unclean, and so unfit for the Passeover: Oh notorious hypocrisie! they are scrupulous about this, and not about shedding innocent blood: Thus how zealous have some been about a Ceremony, or such punctilio's, that Christ never required, yet are bold to commit all the grosse and known sinnes that Gods Law doth plainly forbid? Is hypocrisie to stick at ceremoniall Sacrifices, and neglect morall duties? If the Pharisee had not washed his hands before meat, he would have thought himself unclean, but when he opposed and persecuted Christ, who reproved them for their vain-glory and hypocrisie, that never affected them: yet do not abuse this particular, as some of the world do, who if they see a man precise and strict in such things, as most of the world runne into, they say, It is his hypocrisie, it is his pride, it is to seem more holy then others; if he will not swear his petty oaths, if he will not conform himself unto the fashion of the world, then is he charged for an hypocrite: you will not do these things, but you will do worse; but this is the foul slander of malicious men; no godly man dares commit a little sinne or a great; he that dare not swear will not lie; he that dareth not prophane the Sabbath, dareth not be uncheste or unclean: Not sincerity is of equall antipathy against all wickednesse; Therefore you must know

that

that there is a *Scripture-ſtrictneſſe*, and a *ſuperſtitious ſtrictneſſe*; A ſuperſtitious ſtrictneſſe is, when a man placeth religion in the obſerving or not obſerving of ſuch things, as are not material. Thus *Rom.* 14. ſome of the primitive Chriſtians made a great matter of not eating, others of eating: Now, ſaith the Apoſtle, *The kingdome of heaven is not meat and drink, but righte ouſneſſe, and joy, and peace in the holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14. 17. Strictneſſe in ſuch things the Scripture doth not require, an affected piety about unſcriptural commands, is an ape, not a man, its a ridiculous imitation of godlineſſe, nor godlineſſe it ſelf: but then there is a Scripture-ſtrictneſſe, which lieth in ſelf-denial, in loving of Chriſt above all things, in mortifying our affections, in *non*-conformity to the faſhion of the world. This ſtrictneſſe and preciſeneſſe is neceſſary; No Camel can enter the eye of this needle, that is not willing the bunch of his back ſhould be made level. And it is this Scripture-ſtrictneſſe which prophane men judge hypocriſie, becauſe there are ſome that fear God, and look to the ſalvation of their ſouls, and will not runne into the ſame exceſſe of riot with them, therefore they judge it their proud ſingularity, when as, God knoweth the integrity of their heart, and it is becauſe the Scripture commands them, that they dare do no otherwiſe.

5. He will be for eaſy things, but will not meddle with what is againſt fleſh and bloud.

Fifthly; *Groſſe hypocriſie is for thoſe things that are eaſie, that are of eſteem and applauſe in the world, but then for ſuch things as are difficult to fleſh and bloud, or are accompanied with hatred and ſcorn, they will not meddle with them.* The Jews were very bountifull in their Sacrifices and outward worſhip, but then for to mortifie ſinne, or to crucifie any luſt, that they could not come off to. Alas, to pray, to hear, to come to Church, and to do duties as moſt do them, is ſo eaſie a thing, that if this were the way to heaven and no more; that Scripture could not be true, *Streight is the way that leadeth to heaven, and few enter therein*, Mat. 7. 14. Is it not eaſier to hear a hundred Sermons then to leave ſuch ſwearing, or drunkenneſſe a man hath been accuſtomed unto? Outward duties in the meer externall performance are very eaſie, if that were all nothing would be ſo eaſie as heaven, whereas the Scripture maketh nothing more difficult. The *Iſraelites* entring into *Canaan* upon ſuch difficult terms, inſomuch that but two or a few got into *Canaan* of thoſe many that came out of *Egypt*, doth typifie the ſmall number of thoſe that do indeed obtain heaven, in the midſt of all their performances. Oh then know, to do things ſpiritually, is to climb up the mountaine, to ſwim againſt the ſtreame; Through groanes and agonies thou muſt get to heaven; that which thou offereſt to God muſt come from a broken contrite heart within, but hypocriſie is only for an eaſie, formal, cuſtomary way. Again, in Religion ſome things are accompanied with applauſe and eſteem; other things with hatred and ſcorn: Now the hypocrite is onely for the former works, as *Simon Magus*, who is called a *Childe of the devil, and full of deceit*. Becauſe they were wonderfull gifts of the holy Ghoſt, *Act.* 8. 19, which were of great eſteem and wonder in the world, therefore he deſired them; he had not left his old pride, to be accounted ſome great one: But the upright man obeyeth *Gods* will, becauſe it is his will, whether it be plauſible or contemptible, that he attends not, but onely, This is *Gods* command, and its my duty to do it. As *Mathematicians* in their Science, they abſtract from the matter; They conſider onely the quantity and the dimenſions of ſuch a body, but whether it be of gold or ſilver, or wood, they matter it not: Thus the godly and ſincere man, he onely attends to the command of God, but whether the matter be gold, or wood, be honour or reproach, that he regardeth not. Thus *Moſes choſe the reproaches of Chriſt above the pleaſures of Egypt*, Heb. 11. The Prophets, What hard and contemptible ſervice did they undertake, only becauſe it was Gods will? Oh then conſider thy ſelf! How art thou for the ſuffering and reproachfull things of Chriſt, as well as the glorious and admired?

Sixthly

6. When men will do ſome acts of piety to accompliſh ſome acts of wickedneſſe.

Sixthly, *That is notorious hypocriſie, when men do on purpoſe pretend ſome acts of piety, to accompliſh ſome groſſe acts of wickedneſſe.* This is an hypocrite in the higheſt place; the Phariſees were often thus, pretending love to God and his glory, the honour of *Abraham* and all the holy Prophets which were before, while they were acting the greateſt wickedneſſe to innocent men. Thus *Jezabel* proclaimed a faſt when ſhe took away *Naboths* life. Thus *Herod* pretended to worſhip Chriſt, when his deſire was to kill him: And *Judas*, what charity did he pretend to the poor, when he grudged at the box of oyntment poured on our Saviour? *This he ſaid, not that he cared for the poor, becauſe he was a thief*, ſaid the Text, *Joh.* 12. 6. Thus theſe hypocriticall Phariſees appointed others to be like themſelves, *Luk.* 20. 20. They ſent forth ſpies that ſhould feign themſelves juſt men, that they might take hold of his words; ſo that this is an high degree of hypocriſie, when men do induſtriouſly pretend to ſome piety and religion, thereby to perform iniquity. *David* ſhewed too much of this ſour leven in *Uriahs* caſe, Oh ſaith he, *The battle falls alike to all*: be more carefull for the future, 2 *Sam.* 11. 25. when yet he had ordered his death.

7. In times of danger he will deſert his religion.

Seventhly and laſtly, *Groſſe hypocriſie doth alwaies diſcover it ſelf in times of tryal and dangers.* While its calm and fair weather, it will put to ſea, but let the ſtorms ariſe, and tempeſts blow, then it runneth back to the ſhores again. In times of the Churches proſperity there have been the greateſt hppocrites; even ſnakes will come out of their holes while the Sunne ſhineth. The *Samaritans* would be Jews when it was well with the Jews, *Matth.* 13. The temporary believer went on hopefully till the Sunne did ariſe and ſcorch him; *Will the hypocrite pray alway?* ſaid *Job*, Job 27. 10. and is therefore compared to the Bulruſh, as long as there is wet, miery nouriſhment, ſo long it will grow. Theſe Swallows will ſtay all the Summer. Hence adverſities in afflictions are called tentations, becauſe theſe will diſcover and manifeſt, what the root of a man is; and again on the other ſide, in times of ſore judgements, and under grievous calamities, the hypocrite will confeſſe and complain of his ſinnes, but let the rod be off his back, he will entertain his old *Dalilahs* again. Thus *Pharaoh*, thus *Ahab*, yea thus all the people of *Iſrael*, did lie to God, as the Scripture expreſſion is of many of Chriſts enemies ſubdued by him. Do not then beleeve thy heart for what it ſaith and confeſſeth in ſome extremity. This hard hard ſtone hath only ſome dew upon it, becauſe of a change approaching; This rock would never give water, but that it is ſtricken with a rod. Thus proſperity and adverſity are two great diſcoveries of a mans hypocriſie, whether he be truely built on the rock Chriſt, *who is the ſame yeſterday and for ever*; like the Salamander ſuch an one can live in the fire, like the Adamant he cannot be melted, but ſtands like a ſtrong mountain, whatſoever windes do blow.

Uſe 1. *Of Admonition and Caution.* Take heed of that prophane ſpirit, which ſome are delivered up unto, to think that all thoſe who walk more ſtrictly, and do more powerfully profeſſe the love of Chriſt then they do, that they do it of hypocriſie, out of vain-glory. This is to condemn the generation of the righteous. Chriſt and his Apoſtles they lived ſingularly to the world, they conformed not to it, and all the godly muſt be in the world like ſtarres in a dark night, they are to have no communion with the works of darkneſſe. Now the world gnaſheth their teeth at this, and will take upon them Gods Tribunall, to judge of them. Hypocrites! No, thou art the groſſer hypocrite, there is a beam in thy own eye, pull that out firſt: Doeſt not thou come, and hear, and ſit as if thou didſt belong to Gods people, yet what mean theſe crying ſinnes thou committeſt, that cry louder then thy prayers? Pray to day, and curſe and ſwear to morrow, lift up thy head to day, & look to the ground with it to morrow with drunkenneſſe? Who cannot but take notice of thy hypocriſie? And as for thoſe that walk ſincerely, they matter not thy judgement, they eye God, and look up to him, their

their heavenly Father ſeeth all their integrity which is in ſecret, and will one day own them openly.

Uſe 2. Take heed of affectation and vain-glory, or ſelf-reſpects in matters of religion. This will make thee and thy duties abominable to God: Never think to paint thy ſelf ſo, but that God will behold thee in thy own colours; night and day are all one to him. I tell thee if thou haſt laid up no other good things in religion, but what this thief hypocriſie ſtealeth away, great are the aggravations of thy ſin, as in the next place is to be ſhewed.

SERM. XL.

Setting forth the great Aggravations of groſs Hypocriſie, to deter men from that ſin.

LUKE. 12. 1.

Beware of the leaven of the Phariſees, which is Hypocriſie.

WE have diſcerned the *great Hypocrite* in his proper colours; Now let us conſider the *Aggravations* that may deter us from taking this ſubtil crooked Serpent into our breſt; And truly the Scripture hath pregnant conſiderations againſt it. As,

The aggravations of hypocriſie.

First, It is a ſinne that doth immediately and directly oppoſe the property of the godly. They are deſcribed by the contrary; Of a godly man we ſay, *Behold a true Iſraelite in whom there is no guile*, John 1. Of the hypocrite, *Behold a painted Sepulchre in whom is nothing but guile.* The children of God are ſaid to be *upright, perfect, true, innocent, unblameable, ſimple and plain.* They are ſaid *to follow God with their full and whole heart.* Theſe are glorious properties, and for theſe things the godly are ſo full of worth, becauſe they are true jewels, they are no counterfeits, they have more ſubſtance and worth within them then without, as the deep waters make leſſe noiſe: but the hypocrite is a ſtraw, nothing but an empty ruſh, a meer ſhadow, an image of rotten duſt and mouldy, with a little gilt over it. So that nothing doth ſo directly and immediately oppoſe godlineſſe, as hypocriſie, for that leads to down-right honeſty and plainneſſe; that makes a man have a ſingle heart, a ſingle eye, he is one and the ſame inwardly and outwardly; but hypocriſie, that makes a man have divers hearts, an heart and an heart, as the Scripture calls it, that filleth with crooked, ſubtil waies; The people of *God* are as ſheep and doves, the hypocrites are foxes and ſerpents. Oh then know, thy hypocriſie puts thee in a direct Antipathy to all godlineſſe; hell and heaven, black and white may be as ſoon agreed as theſe two; The great titles that are given to *Job*, are, he was a *perfect and upright man*, Job 1. 1. by this he was not onely oppoſed to prophane, wicked men, but even to ſuch who ſeemed to draw nigh to *God* but wanted a faithfull principle within. Conclude then, that nothing is done holily, or godlily by thee, which is not done in truth and uprightneſſe; whatſoever cometh not from this root, is hemlock or wormwood, is poiſon to thy ſoul, and bitterneſſe to *God*.

1. It immediatly oppoſes the properties of the godly.

Secondly,

2. The Hypocrite's puniſhment is the greateſt puniſhment.

Secondly, *The puniſhment of hypocriſie, is one of the greateſt puniſhments.* When the Scripture would expreſſe an high degree of torment, it ſaith, ſuch *ſhall have their portion with the hypocrites*, Mat. 24. 51. he had ſpoken before in the Parable of ſuch ſervants, that pretended to do the Lords work, but indeed were guilty of pride, and cruelty, therefore he ſaith, *They ſhall have the portion of hypocrites* hereafter, he ſhall cut them aſunder, διχοτομήσει. Some ſay, but it ſeemeth to be too ſubtil, that, as the hypocrite divided between God and the world, between *God* and his luſts, ſo now here, he hath an anſwerable puniſhment, *God* will divide him aſunder: Howſoever you ſee the hypocrite's portion in hell, is made of the higheſt degree: if thou walkeſt in the waies of hypocriſie expect the terrible and accurſed fruit of it, even to have *weeping and gnaſhing of teeth. Job* 36. 13. the hypocrite is ſaid *to heap up wrath, and he ſhall be found among the unclean*, or *Sodomites.* He may expect ſome terrible judgment to finde him out, as they had. Tremble at that time coming, when God will be no longer mocked, when thy diſguiſes ſhall be pulled off, and all that treaſure of wrath laid up for thee ſhall be poured on thy head; of all men living thou art in a moſt accurſed condition, though thou bleſſeſt thy ſelf in hypocriſie, and makeſt lies thy refuge.

3. His hope ſhall periſh.

Thirdly, *The temporall hope of the hypocrite which is his onely ſupport, and for which he tranſgreſſeth Gods commands, that ſhall periſh*, either he ſhall never catch that morſel he gapeth for; or if he do, he ſhall not long keep it in his belly. The hypocrite declineth Gods way, becauſe he ſeeth ſome earthly and worldly advantages in another way, he cannot have God and fulfill ſuch luſts as do reign in him. Therefore to obtain his end, he prevaricateth with God: God complaineth of the Jews, that it was for their *wine and oyl* they adreſſed themſelves to him. The Phariſees were onely for their ambition and covetouſneſſe in all their pretended devotion; their *long prayers were to deſtroy widows houſes.* Every hypocrite is inordinately affected to ſome earthly thing or other, and for this he will part with God and his own ſoul; but now God either diſappoints them, they never get what they deſire, As *Job.* 8. 13. its compared to a *Spiders-web*, that doth with much pain even unbowel her ſelf, and when all is done, on a ſudden is ſwept down with the beſome, or elſe if he have the thing deſired, it proveth *gravel in the belly to him*, it piercth him thorow and thorow. *Judas* for a little money plaid the hypocrite, but what good did this do him when he had it? Oh, he thought it a ſweet morſel, but no ſooner did he enjoy it, but he was filled with horrour, and throweth away that money to the Phariſees again, he dareth not keep it, he dareth not hold it, *I have ſinned in betraying the innocent blood.*

This judgement upon them, is at large deſcribed by *Job, Chap.* 8. v. 13, 14, 15. compared therefore to the *bulruſh* and *flag*, which quickly withers away, and hold no longer then there is water or mire to nouriſh them: Oh then what a fearfull confuſion is this to the hypocrite! He that forſaketh Gods waies to obtain earthly advantages; either God croſſeth him, ſo that he can never have his expectation, or elſe he hath his deſire, as the *Iſralites* had their quails; leanneſſe entred into their ſouls for all that.

4. His joy in religious duties is but a blaze.

Fourthly, *If the hypocrite find any joy, or comfort in religious duties, it's but a blaze, it's a bubble, it cannot hold long, becauſe it comes not from a laſting Principle.* Its a land-flood onely. *The joy of the hypocrite is for a moment*, Job 20. 5. What delight then hypocrites may finde in duties, in performances, its but a tranſient flaſh, a pleaſing dream, this cannot indure, yea to a good heart, the conſciouſneſſe of doing things in hypocriſie, depriveth them of all their peace and joy. They might have rejoyced in ſuch performances, but that inſincerity marred them all. This is a ſecret impoſture, the *putrida tabes* that infects all, therefore the ſame word for *hypocrite* is alſo for *polluted*, Jer. 23. 11. This inſincerity takes away the live-childe, and puts a dead in the room.

It

its makes thee go bowed down, and troubled about thy religious duties: As its related of *Bernard*, who in a great concourſe of people, where expectation was alſo great, made a very eloquent Sermon, and was much admired by all, but went up and down perplexed; the next day he preached more profitably, but not to the ſatisfaction of his curious hearers, and ſo went without that former applauſe, but it was obſerved he walked farre more comfortably then before, though he had not ſo much praiſe; and being asked the reaſon of this deportment, he ſaid, *Heri Bernardum, hodiè Jeſum Chriſtum*, Yeſterday I preacht *Bernard*, I preacht my ſelf, but to day Jeſus Chriſt: and therefore from this latter, I have more comfort; ſo that hypocriſie takes away all true joy, and if it cauſe any, its dead as ſoon as it begins to live.

Fifthly, *In times of calamities and publick or perſonall miſeries, then the hypocrite is filled with great guilt, for then his painting will hold no longer.* Now he is fallen into the hands of a provoked God, God hath met him, God hath ſeiſed on him, and then horrour muſt ariſe every way. *Iſa.* 33. 14. *Fearfulneſſe hath ſurpriſed the hypocrite, who among us ſhall dwell in the devouring fire?* They conceive themſelves in hell preſently; horrour taketh hold on the hypocrite immediately, whereas the true upright man, as *Job*, ſtands like an immoveable rock under all waves: Though God ſeemed to be angry, yet the conſcience of his integrity, that he did not ſerve God for corrupt ends, made him reſolve to *truſt in him, though he ſhould kill him.* Take heed then of this ſecret cloſe ſinne, it will betray thee, when darkneſſe ſhall fall upon thee: Oh the guilt! Oh the ſword in thy bowels it will be to thee, when death or any other affliction ſhall fall on thee; in what deſpair did it leave *Judas*, when he cried out, *I have ſinned in betraying innocent blood?* Oh the time is coming, when thou canſt not daub, or diſſemble any longer, but God will make thee appear to be judged in all thy naughtineſſe!

5. In time of miſery he is filled with guilt.

Sixthly, *This is a great aggravation of this ſinne, that it makes a man have his reward here*: He did it for applauſe and vain-glory and ſuch he ſhall have in judgement, God will do no more for him. *Matth.* 6. 2. our Saviour ſpeaking of the hypocrites, *who did all things to be ſeen of men, Verily* (ſaith he) *they have their reward.* here is a great deal of terrour in this ſpeech, that vain-glory and earthly greatneſs they do ſo breathe for, they have it, & this is all they ſhall have; As *Abraham* told *Dives*, *He had received the good things of this life*, Luk. 16. 25. and that was all he muſt have to all eternity. As a father will give an ungracious childe ſome little legally, that thereby he may not make any claim to the inheritance; Oh then let the hypocrite be afraid, leſt God let him have his deſire! Thou doeſt all things to be ſeen, and thou ſhalt be ſeen and applauded, and that is all. As that unbelieving Lord, he ſhould ſee the great plenty *Iſrael* had, but was trod to death that he could not eat of it. Well then might our Saviour ſay, *Woe be to you when all men ſpeak well of you*; for this may be all the portion thou ſhalt have: The reward of all thy praying, preaching, and profeſſed Chriſtianity, ſhall not be heaven, or eternall ſalvation, but the breath and empty applauſe of men! So then you ſee, when mens ends are carnall, and religion ſelfiſh, Its a terrible judgement for God to give us them, You ſhall have them for your reward, when others for their ſincere and holy duties ſhall paſſe into eternall glory; You ſhall onely have theſe rattles and baby-clothes, the praiſe and good words of men, and that but for a while neither. So here, as the true ſincere man doth not begin or end his duties for the glory of men; ſo neither is he contented with any thing, but the glory that comes from God alone.

6. He hath his reward here.

Seventhly, *Groſſe hypocriſie is a great bellied ſin, it hath many other ſins within it.* You may call it Legion, for its many ſins folded together. As

7. Groſſe hypocriſie is a great bellied-ſinne.

1. *There is direct and manifeſt Atheiſme in hypocriſie*; for take a man carry it outwardly ſo, when inwardly he is the clean contrary, if he did believe there was

I. There is in it direct atheiſm.

an all-ſeeing God? How could thy tongue utter that which is not in thy heart, didſt thou think God knows and ſearcheth the heart? So that this hypocriſie doth directly affront the Omniſcence of God. Men you may mock, you may diſſemble, and play the hypocrites with men, who cannot dive into your hearts, but to carry it thus to God, Oh bold Atheiſm! And therefore God he will deal with thee, or anſwer thee according to thy pretences and duties, according to that wickedneſſe which is in thy heart, *Ezek.* 14. 4. *Every man that did ſet up Idols in his heart, and yet would come to enquire of God, God would anſwer him according to the multitude of his Idolls.* Never then do thou think that for ſuch duties that, it may be, have a ſhew of extraordinary piety and zeal, that God will the more accept thee: No, God will anſwer thee, and deal with thee according to the hypocriſie of thine heart.

II. It argueth a baſe earthly ſpirit.

2. *It argueth a baſe earthly and puſillanimous ſpirit*, for he feareth man more then God, he will do any thing, be any thing, turn into all ſhapes for his advantage. Therefore *Ariſtotle* making magnanimity a vertue, he maketh this the property of a magnanimous perſon, that he doth all things ſincerely, candidly, without diſſimulation; as *David* did abhorre hypocriſie, and ſuch as loved the *way of lying ſhould not dwell in his houſe*: On the contrary, puſillanimity, and baſe low ſpirits are full of diſſimulation and hypocriſie, *Becoming all things to all men*, not as *Paul*, *to gain ſome*, but to ſave one. Thus hypocriſie argueth a ſilly weak heart that moveth in all crooked waies, onely for its ſelf, not for God or good ends.

III. It makes God and earthly things ſubordinate to God.

3. *Hypocriſie perverts that due ſubordination, which is between earthly and heavenly things, between God and the Creatures*; For it makes heavenly things ſerve for a pretence to get earthly; it uſeth the name and honour of God to obtain the creature, as if God were for man, and not man for God. The Apoſtle complaineth of the Heathens Idolatry, *Who changed God into the image of the vileſt and moſt contemptible creatures*, Rom. 1. But how unworthily doth the hypocrite deal with God? he makes the name and honour of God to lackie it, and to ſerve after his corrupt ends, the nobleſt and higheſt things, to come after the meaneſt and the loweſt; Thus hypocriſie confounds all due order.

IV. It is full of worldly and carnall fears.

4. *Hypocriſie is full of worldly and carnall fears.* Its the fear of loſing goods, eſtates, or lives, that makes men look one way, and row another. The Prieſts and Phariſees were afraid to loſe all their credit and glory, all their profit and advantages, and therefore they were ſo hypocriticall and ſubtill againſt Chriſt; We ſee they were carnall feares in *Abraham*, and *Iſaac* that made them diſſemble, eſpecially in *David* often; ſo true is *Solomons* ſaying, *The fear of a man is his ſnare*, Prov. 29. 25. Fear hath made many hypocrites, many apoſtates; So has worldly fear predominating putteth out the true holy fear of God, which would alwaies keep men in Gods waies. Therefore pray much and ſtrive much againſt this, as one great cauſe of hypocriſie.

V. And has much unbelief reigning in it.

5. *Unbelief is greatly working in hypocriſie*: For where faith is, that doth reſt the ſoul on Gods promiſe, it makes a man know him to be all-ſufficient, to be only wiſe, to be full of grace and goodneſſe, that he will never leave or forſake: it repreſenes God as a gracious Father, willing and able to ſupply in all neceſſities; now becauſe the hypocrite liveth by ſenſe, and only by outward means, not in the power and promiſe of God, therefore are his parts ſo crooked, and his waies ſo uneven; and if a godly man attend, he ſhall finde, that a cloſe and powerfull faith in *God* and his promiſes, is the beſt preſervative againſt hypocriſie; for faith bringeth a fulneſſe and ſufficiency with it to the ſoul, whereas the hypocrite is alwaies wanting, and is without this and that, which makes him as wolves and foxes that are ravening creatures to be ſo full of ſubtilty.

VI. And is without any ſpirituall

Laſtly, *Where hypocriſie reigneth, there is no ſpirituall ſenſe or feeling of God, as the greateſt good.* The hypocrite doth not finde all happineſſe and content in

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God himself; if he did, he would not leave the fountain, and go to the cittern: Oh could the hypocrite say with *David*, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and in earth beside thee; As the Hart panteth after the waters, so his soul breatheth after God;* Could the hypocrite do this, all the disguise would presently fall off: But because he knoweth not of a better good then a creature, because he never did eat of this honey-comb, therefore will he be all things, and do all things, to have that his heart is set upon.

sense of God, as the greatest good.

Eighthly, *For the most part, God will in time detect the hypocrite before he dieth, by suffering his sinnes to come out, so that he shall be abhorred by all, and be as odious as a noisome carcase.* Some temptations or other there are, which will make them known to the whole world, and so the verse following the Text, doth not only relate to the end of the world at the day of Judgment, but even to this life, *There is nothing covered, but it shall be preached on the house tops.* The hypocrite that liveth in secret sinnes, while pretending to God, will have all his iniquity by one way or other discovered. Thus *Judas*, he could not alwaies be undiscovered, nor *Hymenaus* and *Philetus*; But like *Gregory Nazianzen's* Ape he speaks of, though disguised like a little man, yet when Apples and Nuts were thrown about, the Counterfeit presently manifested himself to be an Ape; *These that accounted gain godlinesse*, when gain came to tempt them, would then discover their godlinesse; *They went from us, because they were not of us*, saith *John*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. For this end are persecutions on one hand, and subtil heresies on the other, *That those who are sound and approved may be made manifest*, 1 Cor. 11. 19. and when this sheeps skin is pulled off, the wolfe appeareth to be a wolf, and to what shame and scorn do they then bring themselves?

8. For the most part God will in time detect the hypocrite before he die.

9. *Herein hypocrisie is so dangerous, because it giveth such a mortal wound and stab to Religion.* If our Saviour said, *Wo be to him by whom offences come, it were better a milstone had been hanged upon that man, and he thrown in the bottom of the Sea*, Mat. 18. 6. then this must needs discover the wofull and dangerous nature of hypocrisie; for nothing doth so offend and make men blaspheme *God* and his holy waies, as the hypocrisie of those who pretend to serve him. *Davids* deceitfull waies of wickednesse in *Uriahs* matter, made the enemies of *God* blaspheme, and therefore though *God* did pardon that sinne, as to eternall punishment, yet he did severely chasten him with outward plagues. *Judas* his hypocrisie, was it not enough to reproach all Christs Disciples? Oh then to awe thy self against this sinne; remember, this wounds Religion, it makes it to be ill spoken of every where, and woe be to thee that hast given the occasion.

9. It giveth a stab to religion.

Use of Exhortation, To take heed of this inward impostume, thy face may promise much health, and there be rotten vitalls within; Every one till sanctified, is a meer hypocrite, *Totus mundus exercet histrionem.* Indeed the hypocrite out of his own mouth, and from his own waies may well be condemned; for thy desire to appear holy, argueth that holinesse is excellent, it discovers godliness to be precious, because the hypocrite would fain have the name and the title of it. This justifieth godlinesse in the world, but then it condemneth the hypocrite the more; for he cannot plead, he did not know such a way, he was not convinced such things were to be done; No, thou didst them, and wouldst have all take notice of it, yet didst not care for the power and reality. This is so great a sinne, that our Saviour in one Chapter, *Matth.* 23. doth many times cry, *Woe to hypocrites*, and because of this hypocrisie they shall receive greater condemnation.

SERM. XLI.

A Diſcovery of cloſe Hypocriſie, with the Cauſes of it.

LUKE 12. 1.

Beware ye of the leaven of the Phariſees, which is hypocriſie.

YOu have heard the *Nature and Danger of groſſe convinced and affected Hypocriſie*: We now come to the more *Subtill and Latent*, which is like a moth in the garment, an undiſcerned impoſtume breeding in the heart of man, in this reſpect more incurable then the former, becauſe not ſo much or ſo eaſily diſcernable.

And the better to fathom this deep ſinne, I ſhall conſider, The Perſons to whom this Caution is given, *To his Diſciples*, Scholars in the higheſt form, thoſe that were the firſt fruits of Chriſtianity, even theſe muſt take heed that this ſubtill ſinne creep not into them; They that were to leaven the whole world muſt beware of this leaven, From whence obſerve.

Obſerv. *That the choiſeſt of Chriſtians ought diligently to take heed of hypocriſie in holy duties.* *Matth.* 6. You have our Saviour in the beginning of his Miniſtry, inſtructing his Diſciples in this as in a fundamentall point, he knoweth not how to pray or preach, not how to profeſſe Chriſt, that doth it not with unfeigned principles from within. Thus *Faith if it be not unfeigned, Love if it be not unfeigned*, is a meer ſhadow, To open this

Hypocriſie an imitation of grace. Conſider firſt, *That this cloſe hypocriſie is an imperfect or languid imitation of true grace.* As all godlineſſe hath its reall nature and power; ſo there are ſome imitations of this, that in a mans own eyes, and the judgement of others goeth for grace, but is not ſo. As there are counterfeit jewels which appear to be ſo, but are not ſo, only the skillfull Artificer ſeeth the difference; Thus there is a *faith* like true *faith*, a *repentance* like true *repentance*; Thouſands deceive themſelves about them, only the Chriſtian, whoſe ſenſes are exerciſed to diſcern between good and evil, they find a difference. That this is ſo, appeareth 2 *Cor.* 6. 6. where you have a *love* unfeigned, and 1 *Pet.* 1. 22. So 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. and 2 *Tim.* 1. 5. there is πίστις ἀνυπόκριτος, a *faith* that is not hypocriticall. Now we cannot ſay, that all thoſe who in Scripture are ſaid to believe and repent, and had not the nature of thoſe lively graces, that they did groſly diſſemble, only they came ſhort of the lively and reall expreſſions of thoſe true graces, and if the Heathen would ſay, That he who hath not the morall Vertues, that even Reaſon dictates, is not a man but the picture of a man; much more may we ſay, He that hath not the inward nature of grace, hath only the picture of it, and no ſolidity at all. *Chryſoſtom* ſaid, the painting of tears is worſe then the painting of the face. The repreſentation or reſemblance of eminent graces, without the truth of them, is farre more miſerable then to be accounted rich, and yet

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to be poor; To be eſteemed learned, and yet ignorant. Our Saviour hath many Parables to deſcribe ſuch almoſt-Chriſtians; Thy faith is almoſt faith, thy repentance almoſt a true repentance.

Now true grace may be feigned or hypocritically reſembled in theſe particulars:

1. *In the principles and originals of our actions*, when we pray, believe, or do any holy duty from humane principles, from the meer ſtrength of nature. This looks like divine and ſupernaturall holineſſe, but it is not ſo, no more then the heavy earth is a glorious skie; *Nicodemus* before he was regenerated praied, faſted, did the externall acts of the Law; but (alas) the ſtock and root was meer naturall ſtrength, but when born again, he doth thoſe duties from a more divine and ſublime fountain; ſo great a matter is it from whence our duties and profeſſion doth flow, what need the promiſe of *Gods* Spirit renewing and ſanctifying? Why is love, faith, made the fruit of *Gods* Spirit, if we of our ſelves can do theſe things? Therefore the duties done by the ſame man before and after regeneration, they differ in kind, as gold and lead, he doth not pray, he doth not hear as he did, for the principles are wholly changed. Now it is to be feared, that moſt mens duties and religion come from no higher a ground then humane ſtrength; They pray as men, they believe as men, becauſe ſo few partake of the Spirit of Chriſt. Oh then take heed that it be not ſaid, Thy faith, thy repentance is ſuch as comes by the will of man, and is revealed by fleſh and blood!

Secondly, *True grace is imitated in the grounds and motives of it by hypocriſie*; And this is a reſemblance of the choice part of true grace; unfeigned godlines puts a man upon ſincere and pure motives, to do things as of *God*, becauſe of *God* and in the preſence of *God*, as *Paul* ſaid, 2 *Cor.* 2, 17. Thus *David* repented, becauſe *he ſinned againſt God*, *againſt him only*; So the *Samaritans* no longer believed becauſe of the womans words, but becauſe of Chriſt himſelf, *Joh.* 4. Thus all Papiſts make that a theologicall grace, faith, hope and love, when there is a divine motive; when the divine authority of *God* makes me believe; when the power and promiſe of *God* makes me hope; when the excellency and goodneſſe of *God* makes me love. if I believe, hope, or love for ſecondary or humane reſpects only, then this is a baſtard & no true child.

Thirdly, *Cloſe hypocriſie reſembles true grace in the end and aim of our actions.* A motive and the end differ as much as *ratio formalis ſub quâ*, and *finis*; when I love God, becauſe of his infinite goodneſſe and excellency, this is the motive, when my love is terminated upon him as the ultimate object, and I referre all things elſe beloved to him, then he is the end of my love. Now (truly) the godly man hath in nothing more to watch againſt hypocriſie then his ends, to pray but to what end, to be diligent in all religious duties, but ſtill to what end; that crowneth all; when God may ſay, *Ye did it to me*, as he complaineth on the contrary to the faſting Jews, *Did ye it to me*, *even to me, ſaith God*? How hardly do we ſhut out ſelf-reſpects, ſelf-glory, ſelf-advantages? How do theſe earthly reſpects creep in like the *Ægyptian* frogs at our doors, at our windows, ſtill croaking within us, conſtant and univerſall ſelf-deniall is a ſure companion of *ſincerity*, whereas the hypocrite ſeeth himſelf, knoweth himſelf and looketh after himſelf in all things, and in this particular it is, that the godly do ſo often groan & mourn, leſt they be found in the number of hypocrites. They cannot go about any thing for God, but ſtill ſome ſelf-conſideration thruſts in it ſelf; then they cry out, all is marred, I have loſt the duty, the crown of glory is gone, it was not God or Chriſt I looked after, but my own glory and reſpect: Commune then with thy own heart, and ſhake off ſelf, as an enemy to unfeigned grace.

Fourthly, *Hypocriſie reſembleth grace in the quality of it.* True grace is fervent, zealous, joyous and gladſome; and thus alſo the hypocrite may be for a ſeaſon. Thus the Jews rejoyced for a ſeaſon in *John* Baptiſt's Miniſtry,

Miniſtery, *John* 5. 35. even *Herod* heard *John* gladly, *Mark* 6. 20. Oh then when a man findes ſome joy, ſome zeal, ſome delight, who would not think now I have found that precious pearl of true grace? Now I know *God* will love me, but you ſee here may be falſe reſemblances alſo; and the reaſon is becauſe they are but tranſient flaſhes, ſudden blazes, they paſſe away as a lightning, they are not conſtant Sunne-beams, *Job* 27. 10. *The hypocrite will not delight himſelf in the Almighty*, there is not a conſtant, ſetled fountain of joy, and therefore he will not pray alwaies.

Laſtly, *Hypocriſie may imitate grace in duration of time*: It may hold its colour a long while. The Tree may flouriſh with leaves a great ſeaſon, even till there come violent oppoſitions and aſſaults, even till he be thrown into the fire, and then the droſſe will hold no longer, yea if there be no outward trials a man may live and die in this, as appeareth by the *fooliſh Virgins*; Oh then ſeeing here are ſuch deeps and uncertainties, ſuch gloſſes and colours, who doth not attend more to this? why is any thing more in our hearts then this? Other Sermons may pleaſe your ear more, but this will do moſt good to the heart: he that holdeth any truth, is glad of a ſtrong opponent, but it is the theif that hateth the light. Do thou then as *David*, often pray that *God* would *ſearch and try thy heart, if there be any falſe way in thee.* If you think this point too ſearching, too troubleſome, you had rather hear only of comfort and ſweet joy, let that very diſpoſition make thee afraid of thy ſelf; its the ſign of a ſick man to toſſe himſelf up and down, while he findes ſome ſoft, eaſie place.

The cauſes of this hypocriſie.

In the next place, let us conſider the Cauſes of this hypocriſie, that when they are diſcovered we may the better dry up the ſtreams, if once the fountain be ſtopt up. And

1. The not making Gods Word the rule.

Firſt, *One great cauſe of this lamenеſſe and imperfection, is, when we make not Gods word the rule to walk by.* That muſt needs be crooked which is not ſtraitned according to the rule. Now you have the word of God often commended for its *Uprightneſſe*, *Righteouſneſſe*, for its *Purity* and *Rectitude*: Its an inflexible and impartiall Rule, it alloweth no ſinne, it commands every duty. A man cannot ſtumble or fall that walketh by its light: If you ask them, What is the cauſe of all crooked and froward paths that men turn aſide to? you will finde its becauſe they do not order their ſteps according to this rule. *David* Pſal. 119. prayeth for this, and the phraſe implieth there is an exactneſſe, a diligent method, a curious framing and ordering of a mans waies in true grace, it will not let an hair be amiſſe. The Greek word *ἀκριβῶς*, ſuppoſeth there will not be any fold or wrinkle. The Word of God is compared to a Glaſſe, every ſpot, every deformity, that will diſcover; ſo then, whatſoever is not according to the rule, that is crooked, and by this you may anſwer that Queſtion, *How that man's Religion can be judged hypocriſie*, which is according to his conſcience? for *Paul* while a Phariſee thought he was bound to do what he did againſt the name of Chriſt, how then could he be judged inſincere? The anſwer is, *That to uprightneſſe is required the true rule of it*, and that is Gods Word indeed, not our thoughts, or our private conſciences, for they may be as crooked and corrupt as a mans actions. A mans conſcience may be defiled and blinded as well as other parts; therefore true uprightneſſe lieth in a conformity, not to a mans conſcience, but to *Gods* word. Such indeed do not ſinne knowingly, and wittingly, that have a miſſe-lead conſcience, but that is not enough to make a man upright and ſincere: Obſerve then, if all thy ſtruglings and wandrings ariſe not hence, that the Word is not thy counſellour, thy lamp and guide; Thou hadſt not turned to the left or right hand if thou hadſt followed thoſe directions.

2. Want of a ſetled reſolution before one undertakes the profeſſion of Chriſt.

Secondly, *Another cauſe of hypocriſie is want of a true ſetled and reſolved conſideration, before we undertake the profeſſion of Chriſt.* There is nothing makes hypocriſie ſooner then this; Men by cuſtome or education, or by commands of the laws where they live, take upon them ſuch a Chriſtian way; do ſuch Chri-

ſtian

ſtian duties, but then they fore-think not what a great exact work it is to be godly; They conſider not what they are going about, how dear this will coſt them: Am I able to go thorow with it? Our Saviour doth excellently ſpeak to this, *Luk.* 14. 28, 29. he would have every Diſciple of his ſit down afore-hand, and to caſt up his accounts, If I will be godly indeed it will coſt me thus much, I cannot any longer hold out ſuch luſts, I muſt ſhake off ſuch company, I muſt give up my ſelf wholly to God in every thing. Now becauſe men come at a venture in Gods wayes, and meet with things they expected not, they are off and on, they are backward and forward, the burden is too heavy, ſomething they would do; but this univerſall obedience, this conſtant perſeverance, that doth affright them; this putteth thee upon ſhameſull retreats, this makes thee put on many diſguiſes; there are harder things in Chriſtianty then thou didſt provide for: Oh then if thou wilt have truth in the inward parts, Let it be great matter of conſultation and meditation, Will I be a Chriſtian? Will I acknowledge Chriſt? Let me think what that is, I muſt be ſuch an one as *David*, as *Paul*, theſe had none in heaven or earth but God onely; its a building an high Tower, its a warre, its a marrying, and therefore you are to forget fathers houſe, and all.

Thirdly, *A ſure and infallible cauſe of hypocriſie, is the entertaining and hugging in his heart any one known particular ſinne.* 3. He can never be upright to God, that keeps one known enemy againſt him in his breſt: if thou be an *Achan*, a *Jonah*; though thou haſt the gifts and parts of men and Angels, yet thy naked-neſſe will be diſcovered: Can *Judas* be a thief, live in ſecret fraud, and yet hope to be a faithfull Diſciple of Chriſt? Oh notwithſtanding all thy duties, performances and profeſſion, thou art in a dangerous conſumption, that one ſin will be thy damnation, thou breedeſt up a Serpent that will at laſt ſting thee to death; This will be an *Abſolom* to thee, thou doteſt on it, and it will undo thee; Oh then ſay, How can I ſay, I love God truly, when I will not crucifie this ſin for his ſake? how can I ſay, He is the chiefeſt of ten thouſands, when ſuch a ſin is preferred before him? Put off thy diſguiſes thou painted Sepulcher, *God ſhall ſmite thee thou whitewall*, he knoweth thy ſecret luſts, he can dig through the wall, and ſee what is doing there.

Fourthly, *The heart inordinately affected to any lawful thing, to the comforts and good things of this life, will neceſſarily be hypocriticall.* 4. Never truſt thy ſelf, though thou haſt raviſhments in duties, though thy heart mourn like a Dove all day, yet if thou overfloweſt in thy affections to theſe things, God and heavenly things are not ſo ſweet and dear to thee, know then the time will come, when thou wilt betray Chriſt for *a morſel of bread, and wilt ſell thy birth-right for a meſſe of pottage*: Look over all the hypocrites recorded in Gods Word, and you ſhall finde them ſplit themſelves at this Rock. The *temporary believer* falls off, becauſe of the cares of this world, and the delights thereof: why doth *Demas* leave *Paul*? Its becauſe he cleaveth to this preſent world. Every Sunne in this orb hath been eclipſed by the interpoſition of the earth; duſt hath blown in their eyes, and hindred their ſpirituall ſight, godlineſſe doth not only lie in mortifying groſſe ſinnes, but looſing the heart from the world, ſo that nothing is ſo dear and welcome as Chriſt is, neither father, or wife, or children; they are riſen with Chriſt, and ſit with him in heavenly places, *Col.* 3. 1. Oh then fear thy hypocriſie & treacherous heart as long as thy heart is over-loving & over-delighting in any thing but God: Oh cry out of thoſe predominant affections as thoſe that will rob thee of God and immortality! He that hath taſted of hony, all other things ſeem unſavory to him: Thus the heart which hath once powerfully taſted of God and heavenly things, all earthly contents and comforts have no reliſh with him: He that hath drunk of this water will never thirſt again, *Joh.* 4.

Fifthly, *A frequent accuſtoming our ſelves to the forms and expreſſions of holy things,* 5.

things, without attending to the power of them, will inſenſibly plunge a man into hypocriſie. He that out of meer form and cuſtome doth uſe himſelf to holy things, without the inward life of grace, makes himſelf at laſt a meet painted image. As it was with the Jews, *Jer.* 7. who cried, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*; a conſtant frequenting of Gods worſhip without inward enjoying and communion with God, made God complain of their hypocriſie, *They draw nigh with their lips, when their hearts were farre from him*; We ſee it in other things, Men accuſtomed to ſwear, perceive not they do ſo; men given to complementall expreſſions, never regard any truth of affections; And thus it is here, men uſing themſelves to words and expreſſions of duties, not at all attending how true they are in their own hearts, cannot but diſſemble with God.

6. Sixthly, *Illumination of the underſtanding onely without ſanctification of the heart and affections, doth alwaies make a man inſincere.* It makes his tongue bigger then his heart, or his head too big for all his body. There are men of ſtrong convictions, and alſo of ſtrong corruptions; theſe men cannot but run into hypocriſie, *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if he do them.* The Apoſtle prayeth, *That they be ſanctified throughout in ſpirit, ſoul, and and body,* 1 Theſſ. 5. 23. The devils are *Paſuoves, full of knowledge*, when their wills are as full of malice againſt God: that the underſtanding knoweth beſt, which the heart and affection are experimentally ſenſible of. Now when a man is of great illumination, raiſed gifts and parts, whereby he is admired in the world, yet hath not a crucified and mortified heart; he cannot but pray, preach, and diſcourſe of thoſe things, which though not above his underſtanding, yet are above his heart & affections: Oh then pray, this oil may deſcend from thy head to all the affections below! Take heed that thou beeſt only light, not a burning light.

7. Laſtly; *Great and irreſiſtible judgements do many times, if not cauſe, yet are an occaſion to draw out hypocriſie.* When men can have no more pleaſure in ſin, when terrours have ſeized on them, then they will confeſſe and even roar out their ſinnes, when yet there is no truth in them. The *Iſraelites* were often thus; *Pharaoh* and *Ahab* were thus falſe alſo; and many whoſe hearts are not truly to God, yet in ſickneſſe and fears of death, cry out as if they were renued men; we have an expreſſion *Pſal.* 66. 3. and, in other places, that through the terribleneſſe and greatneſſe of God's power, his enemies ſhould ſubmit themſelves, in the Hebrew it is, They ſhall lye, they ſhall yeild a feigned obedience; and thus it is with many men, when *God* is too ſtrong for them, his judgements too powerfull, then they lie to *God*, they give him feigned obedience.

Uſe of Admonition. See that all thy religious waies be from ſincerity and uprightneſſe; what though thou haſt light, parts, and abilities, praieſt more then others, heareſt more then others, and with *Paul doſt labour more abundantly then all?* yet if hypocriſie be in thy principles, motives, aims, *&c.* thou haſt loſt all. This is terrible to hear, but it will be more terrible to be ſo. *Quid proderit Chriſtum ſequi, ſi non conſequi;* What will it be to follow Chriſt; if thou do not overtake him, What will this almoſt-Chriſtianity be; but almoſt-ſalvation? yea the nearer the haven, thy ſhipwrack will be the more miſerable; I would not unſettle the gracious heart, but Oh that this might go to the bottom of every unſound ſpirit.

SERM.

SERM. XLII.

The Grounds or Reaſons why all ſhould take heed of Hypocriſie.

LUKE 12. 1.

Beware of the leven of the Phariſees, which is Hypocriſie.

THe godly man you heard is carefully to beware of this ſecret and cloſe ſin, as well as other men.

Grounds or motives againſt this ſin of cloſe hypocriſie.

Let us in the next place conſider the grounds why he muſt be thus circumſpect. And

Firſt, *Becauſe of the poſſibility and proneneſſe that is in him, to be enſnared by this ſinne.* The very caution doth imply, that we are tinder and ſtraw; if a ſpark of this fire fall upon us, it is ready to ſet all on a flame. *Math.* 26. 69, what a ſad inſtance have we of *Peters* falſhood and diſſimulation? *He curſeth and ſweareth that he knew not Chriſt*, as if he had never heard of ſuch a man. Oh what groſſe hypocriſie and falſhood was here! Thus *Gal.* 2. 13. we ſee a ſpice of the like hypocriſie in him, when *with the Jew, he walked as a Jew*, and thereby through his example compelled others alſo, inſomuch that *Barnabas* was carried aſide with that diſſimulation. How greatly was *Pauls* ſpirit moved at this, *verſ.* 14. when he ſaw they did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the Goſpel, and he withſtood him to the face. Thus you ſee even godly men are apt to halt and reel from one ſide to another, till upright neſſe confirm them; we might inſtance alſo in *David*, who upon that foul hypocriſie running all along the matter of *Uriah*, is ſaid to have his heart upright to God, and to ſollim coſely, onely this fact is excepted, 1 *Kings* 15. 5. What an excellent copy had *David* been, had not this foul bloach fallen upon it? And therefore *Pſal.* 51. this conſideration of falſhood, that he had not done uprightly before God, did ſeem to be the greateſt wound on his heart, *Thou deſireſt truth in the inward parts.* By theſe examples we may quickly gather, how frail and brittle we are. Even the ſtrongeſt *Sampſon* may quickly be enticed by this *Delilah*, yea certainly the heart of every man is ſo apt to be falſe in all the things of God, that it is as wonderfull the ſoul of a man doth not overflow this way, as the Sea doth not break out and drown the Land: ſeeing then thou maieſt ſo eaſily fall, obſerve well thy ſteps, leſt thy conſcience upon ſuch defaults ſay to thee, as *Ahijah* to *Ieroboams* wife, 1 *King.* 14. 6. *Come in thou wife of Ieroboam*, why feigneſt thou thy ſelf to be another? for I am ſent to thee with heavy tidings. So after this manner thy awakened conſcience may ſay, Come, thou falſe deceitfull heart, why feigneſt thou thy ſelf to be what thou art not? Why doeſt thou appear as if for God, when it is not ſo? I muſt tell thee heavy tidings from the Lord. Did not the heart of *Judas* thus roar like a Lion upon him?

Secondly, *As hypocriſie is a ſinne, the godly are prone unto, ſo it is hardly diſcovered*; Many that act hypocriſie do not believe they do ſo, and commonly the more confident and ſelf-juſtifying men are, the more their

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hypocriſie is, as you ſee it was in the Phariſees, as it was eſpecially in *Paul*, *who thought himſelf bound to do ſuch things againſt Chriſt:* All counterfeiting and painting is hard to finde out. In all Sciences he muſt be a good Scholar, that can diſcern between *vera* and *verifimilia*; and thus it is alſo in practicals; to diſcern when its God, or when its any other motive, that moveth me to what is good. No doubt but *Iehu* thought what he did was out of pure zeal to Gods glory, that all was out of love to juſtice, and the pure worſhip of God; therefore he ſaid, *Come and ſee my zeal*; yet all this while *Iehu* did wholly delude himſelf, it was ambition, it was high and lofty thoughts that carried him on ſo fiercely. *Peter*, what confidence had he in his fidelity and ſtrength for Chriſt? but he did not know his own ſtrength. Thoſe Diſciples that would have called *for fire from heaven*, our Saviour curbs them with this, *You know not what ſpirit you are of*, Luk. 9. 55. And truly if in Divinity learned men find it very hard after a ſpeculative and doctrinal manner, to give a difference; no wonder, if in the practical & affectionate part, we are much more at a ſtand to know what is what; To ſay this is gold, the other is droſſe; This is for God the other is only for my ſelf; if then no diſeaſe can be cured, unleſſe it be firſt known, then this ſhould make the godly tremble more at it, becauſe this enemy may be lurking in them, and they know it not. Oh how many areapt to ſay, *God knoweth their hearts!* They mean well, they deſire, if they be in falſe waies, to be found out, but all is from a preſumptuous foundation already laid, that they did begin for the Lord, and ſo ſtill continue: Oh then, who will not take heed of that ſinne which may prevail in me, and yet I think the clean contrary! *Prov.* 16.2. *Every mans waies are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord pondereth the hearts.* Oh then do thou ponder thy heart as well as God! I was proud and not aware of it, I was earthly, ſelf-ſeeking in ſuch a matter, and did not perceive it.

3. Thirdly, *Let the godly therefore take heed of it, becauſe God knoweth all things, and with him they have to do in all their actions.* *David* doth often quicken himſelf up with this, *That God knoweth the heart, he ſearcheth and tryeth the reines:* Oh this would be an excellent antidote againſt every falſe way! Yea not onely that God knoweth it, but that he will diſcover and bring it to light, as followeth in this next verſe, not onely thoſe groſſe ſinnes ſecretly committed, but all thoſe hidden thoughts and counſels of the heart, with what ſpirit, with what frame of ſoul thou didſt every thing; yea, he hath appointed a day of judgement, when the counſels of mens hearts ſhall be diſcloſed to all the world, 1 *Cor.* 4. 5. do things therefore with no other heart and thoughts then thou wouldeſt have all the world know it. How wouldeſt thou be aſhamed, if men ſhould ſee that vain-glory, thoſe earthly reſpects, that yet are too much ſtirring in thee? Know that God will one day make all this manifeſt.

4. Fourthly, *Therefore take heed of hypocriſie, becauſe the greateſt and moſt excellent duties are not regarded where this is, and very great failings and infirmities are pardoned, where ſincerity is.* Did not *Iehu* do remarkable exploits for God? yet all was but a bulruſh in the mire. Had not *Saul* many commendable things in him? yet this Hypocriſie totally marred him. Was not *Iudas* one of the lights of the world, and the ſalt to ſeaſon the whole earth? yet he was unſavory ſalt himſelf, becauſe he had not ſincerity. So that truth and uprightneſſe is in effect the marrow and ſubſtance of all Religion. If faith be ſincere, if love be unfeigned, then *Gods* love will cover a multitude of thy other infirmities; but take this foundation away, and all falls to the ground. We read of many of the godly, ſometimes for their ſpirituall condition like *Lazarus* in his body full of ſores, yet the precious Robes of Chriſts Righteouſneſſe covered them, becauſe they were upright for the main: Oh how happy is this, when thou canſt come into Gods preſence, and truly ſay, O Lord, though I am bowed by many infirmities, though my weakneſſes are more then the hairs of my head, yet the bent and inclination of my ſoul is really and ſincerely towards thee! This prevaileth much with

with God: As the Father is greatly pitying his childe when he ſeeth him faint and weak, yet very willing to do his commands. On the other ſide, when ſome come with a glorious flouriſh, ſaying, *Have not we propheſied? Have not we wrought miracles?* God ſhall ſay to them, There was a bitter root within from whence all this did flow, man did not ſee it, but God did; this will undoubtedly be *the bitter herb in the pottage*: What can be a greater reaſon, why the godly ſhould preſerve this precious frame of ſpirit, than conſiderations from hence, All is well, or all ill is forgotten, where uprightneſſe doth prevail.

Fifthly, *They have cauſe to watch againſt hypocriſie, becauſe of the doubtings and diſconſolate objections it brings,* The hypocrite hath not any true ſolid peace or joy, it cannot be that he ſhould be without many black clouds upon his heart. For ſeeing he *doth not give all diligence to make his calling ſure,* but he is off and on, backward and forward; this putteth him into ſuch conſolations as his duties are; they are uncertain, and ſo are theſe; they float up and down, ſo do his hopes: *Iam.* 1. *A double minded man is inconſtant in all his waies*; and therefore as his duties, ſo his comforts are; ſometimes they are lifted up to the heavens, and again they fall as low to the earth: And it cannot be otherwiſe, for 1 *Iohn* 3; *If our hearts condemn us not, then have we boldneſſe with him*, Now the hypocrites heart becauſe it doth not fully cloſe with God, is therefore like a ſhip without an Anchor, in danger of being ſplit at every rock. 5.

Sixthly, *Above all things take heed of hypocriſie, becauſe there is no temptation or grief of minde more terrible then to lie under this fear, that thou art an hypocrite that all is rotten in thee.* For although many times thoſe whoſe hearts are moſt ſincere, do walk in this darkneſſe, and they fear it moſt, who have cauſe to fear it leaſt; yet it is an unſpeakable ſad thing, when we walk ſo falſly and deceitfully, as to give juſt occaſion for ſuch doubts to be raiſed in our hearts. Oh this is an heavy ſtone that cannot eaſily be rolled away! To have it ſet upon thy heart and this furthered by the devill, that all thou doeſt is in hypocriſie, in guile; that therefore the promiſes of Chriſt and grace do not belong to thee. What comes nearer hell then this condition? If ſo be therefore any thing may prevail with us to walk uprightly, let the conſideration of thoſe woes and wounds and troubles that will fall upon thee, make thee avoid hypocriſie, This will *Solem è mundo tollere*, take the Sun out of thy little world; This will raiſe up a great gulf between thee and Gods favour, Who knoweth when this black cloud will flie over? This may make thee go lame to the grave. On the other ſide, for a man to have a good teſtimonie and aſſurance of his integritie, is the greateſt refreſhment in the world, *Iob* 33. 23. There we have *Elihu* enlarging his diſcourſe concerning that man who is bound in the chains of his ſinnes, and kept in ſad darkneſſe, *If there be a meſſenger, an interpreter, one amongſt a thouſand, to ſhew man his uprigbteneſſe, then he is gracious unto him; His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a childes, He ſhall pray unto God, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy.* See here, when a man comes to know he is upright, that temptations of hypocriſie do not overwhelm him any more; then he that even bodily decaied and pined away, doth grow freſh, and he that could not pray, had no heart to it, found himſelf afraid to pray, ſhall pray and have much joy: Oh then who is there that feareth God, that knoweth how bitter a thing it is to lie under Gods frowns? how inſupportable to be kept at a diſtance from God, and to have nothing but diſcouragements from within? who (I ſay) that knoweth theſe things experimentally will not take heed of that ſinne, which above all other doth make the ſoul thus bleed and is hardly ſtenched? 6.

Seventhly, *Take heed of hypocriſie, becauſe it puts a man out of Gods protection, out of his care and love.* Firſt, it puts a man out of Gods way, and then out of his favour and promiſe to help; for the hypocrit is his own carver, he will not truſt God, he followeth his own carnall advantage, and thus God lets him alone to 7.

ſave himſelf, to reap the fruit of his own folly and wickedneſſe, *Pro.*16.9. *He that walketh uprightly walks ſafely, ſecurely.* Then the hypocrite is fearfull and doubtful, he *cannot caſt his burden upon the Lord*; neither will the Lord take care for him; but as for the upright man, many glorious promiſes are made to him, *Pſal.*37.37. he calls all the world *To mark the end of an upright man, to ſee if for the moſt part it be not peace*; and where any ſad afflictions have befallen them, as upon *David* ſometimes, it was for their halting before God. How comfortable is that, *Iſa.* 57.2. *He ſhall enter into peace, they ſhall reſt in their beds, each one walking in his uprightneſſe.* Oh then what terrour ſhould this be! The hypocrite who truſteth to his crafty counſells, to his power and ſtrength, will adhere to his own luſt, rather then Gods Word, conſulting with fleſh and blood in all things, he puts himſelf out of Gods favour: He doth as if one in the Ark ſhould wilfully have thrown himſelf out of the Ark into the waters; what ſafety could he then expect? You have a pregnant inſtance in this concerning *Aſa*, 2 Chron. 16. 8, 9. *Aſa* while he relied on the Lord, God delivered him, but when he truſted in the King of *Aſſyria*, he had done fooliſhly, and from that time he ſhould never be without warre: *For the eyes of the Lord runneth to and fro throughout the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong for the upright*, There needs no Stars when we have this Sun; Who may not lay of this Text, Lord it is enough, it ſufficeth.

8. Eighthly, *Beware above all things of hypocriſie, becauſe it is our duty to be reſtored to that holy and heavenly eſtate from whence we are fallen.* Now that is a ſtate of uprightneſſe, *Eccleſ.* 7. 29. *God made man upright*, and the image of God is ſaid to be *in righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe*, *Adam* had an univerſall rectitude in all the parts of his ſoul, he was wholly God's; all the Love he had, all the underſtanding he had, all the ſtrength he had, it was ſolely for God, and not any creature. Seeing then that holy and righteous eſtate we were created in, was thus perfect and compleat, how ſhould we breathe and pant after that eſtate again? Oh it would not have been thus once! our hearts would not have had ſuch flaws and deceitfull leakings as now they have: This is ſo contrary to that holy image which is to be repaired in thee, that all thy endeavours ſhould be, that it be true holineſſe; not only holineſſe, but true holineſſe.

9. *Take heed of this, for this only in ſome ſenſe may be ſaid to be the breach of the Covenant*; for as that though it require perfection of grace, yet is content with truth; ſo hypocriſie is that which violateth this command. Hence are thoſe expreſſions of ſeveral Kings, they did many things, but they did not walk perfectly as *David* did: When God requireth of us *to love him with all our heart, our ſoul, and ſtrength*, this cannot be any further fulfilled in this life, then by truth and ſincerity; a true heart is the whole heart, a true ſoul is the whole ſoul. A godly man whoſe graces are weak and imperfect, may in an Evangelicall ſenſe, be ſaid to fulfill this command; but where hypocriſie is, there is rottenneſſe at the core; there cannot be any claim made to pardon of ſinne or eternall life. Imperfect grace is ſtill grace, but feigned grace is none at all; a man is a man, though unſound and ſickly, but a picture of a man is no man at all; ſo that hypocriſie takes away the very eſſence and true nature of grace, it ſtrikes all dead immediately.

Object. To this Doctrine an Objection may be made, If godly men are obnoxious to hypocriſie, if they may know and diſcern this in themſelves, how then ſhall he difference himſelf from a convinced hypocrite? Doth not the Apoſtle ſay, 1 *Joh.* 3.20. *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts*? and therefore the diſcovery of hypocriſie in our ſelves, may make us caſt away all our hopes.

Anſw. To this the Anſwer is eaſie, 1. It cannot be denied but that hypocriſie as well as other ſinnes, doth in ſome meaſure abide in the godly, *Every man is a liar*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 3.4. and this lie, this falſhood in every man, hath its ſtumps ſtill, though the main branches be lop'd down: who can ſay he hath

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such a pure single eye, that it looketh on God directly, that it never is ear. a'quint? who can say he alwaies hitteth the mark, that there are no dregs in his wine at all? But yet though this be so, and the godly know it, yet in the second place, they bewail it, they bemoan it; This guile, and deceitfull heart, is an heavy burden, and a great confusion to them. You see *David* cried out, that he was a blessed man *whose sinne was pardoned, and in whose spirit there was no guile*, Psal. 32. 2. How often doth *David* pray that God would deliver him from *lying* and from every *false way*? How often doth he pray that his steps be directed, that he may walk in even paths? But it is not thus with the notorious hypocrite, he knoweth it, and is not troubled at it, but rather rejoyceth to see himself thrive in it. Did the Pharisee bewail that he was but a painted wall, that he was a whited Sepulchre? Did he look on himself as abominable to God and man? No, but in all things justified himself. 2. The godly mans hypocrisie is but graduall, not totall; Its but in some measure or degree, and its decaying and languishing daily, because uprightnesse of heart is stronger: He that is born of God hath His image of righteousnesse and true holinesse repaired in him, and although there may be many combats and conflicts, yet grace and truth will prevail at last. As it is with falshood and truth in doctrinalls, we say, Truth will at last prevail, the Sun will overcome the Night; though it may be under a bushell for a while, yet at last it will get into a Candlestick; like Christ himself, the grave that seemed to swallow him up, did not overcome him: so it is here with truth and falshood in practicals, The plainnesse and uprightnesse of the godly will by degrees consume that falshood; and thus you see, there is a great difference between these two.

To conclude this Text and subject, Let this daily and continuall dropping of this necessary truth at last soften and mollifie your heart, let these many sparks of fire kindle in your breast. You see as long as this worm is in thy best flowers, they cannot but die. Beware of it first of all; you pray, you hear, but above all things beware of hypocrisie in them. Thou art but an Idol in Christianity, having eies thou doest not see, or rightly understand in religion, till this foundation be laid: how loathsome is hypocrisie to man? To think one thing in your heart, and to speak another thing, ἐχθρὸς ὡς ἄιδης. The Prophet *Jeremiah* doth notably instance such men, *Chap.* 42. 2, 3. compared with 20. Oh take heed of this kinde of hypocrisie! Thou maiest pray to God, desire to be directed in his way, while thy heart is pitched what to do; but though God or his Word command the contrary, yet for all thy praier and supplication thou wilt do it. You see its a dangerous thing for a mans heart to be set this way or that, and then pray to God to direct him, for this is but hypocrisie. Thou must not prevent or anticipate God in prayer, but with *Paul* resign thy self, and say, *Lord, What wilt thou have me to do?*

FINIS.

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